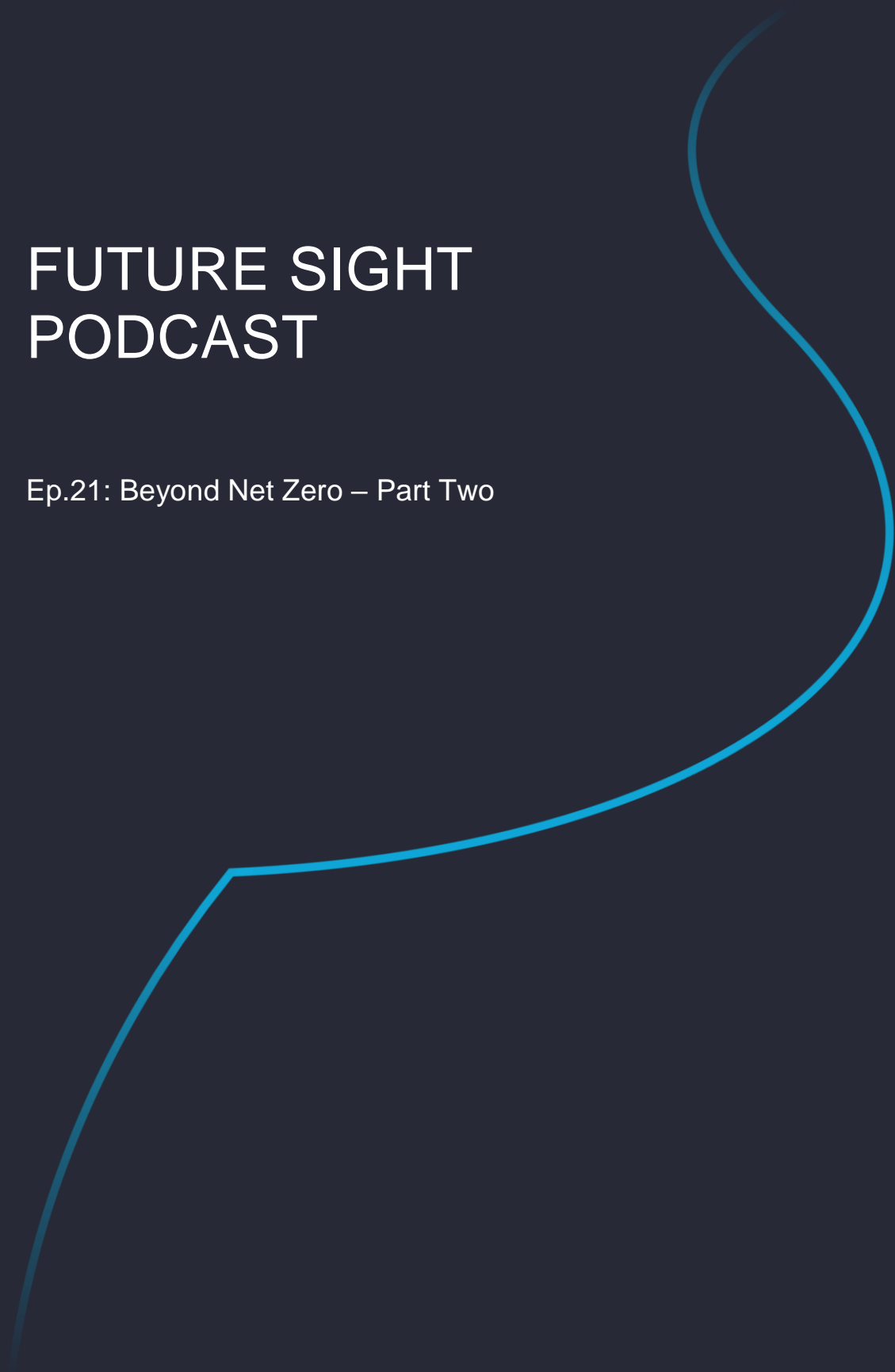


# FUTURE SIGHT PODCAST

Ep.21: Beyond Net Zero – Part Two





# Future Sight Podcast by Capgemini Invent

As business and technology move forward at a rapid rate, it is becoming increasingly important to explore new ways to adapt and grow for the future. This podcast is your guide to that future journey.

