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UNited for climate JUSTICE

POLICY PAPER WITH DECLARATION AND GUIDING PROPOSALS FOR **PROGRESSIVE CLIMATE ACTION**



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Photo by Ashley Cooper



*Policy paper including declaration with guiding proposals for
In consultation with*

FEPS United for Climate Justice Steering Committee

Presented ahead of the UN Climate Action Summit New York 23rd September
and FEPS side-event in New York on 20th September in the framework of



ABOUT FEPS

FEPS is the European progressive political foundation and a platform for ideas and dialogue that establishes an intellectual crossroads between social democracy and the European project. Its main purpose is to nourish fresh thinking through research, dialogue, interactive public events and its publications. FEPS works in close collaboration with progressive and social democratic organisations, and in particular national foundations and think tanks across Europe and the world.

PARTNERS



This declaration and policy paper are the result of the reflection process from the discussions held in the framework of the FEPS United for Climate Justice steering committee meetings. The input towards which derives from everyone who has taken part. The guiding proposals included in this paper have generated a significant level of consensus among group members, however not all members or their respective organisations may agree with all of them. Nevertheless they are considered important drivers to trigger the necessary ambition increase.

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United for Climate Justice

Declaration with guiding proposals and policy paper, August 2019



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FEPS DECLARATION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Who we are

The Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and its partners wish to propose guiding principles in the United for Climate Justice Declaration. Under the chairpersonship of Teresa Ribera, Minister for the Ecological Transition in Spain, we convened a steering committee of concerned stakeholders from across the world encompassing policy experts, academics, political, civil society and business representatives to build these guiding principles and to propose specific action-oriented recommendations. FEPS and its partners hope that these recommendations can facilitate rapid decarbonisation and at the same time enhance global economic equality.

What we want

Climate justice is significant for us because it stands for an agenda that links the struggle for a prosperous, safe future for all with a fight against inequalities and exclusion. We want to ensure political commitment to safeguard our planet and livelihoods while ensuring a sustainable transition guided by the principle of fairness with social justice. Our vision for the future is of a flourishing carbon neutral society where production and consumption are organised with a high-level of solidarity and responsibility. We also want to achieve equality between and amongst peoples and countries, and ensure that all generations have a better standard of living. Therefore we urge governments to build on the ambition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, to realise the commitment they entail and use them as the guiding basis for our societies. Such an achievement shall result in a better society and world to live in.



To this end fossil fuels need to be phased out. We want to see an end to short-term decision-making that is locking countries into unsustainable practices for the long-term. They prove to be expensive, inefficient and undercut development in sustainable infrastructure. The result of these goes against meeting international, already-agreed climate objectives, is leaving stranded assets and continuous environmental degradation.

Our message is especially meaningful now due to the momentum, created by citizens themselves taking to the streets across the world, to demand a change and serious action in the face of climate change. We are calling for a re-think in how we address the challenge of the climate emergency. Actions to reclaim the environment, economic well-being and social mobility are compatible. Crucially by,

- binding the deep link between social progress, environmental protection and economic sustainability;
- bringing about a significant change in the way social and economic progress is understood and measured; and
- considering the values of climate justice and empowering our societies in order to safeguard the environment.

We are asking politicians and policy-makers gathered at the UN Climate Action Summit and those in all the world's capitals to live up to the expectations and to ensure a world that allows us to respect nature and live in harmony with the environment that surrounds us and leave a proud legacy for the next generations to build on.

Why we want it

Now is the turning point. We have been living in a climate emergency for a while. Addressing this issue is now firmly on the public agenda. We support the incredible amount of people who have taken to the streets in recent months and we share the public frustration that not enough is being done to respect the Paris agreement and the 1.5°C target, achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 or recognise the latest IPCC report. We share too the anxiety that shifts in political terms mean weakening of the commitment to fulfil promises, while in the shadow of that, climate deniers growing in strength again. This is a turning point in human history, where coordinated and ambitious action is the only way to cross to a world that is able, not only to survive, but also to thrive in the future.

The difference we want to make with our proposals is to set out the strong need for clear collective action and systemic change to which we – coming from diverse communities, united by a common goal – are ready to contribute the best way we can.