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# Episode Transcript

**Liz:** Hi, Future Sight listeners. This is the second episode of a two-part series where we're looking at what happens when we go beyond net zero. If you haven't listened to the first part, be sure to go back and give it a listen. We'll still be here when you get back.

This is Future Sight, a show from Capgemini Invent. I'm Liz Lugnier. On this show, we explore new ways for you to adapt and grow for the future in business. In the last episode, we found out about the challenges to going beyond net zero: the ideas of unrealistic expectations, counterproductive measures, tricky regulation, speed, scale, and technology.

But all these issues, while certainly hugely important, actually they gate one of the biggest challenges to reaching net zero: the human factor. Why? Because humans are always at the heart of the consequences of climate change, whether it is rising sea levels or the loss of jobs due to the changes in their industry. And it is the last of these things I want to find out more about: to see what companies today are doing to train their workers so that they are not left behind in the move to sustainability.

I spoke to Kara Pecknold, the Design Director at frog, who we heard from during the last episode to find out more.

**Kara:** Yeah, I think in this case, the best story I can tell is to tell our own story. We are also constantly growing and emerging, and I think we've used a lot of the mindsets around how a designer thinks about solving a problem to think more laterally and to think differently. And, as we do that, how can we help people to think differently or to work differently in organizations?

And actually, last year, COVID was a real trigger for us to rethink how are we going to show up from a responsibility in the world, a contribution to the world, and then what was the business that we needed to be in or start to focus ourselves and redirect ourselves?

And what we did was we took a six-week internal project to really align ourselves. We called it Project Doughnut. And the doughnut is based off of "[doughnut economics](#)" as a framework for looking at both social and environmental aspects of how you want to shape and reframe; in this case, it could be a city, it could be a business.

And in this journey, we really upskilled our own people. We had trainings. We really looked at what were the things we needed to grow in. We looked at the skills across the organization and we began to map everyone. So, we knew who had certain experiences and certain categories that we could tap into. Maybe they would do some training, but we could also expose the gaps within the organization.

And I think what it enabled us to do was really look at this sort of integration of social and environmental expertise. And what that resulted in was a bunch of new tools, a bunch of new ways that we could begin to have different kinds of conversations with our clients and to help upskill them or to bring new capabilities to them.

**Liz:** Yeah. That's absolutely fascinating. You guys seem to have great humility and a great mindset regarding this. But what about some of those workers out there who are a little bit more set in their ways? What can businesses do to ensure that no workers are left behind, especially when it comes to moving away from the more polluting technologies out there?

**Kara:** I think a lot of the ways we try to do this is to make it real for those employees. And, as we did for ourselves, we put it into practice in what we would call a pilot.

So, a lot of the ways that we tried to make change is not just with an online learning or a course that you would take while you sit and you're in front of your computer, but we actually helped to bring tools and strategies and methods right to the on-the-job learning. And I think that's how we don't leave people behind is we help them to own a better work experience for themselves.

**Liz:** What has been difficult in upskilling that you faced? What have you gotten wrong along the road?

**Kara:** As I said, I think what's difficult is if you like your job, the way it is, it's really difficult to say we're going to do something different. And change is always hard for even the most, let's say adaptive or change-hungry types of people. When things are different, it always causes a bit of a challenge.

All I can say is it's really about patience and having a big vision. I think if it only looks like we are tackling something for the immediate future, it can be harder for people to get behind and harder for people to be inspired.



I think there is something about casting a wider net and a bigger vision and a future that more people want to be a part of. And so, for me, that's, if anything, I think the call today is what does it mean to be a regenerative leader? What does it mean to cast a vision big enough for your teams to feel maybe a little bit afraid that will we get there? Will we make it?

But inspired enough to keep alert and to keep sensitized and to be empowered, to be able to make change and to be the people who innovate the new solutions both on the ground because they're facing it day to day.

**Liz:** This idea of upskilling is incredibly vital for the climate change conversation. When going beyond net zero, we must ensure that workers in the fossil fuel sector are not forgotten, losing their jobs and livelihoods. We need to ensure that workers from all sectors are given agency and respect [in this new sustainable working ecosystem](#). To find out more, I spoke to one organization who is doing fantastic work in this space: Purpose Climate Labs (PCL).

**Daniel:** I am Daniel Hale. I work out of Purpose's London office, where I'm responsible for the Purpose Climate Lab across Europe. So, I think of net zero and that journey to net zero as a very human and cultural task. And if we think about that, then we can start to think about it in an interesting way, in terms of re-seeding the values that we have, the values of the organization, but also the hopes and reflections that we have of ourselves.

I'm a campaigner. And we often campaign by inviting people to think about the things that really might matter to them, to their kids, to their communities, and their own futures.

**Liz:** It sounds like you guys are doing some great work. Can you give me an idea of what exactly [Purpose Climate Labs](#) does?

**Daniel:** It's probably easier to talk a little bit about our theory of change. So, our theory of change does what it says on the tin. How do you think you're going to make the impact that you'd like to have? And we've got two complementary theories of change.

Okay so first, we know, and we recognize around the world that impacted communities are really critical voices in the climate debate. And very often they are silenced, they go unheard. No one really asks them what they want. And so, we make a really special effort to find those people and uplift their voices because they're the people in society who can really speak with authority and authenticity about climate change. So that could be those oil or coal workers faced with losing their livelihoods.

But also, it could be indigenous communities who are at the frontline of resistance to deforestation in the Brazilian rainforest or the Indonesian rainforest. And we really need to support them and make their voices heard. Or it might be young people of color living in neighborhoods marked by toxic air, here in the UK, in London, where I live.

So, yeah, that's the first theory of change: impacted communities. And then that, secondly, we see the climate movement and climate campaigning has done really well around the world. We're talking about net zero, but I think what we're saying is that we're beginning to see the limits of what the climate movement can do, because it focuses on a pretty narrow segment of societies that are often educated, affluent, pretty aligned with the values that the sector holds like internationalism and the importance of science.

We see that, you know. Um, so I think to make progress and to really like embed the gains that we've made, we really have to engage on a whole society level, which means talking to people that don't really necessarily hold that set of values or really know very much about climate change in the first place.

I think we really need to expand the audience for climate action. And so that means building new audiences, which are pretty unlike our existing ones.

**Liz:** Can you give me a little bit more detail about how you're going to be building power among some of those affected in marginalized communities. What does that entail and why do you think your strategy is so effective?

**Daniel:** So, we do it in lots of different ways in different parts of the world, but maybe I could talk to you a bit about [the work that we've been doing with rainforest communities](#), indigenous communities in rainforest. We find around the world that indigenous communities are being criminalized and expelled from their lands.

They're not consulted on about projects that impact rainforests and lands that they've historically called home and protected. And that's because there's a lot of money in rainforest. There's oil under rainforest, there's timber in rainforests. There's various coals under the rainforests, as well, as you know that there are lots of incentives. The rainforest isn't really worth anything standing up, but if you chop it down and you mine under it, all of a sudden it's worth a lot of money.



And so, it's very easy for indigenous communities to be attacked, undermined and ignored. And so, in partnership with a big philanthropy, the Ford foundation, we created the 'Guardians of the Forest,' a campaign which really was mobilizing and creating a verbal and visual brand and key narratives that highlight the role of indigenous communities as really critical people in the preservation of the rainforest and also helped to equip indigenous communities with the tools that they needed to tell their own stories. It's not down to us to, to tell their stories, it's theirs. And our job is really just to elevate that voice to people in power.

**Liz:** The Purpose Climate Labs has an idea of what is a just transition when it comes to non-polluting energy sources. Can you explain a little bit about what that just transition is?

**Daniel:** So, it's probably easier to explain what an unjust transition is. And so, I'm here in the UK. And in the 1980s, we closed all of the coal mines or many of them, and we didn't put anything in place for any of those workers and all their families or their communities.