Yet while we are ready to take our responsibility, immediate action needs to come from political action and political will. The financial and necessary tools from governments and powerful economic actors as means to achieving this are available. Politicians need to put forward a new way of thinking and a new strategy to introduce new tools and ways of measuring progress. They have to provide guidance for civic dialogue and resources to make the changes possible. At the same time transnational corporations need to align their investment decisions with the 1.5 degree goal, shift their employment practices to one based on greater societal equity, and alter their development plans to support the transition to a sustainable future.



What we expect

Driven by this motivation a long-term reflection process was undertaken, which led to drafting this declaration and now we bring its main points to address the UN Climate Action Summit in New York this September 2019. By means of this to raise the voices of the communities we represent, we are asking global decision-makers to commit to **Climate Justice** and our five guiding proposals outlined here below. To this aim, we fully welcome the motto of the summit that this is **“A race we can win!”**

FIVE GUIDING PROPOSALS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

1. Include Just Transition plans in the process of preparing NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions)

Parties to the Paris agreement should commit to adhering to this which will help serve towards part of fostering **New Global Social-Ecological Contract**. **Together this will ensure the equally fair** (pre) and redistribution of wealth and strengthening welfare policies whilst phasing out fossil fuels and moving to a decarbonised society.

2. Climate-proof global investment, finance and trade

As part of systemic change in this area for **stimulating a planet and people - centred approach to climate investment**, governments at all levels should take a range of proposed measures including ensuring tax justice, committing to climate and social-friendly procurement standards, incentivising sustainable modes of transport and introducing an internationally agreed levy on airline fuels. As well as requiring countries and businesses to commit to carbon disclosure and facilitating direct support for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to invest in green and social initiatives.

3. Engage young people in decision-making through green youth councils

As part of guaranteeing **the harnessing of civic participation and responding with effective governance**, these can be established by governments at all levels as well as implementing impact assessment testing for future-proofing policies and introducing a guardian for future generations.



4. **Establish an international framework for sustainability and environmental rights**

As part of **reinforcing and advancing a rights-based approach to climate action**, governments should establish an internationally operative and respected framework that includes recognition also for environmental defenders, climate-displaced persons, the right to a healthy environment and procedural rights.

5. **Require a more adequate target of nature-based solutions in NDCs.**

As part of **recognising the intrinsic value of nature** governments should commit to establishing more adequate targets which embrace nature-based solutions, the most cost-effective way both in terms of mitigation and adaptation. At the same time guaranteeing autonomy of indigenous people and traditional communities regarding the control of their territories would also serve towards better valuing nature.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CLIMATE JUSTICE?

Climate justice is an ethical, political, ecological and socio-economic issue. People are facing a **triple injustice**. Those facing the effects are least likely to have caused global warming. It is the most fragile and vulnerable, the most marginalised and disadvantaged who are affected most and are least able to adapt and deal with it. Moreover they will be the ones bearing the biggest financial and social burden if this is not changed. Subsequently, the climate crisis is further exacerbating already existing inequalities thereby fuelling people's anxieties about the future.

Therefore, we define climate justice here as any social justice issue associated with either the impacts of climate change and the preventive measures to address the consequences.

Consequently the reflections for preparing this declaration and policy paper based its initial analysis on three core interconnected strands of climate justice issues:¹

- **Inter-country equity:** The main focus of climate justice considerations in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement, concentrates on relations between, and mutual commitments of, countries. This addresses questions such as the differential impacts among countries of current and future climate change; the allocation of responsibility for mitigation, and for financing adaptation efforts; and, as a factor in discussions on both of these questions, the attribution of responsibility for the problem of climate change.

¹ For more information on this see the background paper prepared for the first meeting of the FEPS United for Climate Justice Steering Committee, April 2019.



- **Intra-country equity:** Within states (or, for parties like the EU which have made joint commitments under the UNFCCC and Paris processes, within groups of countries) further justice questions arise when considering how mitigation and adaptation efforts will be organised. Different groups are affected in different ways by the degree of commitment to decarbonisation, and by decisions on how targets will be met. Some groups are more affected by energy and transport costs than others; the geographical impact of mitigation commitments can vary significantly, particularly where regional economies have been focused on hydrocarbon extraction or other high emissions activities; and the impacts of climate change (and the costs of Government commitments to addressing them, for example through land use planning or through insurance subsidies) can also create differing impacts.
- **Inter-generational equity:** Differences in impacts between generations underlie many of the inter-country and intra-country issues; but creates challenges which are specific to the climate issue, and deserve to be separately addressed. The key issue is that while older generations are generally responsible for, and face the costs of, mitigation action now, younger generations and future generations face the brunt of the impacts of climate change, and will bear the main costs of any failure to take adequate action. This is an increasingly prominent framing of the climate question, driven by legal action in a number of countries, and by the growing youth climate movement.

POLICY PAPER - UNITED FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- I. A New Global Social-Ecological Contract for Just Transition**
- II. A planet and people - centred approach to climate investment**
- III. Harnessing inclusive civic participation and responding with effective governance**
- IV. A rights-based approach to climate action**
- V. Recognising the intrinsic value of nature**

I. A New Global Social-Ecological Contract for Just Transition

Our fundamental goal is to achieve climate justice and work to eliminate the triple injustice that people currently face. Social and economic inequalities are rising globally and this is exacerbated by global heating.

Yet there is overwhelming consensus that the solutions to these problems can be found through increased climate action. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) “6 million jobs can be created by transitioning towards a ‘circular economy’ which includes activities like recycling, repair, rent and remanufacture — replacing the traditional economic model of “extracting, making, using and disposing.”²

² *World Employment Social Outlook: Greening with Jobs*, International Labour Organization (ILO), 2018



In the same report this is up to 24 million new jobs that could be generated within the next decade by taking action in the energy sector.

Additionally, FEPS research also demonstrates that ‘green’ investment creates new jobs³.

Ultimately a new type of social contract is needed to be brought to the international level and provide a basis for **adequate targets and greater ambition** for the ecological transition in order to accelerate decarbonisation. This goes further to reduce inequalities and address global warming; assuring social justice and sustainable equality⁴.

The premises of a New Social Contract must refer to the rights and responsibilities of individuals and societies, state and its institutions. It should define the standards alongside outlining opportunities that all should have access to.⁵

Therefore, to address the social-economic inequalities that go together with climate equity, a New Social-Ecological Contract should:

- **(pre)redistribute wealth** more fairly across our societies;
- **measure economic indicators realistically** according to our planetary boundaries;
- **strengthen welfare policies.**

Essentially, **(pre) and redistribution of wealth** would help re-set the fundamentals of inequality, political and climate justice first of all. Predistribution, referring to re-setting underlying pre-tax allocation of economic gains and market rules based on labour and financial regulation that cause inequality in the first place, this before

3 S. Dahl, L. Andersen and T. Nissen, *A Green-Social Investment Plan*, FEPS and ECLM, 2017

4 Progressive Society, *Sustainable Equality, Report of the Independent Commission for Sustainable Equality 2019-2024*

5 A. Skrzypek, *Next Left, New Social Deal*, FEPS and Renner Institut, 2017, p. 65

redistribution through taxes and government welfare programmes. The current dynamics with 1% of the world population owning the majority of wealth whilst the majority of the population lives in poverty is in itself an indicator that systemic change is needed. By adjusting income, wages and wealth would provide diverse access to funds and help rebalance the way the economy should exist to serve nature, society and humanity. It would help share wealth more fairly.

To incentivise citizen support and acceptance of such proposals they need to have a strong social foundation. For this, basic needs have to be ensured now and re-asserted for the future. **Improving social welfare policies and social protection measures that provide security and satisfy human needs** should be enhanced as part of this policy; **health protection and a healthcare system for all, education, policies that protect food, housing, water and economic security.** The Progressive Society, Sustainable Equality report⁶ recommends the creation of a Common Wealth Charter and this is a proposal that corresponds to this aim. Instruments that help social progress and effective (pre)distributive policies to promote a new model of well-being are essential to move away from unsustainable growth and prioritise climate equity at the same time. This basic welfare support needs to be guaranteed for the whole community too, not just for those formally employed.