And those parts of the country have been blighted for many years. That's an unjust transition. So, what's the flip side? What's the just part of this? So, I think it means moving to carbon-neutral energy sources in a way that happens really fairly for everyone: for those affected communities, or those employed in the fossil fuel sector but also for society as a whole. I think we need to make sure that we have a special support for those who might lose out because of the transition. They could be whole countries. They could be regions of countries, industries, communities, workers, and consumers.

Everyone needs to, we need to think about things in the round and recognize where people are going to be adversely affected, particularly those people who are least able to bear those costs. And we need to particularly put them at the center of our policymaking and thoughtfulness.

So, transition to a green economy really means that we need structural changes. We need new strategies, we need detailed plans, and it requires us putting affected communities right at the heart of what we're doing so that they can drive some of this process as well.

**Daniel:** A good example of some of the work that we've been doing in Silesia, which is the coal region, one of the coal regions of Poland. We've been doing loads of work there to try to even begin to have the conversation about the transition and a just transition. It's pretty politically fraught to work on climate in Poland.

**Liz:** The work that PCL is doing in Poland is truly incredible. It puts people at its heart. I wanted to dig further into some of the work they are doing to understand what can be done.

**Natalia:** I am Natalia Węgrzyn. I'm a campaign manager at Purpose Climate Lab and based in Poland, where I run our campaigns, focusing on climate and environmental issues.

**Liz:** So, I got in touch with Daniel's colleague, a campaign manager at Purpose. She has been leading PCL's work in the region as they carry out campaigns to help forgotten workers across the country. Who is being left behind? What sectors of workers are going to be left behind as we move to net zero?

**Natalia:** I like to think about this just transition process as a process that really is full of inclusion and equality. But there is a risk, of course, that some of the groups might be left behind. And there's some obvious comments I could make here it's definitely the whole sector of electricity, gas, air conditioning supplies, the whole mining sector in Poland, for example. So, when I say the mining sector or the people that are part of this, of this system, so miners and companies that are included in the supply chain, et cetera. But that's also transport and storage because we need to change the transport to be non-polluting as well.

That's manufacturing, that's a whole big discussion about agriculture and farmers and how to make sure that farming and agriculture is sustainable and non-polluting as well. So, I think these are some of the sectors that, that might be left behind. And there is a really real need of thinking about those communities and businesses and really making sure they're on board and they are considered as an important element of the whole conversation and the whole sectoral change.

**Liz:** Can you give me a specific example of how you've built power among some of those affected in marginalized communities? What did it entail and why do you think it was so effective?

**Natalia:** I think one good example of building power among affected communities is the work we... I'm based in Poland. Let me bring an example from Poland.



Last year, we started to work with some of the rural communities because we identified that these are the communities that are impacted by floods and by droughts. They all raise concerns about the water resources and how this is shortening every year. And we thought creatively how to take those communities on board, how to empower them to voice those concerns and really become part of the conversation.

And we identified some leaders from rural communities. We upskilled them. And gave them some tools and knowledge about how to talk about issues, how to make their voices relevant and then supported them in building local and locally relevant campaigns that really can start a dialogue with local governments with municipalities, but also how to voice those concerns and build an action that could reach out to central government.

And as part of one of the last activities, we developed an exhibition with Pismo magazine in Poland that was showing 10 women from rural areas of Poland that are active locally. And they tell a story of their personal experience, how the climate change is affecting them day by day.

**Liz:** Can you tell me a little bit more about that exhibition? What were some of the personal experiences that these women were discussing?

**Natalia:** That exhibition and reportage that was part of the project were very emotional. I found it very emotional and very personal because the women share their private stories, how the situation really affects their private lives and their businesses.

And I remember that one woman said that she's really afraid of the future for her kids and that they won't live in the same area that she lives, but also how the future will look like for them. Well, if there will be resources like water. If there will be challenges, because maybe the surroundings might be affected by floods, et cetera.

So, I think it's very powerful because it's personal. It's strong. But also, the whole story was quite sad to me because of how severe, already, the impact of climate change is. But there was a positive side of the story, of course. There is a time to act and there is a need to act. And also, the willingness to do more and engage communities, which I think is very important in the stories.

**Liz:** But this is not the only work that PCL is doing in Poland. Their work with miners in Silesia, an area in Poland of vital importance to mining with a rich and proud culture, provides another perspective.

**Natalia:** In Poland, we developed work with miners in the region of Silesia. So, Poland is the EU's largest coal-dominated economy and around 86,000 people in the country work directly in the mining sector; most of them are from Silesia.

But also, there are many others that cooperate somehow with the mining business and will be affected as well. We decided to focus on Silesia itself because it's the biggest coal mining region. Coal mining – it's a big part of the history of the region. There were times of the prosperity for the region where coal mining was the heart of it.

But also, the region built identity through that and coal. It's moving away from coal. It's not only an economic decision. It's like a changing of the lifestyle of the region. With the campaign, we wanted to build and test a narrative around the future of the region to show that Silesia is so much more than just coal. And we wanted to really empower people to start talking about alternative scenarios that could be built for the region.

And we wanted to start a discussion. What are the perspectives for miners, for their families and who will be really affected by these changes? So, we were inspired by the fact that there were some radio stories that were quite popular years ago, and we thought that we will take miners and mining communities on this entertaining journey with us.

And we got a lot of insights about the group. Some of the team is really based in Silesia and some of our families used to be miners. So, we had insights that were firsthand. And we worked really closely with a great local NGO; it created and offered us a context. And that was BoMiasto association. And with gathering all the stories we created a family saga that was captured in two formats: one of them was a podcast that was based on this radio saga inspiration. And the other was like a soap opera style, four episodes video, telling a story of just one family, but at different stages. So, there was an older grandpa who used to be a miner, his son, who was in the moment of making decisions about his future career and the younger generation of teenagers who see their future totally different than that of the older generations within the region.

And what was the reaction to that, was that we sparked a discussion and really gathered a lot of feedback from people about their fears and their hopes for the future. And it was really helpful to also guide us with the strategy: how to take those stories forward and how to build on them, like the campaign and future.





**Liz:** And you really worked to understand those communities and understand those people and understand where they're coming from in order to do that. But in order to take actions, sometimes they have to see options. Growing up in Western Pennsylvania and rural Pennsylvania, people didn't often see what the options were outside of coal mining, in some cases. What sort of new sectors of work are the miners of Silesia now moving into? And how did you encourage them to?

**Natalia:** It's still a process because what we identified is that miners already have a set of very important skills. They're miners, but at the same time, they have so many different skills in hand.

They just often don't have the papers to prove that they're experts in the field. In my opinion, another discussion and another way, how the campaign could evolve and engage new partners is to think about upskilling and having certificates in the hands of miners, because we see a huge potential. And for example, renewable energy sector, like things like, even installing solar panels or retrofitting houses; these are the industries and sectors that really need people to work on and focus on.

If we want to think about net zero, beyond net zero and really having change, we need to also think on how to remove coal from in-house heating. And that's a massive problem that we work on as well. This is why the whole retrofitting industry already needs many people, but we need even more. So that's one part.

The other part is that we need experts, specialists, and innovations. It's already a home of many different innovative companies that try and do the best they can to really make impact.

So, I think it's a way of how to change economy and how to create those workspaces for people. And how to match the skills that are already there and how to fill the gap of skills that are missing and are needed, and how to upskill the people to make sure that they can get the job they need.

**Liz:** The work that PCL is doing in Poland is so vital to the community. Over these two episodes, we've heard lots about the solutions to climate change about new technologies and human processes, which attempt to reach net zero.

But are they going to work? Will they bring emissions down in time? I asked Daniel his thoughts. What do you think the likelihood of the world reaching net zero targets by 2050 is? And what is the likelihood of going beyond it?

**Daniel:** I think the path is narrow and the path is narrowing all the time, but I'm optimistic. I'm very hopeful that I'm sure that we can do it together. I think it's really interesting to think about what the future could look like. Like what, where are we heading for? And I think it's really hard to say.