In social terms encouraging global solidarity, within countries, between countries and reconciling humans together with nature and vis-à-vis economic profit will be key in ensuring climate action. It also needs to empower and bring about democratisation and ownership of the changes. Strengthening the **welfare state** and **collective solidarity**, provides a suitable framework for addressing climate justice to promote concerted action rather than blaming individuals as perpetrators. Consequently, the right to organise, social dialogue and fundamental labour rights are also key in ensuring this.

⁶ Progressive Society, *Sustainable Equality, Report of the Independent Commission for Sustainable Equality 2019-2024*, P.135



The **Green New Deal**, being discussed heavily in the US at the moment relates to this societal contract therefore we very much welcome this idea; a public investment framework for accelerating climate action and addressing the wider challenges of the energy system which is the cause of global warming as well as inequalities at the same time. For example, a way of addressing energy poverty would be by offering financial support to households to install energy efficiency measures. Furthermore, incorporating more responsible ways of measuring growth would help bring about the wider structural reforms that are being called for.

Good alternatives must be made available for people who will be affected by the phasing out of coal, oil and gas—even more so because that phase-out needs to happen fast to stop global warming. This means providing the right **education, training, skills and investment** to support moving away from a society that is heavily carbon-emitting towards a carbon-neutral one. Not forgetting, transitioning to decarbonisation of the most hard-to abate sectors by creating the right policy signals for businesses to innovate will be especially important in the next few years also.

The story of renewables is demonstrating fantastically that the move away from fossil fuel energy is a positive one. The price of renewable energy has fallen sharply, despite being at a disadvantage on the market playing-field and the sector is creating new jobs and services whilst providing us with more energy, faster than anticipated. Traditional fossil fuels are not only no longer economically sound but are no longer desired by many consumers. Similarly there is a positive effect enhancing livelihoods directly for example when sources of energy production shift.

Our shared objective is clear; to achieve climate justice we need to transition to a carbon-neutral society in a socially fair manner. To ensure both mitigation and adaptation across all industries and sectors this transition needs to be planned thoroughly so that no-one is left behind. This needs to be done by ensuring full and inclusive social dialogue, with workers and the whole community, ensuring the availability of decent work for all. It needs to be inclusive to ensure ownership

of the transition in order to minimise negative impacts. In this regard it needs to be partly a bottom-up approach but requires top-down resources and incentives to spur on investment.

The economic, environmental and social benefits of decarbonisation will only be achieved properly if **ambition is raised**, especially in NDCs and the long-term carbon neutrality strategy and if the concept of **Just Transition** is adhered to. This signifies ensuring that the consequences of the ecological transformation are managed in ways that maximises climate protection as well as promoting social justice, reducing inequalities, ensuring decent work for all, supporting business innovation and workers, communities and future generations.

This is as a major part of the Global Social-Ecological Contract and something Progressives, together with trade unions and many others have been calling for, referred to in the preamble of the Paris Agreement, and developed in the ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition, that offer a framework to guide the transition to decarbonisation that countries can make use of.

Importantly we recognise that **Just Transition** refers to the whole community and not just formal workers or their families. Indeed it is particularly relevant in towns and regions where fossil fuel industries serve as the only source of employment but it is in no way limited to these communities, Just Transition strategies should also be adopted for other industries such as agriculture, fishing and car manufacturing.

Regions and sectors differ in their unique historical, geographical and structural situations yet effective frameworks for an inclusive and successful Just Transition model has been identified in FEPS research⁷, and can be applied in different areas. It is based on the components:

⁷ S. Kumar, A. Americo and C. Billingham, *The New Social Contract: A Just Transition*, FEPS and Change Partnership, 2016



Ownership of the decision to change – regions or sectors need to identify and declare themselves as entering into a transition. This consequently provides the framework for discussion, planning and managing the transition as well as setting aside sufficient funding.

Investment– Firstly support for any necessary alternative structures need to be provided and allocated to avoid energy insecurity, economic disruption or other possible conflictual situations. Adequate, timely and accessible sources of funding are pivotal. A dedicated fund is recommended. At EU level the Modernisation Fund has been set-up is an example of how this has been done. In other regions this could come from other sources acquired in the shift of climate-proofing investment. *(See more in section II)* To help incentivise the urgency of declaring a Just Transition an accelerator fund would release investment for the first companies or areas to declare themselves undergoing change and would receive more compensation. This could be done through the Green Climate fund or other funding instruments.

Management, delivery and reporting – Being able to measure the change and reporting it is important as well as managing it in a fair manner. Full participation of those affected through social dialogue and other forms of civic participation together with the industrial representatives and workers. Structural, economic and social value indicators, to measure and report on the progress is important for ensuring delivery.

Effective policy design – re-distributional mechanisms and the vision for the social contract need to be incorporated in the planning of a transition. It should act on the scientific and moral bases of the need to address the climate emergency. Sufficient regulation together with transparent and robust institutional capacities need to be implemented to ensure the premise of the Just Transition are upheld.

Likewise, introducing Just Transition Plans and social and climate justice issues into Sustainable Energy and Climate Plans (SECAPs) is fundamental for more local and regional government levels. We recommend that this be done at all policy levels in planning and budgeting.

Therefore, Just Transition National Plans could facilitate the process and the way to prepare the Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs). They would, with the support of different actors, as appropriate, focus on a few central pieces including;

- a) Inclusive **social and entrepreneurial dialogue** to forge adequate participation structures and a strong societal consensus on climate, sectorial and labour policies, to defeat the fear of job losses and unleash positive energies that will enable higher ambition on climate action;
- b) **Employment assessments** for a better understanding of job and social impacts of climate policies;
- c) **Skills development and upgrading** for smooth transitions in labour markets and low-carbon and more resources-efficient enterprise development strategies for green **job creation**;
- d) Innovative **social protection policies** to protect workers negatively affected by the ecological transition as well as vulnerable workers and communities;
- e) Responsible, **climate-proof, foreign and national investment** that can stimulate economic transformation, green and decent job creation and a long-term decarbonisation strategy.



Significantly in February 2019 the Government of Spain presented the Strategic Energy and Climate Framework, seeking to facilitate the modernisation of the economy and move towards a sustainable and competitive model which helps slow down climate change. This Strategic Framework is shaped by:

- the Draft National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (NECP);
- the Draft Bill on Climate change;
- the Just Transition Strategy.

The Just Transition Strategy aims to ensure that people and regions make the most of the opportunities offered by the Transition, so that nobody is left behind and it incorporates an urgent Action Plan for Coal-mining Regions and Power Plant Closures.⁸

Stop the use of fossil fuels

To achieve climate and social justice, whilst investing in alternative, sustainable resources and energy production, fossil fuels - the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions must be phased out. Apart from bringing benefits of restricting climate change, a managed phase-out of coal, oil and gas will bring major public health and local environmental benefits - for example, from reduced air and water pollution. It will also save hundreds of billions of dollars in wasteful government subsidies to the fossil fuel industry and trillions of dollars in fossil fuel resource expenditure⁹, and avoid the myriad governance problems and human rights abuses that are associated with fossil fuel production and consumption globally. Meanwhile, the accelerated scale-up of non-fossil energy systems, combined with step changes in energy efficiency and demand management, will unleash a wave of innovation-led productivity and sustainable growth.

⁸ Spanish Strategy for Just Transition, Government of Spain, 2019

⁹ Energy Technology Perspectives 2015, Paris: International Energy Agency, 2015p. 16.

We put forward the following recommendations toward achieving this end:

- 1. Phase-out existing fossil fuel production and use before mid-century;** introduce a fully-fledged programme of alternative raw material use and energy sources. Avoid policies that result in being 'locked-in' to fossil fuel infrastructure. We urge governments at all levels to plan and implement the phase out of the whole supply chain of fossil fuels.
- 2. Ban new fossil fuel infrastructure;** we urge all governments to set nationally-determined targets for banning new fossil fuel exploration, production and supply infrastructure, and all new fossil fuel-based power plants.
- 3. Introduce Fossil Fuel Free Zones;** a system of Fossil Fuel Free Zones is a novel proposal for building societal and international pressure to phase out fossil fuels.. It would send a powerful signal about commitments to the longer carbon neutrality strategy and ensure short-medium term action. We urge governments at all levels and, in particular, non-state actors – be they companies, households, sports clubs, schools, universities, religious institutions, indigenous landowners, etc – to commit to a process of becoming 'fossil fuel free' and to publicly declare their achievement of intermediate milestones along the way. For example, they could declare that they are 'coal supply free' or 'pipeline free', 'gas consumption free' when these targets are reached. There could be further differentiation between these categories depending on the level of implementation (e.g. "committed" versus "achieved") and the stringency of the objective. Different levels of stringency could be foreseen with respect to the transport sector and other non-stationary fossil fuel-consuming activities or indirect consumption of fossil fuels.