I don't know if you've seen, there's this cartoon that I really like it's from 2009. It was a pretty challenging year for climate and climate diplomacy. But it shows this conference presenter listing lots of advantages of curbing climate change: energy independence, preserving sustainability, green jobs, livable cities, renewables, clean water, clean air, healthy children, et cetera, et cetera.

And then someone stands up at the back in this cartoon. This person stands up at the back saying, "what if it's all the hoax and we create a better world for nothing?" And I think it's a funny way to make a really serious point because I think we all want those things. We want energy independence. We want to preserve rainforests, et cetera, et cetera.

And I think that's the future we get, if we get this right, then I think it's interesting because I think it won't be a wholesale transformation of society. I've said the jobs haven't been invented yet, and that's true. But you think 30 years ago, no one knew what a crypto currency trader was. But they still live the same lives that the rest of us do. Society hasn't hugely transformed in that time.

There's a guy, James O'Malley, recently talked a little bit about this. He made a great point, and he was like: "the fundamental problem is that with any approach to climate that fundamentally involves rewiring society is that we're already too close to the deadline".

**Liz:** Our guests over these two episodes have been fundamentally positive and optimistic about a sustainable future. So, I wanted to give them a final word as we draw to a close to see what they think we can all do in this fight. Here's Alison Dring from episode one.

**Allison:** So, I think what we can do as individuals is demand that systems consider the climate. And we can do that by making the choices that we make. So, being consumers that understand what impact that company is making



on the climate, good or bad and make decisions that way. That's something we can do. We can make better choices.

**Liz:** And Kiri Trier.

**Kiri:** I would love to take the chance to remind the people that we really need to act now and that everybody can make a mark on an individual basis, starting with reducing the waste, starting with buying things that are really neutral. There are so many initiatives. There are so many actions out there. But also, not just claiming targets and numbers because of profit growth, and really focusing on the execution.

**Liz:** And Natalia Węgrzyn.

**Natalia:** In order to have a brighter future, I think we really need to take into account different voices and listen to people that we do not necessarily agree with. And just to try to find some common ground for the action. And I would say that we need everyone on board. And whether you're an individual or you have your own company, or you work in a government or local government, I think it's time for all of us to think about it and do our best. And I hope that we could make a real change.

**Liz:** But beyond the human factors, there's things companies can do as well. Here's Florent Andrillon.

**Florent:** We're just starting a very exciting journey of transformation. It's a human challenge, but I'm very excited because there is a lot of opportunity to reinvent the wheel.

And in any industry, we need to reinvent everything. We need to reinvent the way we move, we consume energy, we produce products. So, everything needs to be reinvented. And that's what we like here at Capgemini, to reinvent the world and the products.

**Liz:** And Kara Pecknold.

**Kara:** That's what gets me out of bed every day is: how can I make this easier for people to achieve? And how can my role in this large ecosystem enable that and not make it an "us versus them", a "me versus you", but make it something where we all want to have good food on our table? We all want to have a safe home to live in. And finding the places of commonality rather than the places of difference.

**Liz:** Finally, Daniel Hale.

**Daniel:** Right at the beginning of this conversation, which I've enjoyed enormously, everyone has a part to play.

I've got one, you've got one, everyone listening to the podcast has one. So yeah. Don't leave it till tomorrow, do something today. Get excited about it. If you need a helping hand to reach out to some people then, come call me. And yeah, I think between us, we can definitely reach net zero. But it's going to take everybody and yeah, we've got no time to lose.

**Liz:** Thanks to all of today's guests, Daniel, Natalia and Kara. Plus, our guests from episode one, Florent, Kiri, and Alison. You can find out more about all of their work in the show notes. Future Sight – Beyond Net Zero was hosted by me, Liz Lugnier. It was written by Harry Stott with contributions from Emily Lopez and produced by Theresa Ignatius and Ollie Judge.

If you enjoyed this podcast, don't forget to subscribe on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts. This has been Future Sight, a show from Capgemini Invent. We'll see you soon.



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