Many jurisdictions are already well on their way to being Fossil Fuel Free. For example, many parts of the world are already “coal supply free” and some do not use coal. It is envisaged that committed groups would progress through different stages, starting by working to eliminate the remaining fossil fuel activities that are most feasible, while collaborating or engaging in ‘friendly rivalry’ with other groups to work toward the end ultimate status of being ‘Fossil Fuel Free’. Ultimately, a Fossil fuel Free Zone would be a geographic area characterised by the absence of fossil fuel exploration, production, transportation (e.g. oil and gas pipelines or coal ports) intermediate treatment, and consumption.¹⁰

In the early stages it is not envisaged that Fossil Fuel Free Zones will be formally institutionalised. Rather, by tapping existing motivation in civil society, it is envisaged that civic commitment to eliminate fossil fuels will emerge from the bottom-up. As the social salience of Fossil Fuel Free Zones increases, local and global norms against fossil fuels will become more prevalent, and ‘laggard’ governments and non-state groups that continue to supply and use fossil fuels will face escalating social and moral pressure to change their policies and operations. Similarly support should be provided for areas that rely heavily on fossil fuels to be able to apply the Just Transition architecture, ensure social protection and assure energy concerns.

As participation grows, formal institutionalisation could be established. Certification standards could be created to validate and recognise the achievement of each intermediate stage of fossil fuel freedom. Further economic incentives could of course be provided by supportive higher-level authorities, for example national or regional governments could award funding to local municipalities, schools and other groups to switch to renewable energy or retrofit buildings, and this funding could be needs-based, as part of a wider just transition to a decarbonised society. Wealthier regions and groups could also be encouraged to work with poorer ones in a collaborative effort towards full phase out.

¹⁰ For full details of the Fossil Free zones on which the following recommendation is based see F. Green, *Fossil fuel free zones*, Discussion Paper, The Australia Institute, 2018

Proposal 1 - Include Just Transition plans in the process of preparing NDCs

We urge Parties to the Paris Agreement include Just Transition plans in the process of preparing their NDCs, based on in-country preparatory dialogue with workers, employers, communities and other relevant stakeholders. To this end, employers and all government levels should need to demonstrate their programmes or business operations are 'climate-proof'. In addition to this, equally fair (pre) and redistribution of wealth and strengthening welfare policies whilst phasing out fossil fuels is recommended.



II. A planet and people - centred approach to climate investment

Climate-proofing global investment, finance and trade

The current finance and economic system does not serve our planet and people. This has been proven during and since the financial crisis that began in 2008. There needs to be systemic change in this area. Moreover transforming the carbon-based free market into a more plural and diversified economy with a more equal model of **(pre) and redistribution of income and wealth** would address many of the problems that exacerbate the triple injustice of global heating. There needs to be a convergence of global living standards. In the same way our current methods of overconsumption need to be tackled.

GDP (Gross Domestic Product) should be rejected as the sole measure of an economy. It is the most obvious limitation to assessing social well-being and prosperity. Looking beyond growth rates, finance or profit, instead at well-being indicators, measures of happiness and other criteria should be the basis of these proposals.

The promotion of renewable energy systems should be promoted whilst subsidies to **fossil fuels** should be stopped across the whole supply chain. Current favouring of fossil fuels helps support unsustainable business practices and is incoherent with climate objectives.

Furthermore, **investment** in climate action is recognised positively for its multi-fold and long-term benefits and is not to be considered as simple economic spending or cost. Scientifically proven, it is better to adapt quicker, otherwise we risk paying more in the long-term. Indeed investment in the green economy will create jobs and will have large positive indirect effects on the whole economy¹¹. Certainly, to respect climate justice these need to be decent jobs, adhering to social rights and responsibilities of decent work.

11 S. Dahl, L. Andersen and T. Nissen, *A Green-Social Investment Plan*, FEPS and ECLM, 2017

Firstly, **'climate-proofing' global investments, finance and trade** for a progressive transformation is key, as well as mainstreaming climate justice across all areas of budgets and policies. That is why we believe governments should be required to introduce **binding criteria of environment and social clauses in national budgeting** and as part of international trade agreements. In addition to this governments should also be required to present a **climate impact assessment report every year in the budget bill**. Also climate-proofing global finance together with full and effective implementation of existing climate finance mechanisms needs to happen for climate objectives to be credible.

Governments at all levels and businesses operating in the public and private sectors can do this directly by committing to **climate-friendly procurement commitments**, standards and targets to ensure they are reducing their environmental impact. They should also commit to **carbon disclosure on measuring and managing their environmental impacts** in order to shift investment towards socially and ecologically sound initiatives. Introducing a green public social impact review at all international and regional financial and trade organisations to ensure high environmental standards are upheld would also help 'climate-proof' global trade. **Taxonomies or inventories of climate-friendly investments**, for example in energy and transport use would serve this end. In addition, disciplined budgets should be set to respect climate targets alongside 'budget discipline'. Similarly we recommend governments review the existing business licences to operate. Like the social licence to operate, an environmental licence to operate should be implemented to ensure true corporate social green responsibility. Governments should work proactively with the management and workers of the largest greenhouse gas emitting companies to help reduce the corporate carbon footprint.

The **circular economy**, which regards the life-cycle of products and how waste is dealt with should be brought to the forefront of international economic policy. Natural materials should be favoured and unsustainable materials that cannot be recycled or are not biodegradable eliminated whilst avoiding the depletion of natural resources.



Secondly raising finance is imperative to enabling investment in mitigation and adaptation measures that address the impacts of global heating. Equally short-term and long-term financial policies are needed to enable countries, regions and cities to introduce necessary measures. There is currently an institutional problem of finance which favours big banks and institutions. The challenge is to **ensure that Small to Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), communities and individuals, especially those with no bank account or outside of the formal working sector and economy have access to finance.**

The role of the state in supporting financial risk in the public and private sectors is key to helping reduce the cost of finance. A shift towards more green financing would enhance the objective of creating more shared responsibility. We suggest on one hand to strengthen and enhance the role and scope of **development and investment banks** to actively support the transition by providing financial resources on a concessional basis for the green and circular economy and accelerate renewal towards cleaner supply chains and a resource efficient production system. On the other hand we also recommend finance and investment to be made available directly to SMEs and communities wherever possible to avoid the access challenges that can result from filtering through large financing institutions. This revision would address an institutional problem of climate finance and the challenges for acquiring financial support because SMEs often have much more difficulties than larger businesses in accessing finance. Similarly, many communities that want to invest in projects that address the climate crisis currently cannot, they require direct assistance and support.

Furthermore, by providing incentives for governments, businesses and communities who purchase and invest responsibly as well as consumers, prosumers or energy communities could also be an effective way of ensuring environmental and socially responsible actors have more access to financing for climate action and others are rewarded or incentivised. Together with providing more support to SMEs and communities, alternative business models should be encouraged such as in the **social economy, social and sustainable enterprises,**

cooperatives and mutuals¹². This also helps create local wealth. It is recommended to give these models differed and better legal recognition in order for them to operate more optimally across different sectors and countries.

Climate finance is an imperative for all countries and all economic sectors, with opportunities for all financial sources and instruments to contribute to progress. We would like to see Parties supporting the Paris agreement with a realistic, adequate and ambitious **post-2020 climate finance strategy**. In addition to that we recommend a **climate finance for all concept** which would offer a holistic framework and promote better financing for climate justice. It would facilitate emphasising the interconnectedness of climate action with co-benefits such as biodiversity conservation and cleaner air, as well as the link between funding climate action and creating sustainable jobs and livelihoods. Similarly, countries with greater capacity should help bridge the ambition gap through climate finance, this could be done by implementing a solidarity or equity-based approach to climate finance¹³. A climate finance for all concept would draw on the experience of the impactful multi-stakeholder partnership “Sustainable Energy for All” by emphasising that the greening of finance cannot be limited to UNFCCC, North-to-South or public sector financing mechanisms.

Likewise, to specifically help small scale non-state and sub-national climate actors access financing, identify barriers, we recommend a **Climate Finance Forum** to design solutions, and identify most efficient mechanisms for improved distribution of finance, including a type of match-making service that links projects and appropriate climate finance sources to each other.

Further finance measures such as enhancing **green bonds**, making them more robust by improving their evaluation and regulation would scale-up climate finance. A Green Quantitative Easing programme that involves the purchase of green

¹² P. Hunt and M. Willetts, *Framing the New Progressive Narrative: A Mutual and Cooperative Approach to the Economy and Society*, FEPS and Mutuo, 2016
¹³ *After Paris, Inequality, Fair Shares, and the climate emergency*, Stockholm Environment Institute, 2018



corporate bonds to reduce the cost of borrowing for sustainable projects can also reduce global warming.¹⁴

Ensure tax justice

Tax reform towards a fairer taxation system is required, primarily progressive taxation would have a differentiation according to people's ability to pay. It would also be based not according to income and labour but instead taxing profit and activities that cause environmental damage. Moreover, 'work' in the general sense would be included to count towards someone's contribution to society instead of only counting time in employment. Consequently, we recommend introducing progressive taxation, making those at the top pay a higher rate than those with less income.

Likewise, closing **tax loopholes**, addressing corporate tax levels, revising tax exemption policies and capital gains tax, abolishing tax havens and introducing a **financial transaction tax** (FFT) on financial services are all well-known and well-proven policies that progressives have been pushing for that would make the (pre) and redistribution of wealth more equitable.

Additionally, a specific progressive **carbon tax**, could be an effective tool to mitigate the climate crisis by driving down the use of fossil fuels and promoting environmentally responsible technologies. Furthermore, a **carbon border adjustment tax system** should be put in place to protect industries and economies from regions that do not have carbon taxation systems. A first major step also in this line would be to tax carbon emissions which fall outside national and regional carbon markets such as the air transport and maritime sectors.

¹⁴ G. Galanis, M. Nikolaidi, Y. Dafermos, *Can Green Quantitative Easing (QE) Reduce Global Warming?* FEPS and GPERC, 2018

This goes towards ensuring that what is extracted from nature is paid for. This is already happening in Nordic countries to a large extent regarding energy and carbon taxation and is proving to be effective. Yet we recommend that tax be introduced with re-distributional mechanisms. For example, by helping low-income households, introducing free public transport, installing energy efficiency measures in homes, reducing other taxes for low-income families to compensate for the new tax. Also it is preferred to phase-in carbon taxes with an introduction at a low rate and over time increase the rates in a predictable and transparent manner. Trial periods could also be used. Revenue and proceeds of such policies would account for billions in funds that could be used for social and environmental policies. It could help serve towards scaling up investment to address loss and damage for instance as well as pro-poor insurance mechanisms to benefit those most in need.

Incentivising sustainable modes of transport – a medium-term solution; a levy on airline fuels:

International emissions from air transport is one of the sectors that is not included in the Paris agreement, Kyoto protocol or the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and other carbon market schemes. Consequently, whilst being a major source of global greenhouse gases, like maritime, it is a key sector that is not contributing to reducing emissions or financing adaptation. Whilst we recognise the carbon offsetting and reduction scheme in international civil aviation (CORSIA) being introduced by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), we believe higher targets and even stronger intermediate measures would be beneficial in addressing the heavily-polluting and rising sector of air travel.



Air transport stands out because it is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, used by a minority of the world population and by high-income groups. However, the main problem is the current Chicago Convention (1944) which prevents kerosene from being subject to international taxation. This should be revised. Nevertheless, it is currently possible to tax this at national level. Responding to this ask, many governments already have varying levels and kinds of aviation tax.

An internationally agreed levy on airline tickets could help address this problem. The proceeds of which would be invested in adaptation and mitigation to climate change. There should be a marked differentiation between economy-class and first-class tickets. An example could be €20 (\$22.50) on an economy airline ticket and €180 (\$202) for first-class. It has been calculated that this would currently fund up to €150 billion (\$ 170 billion) for adaptation every year.¹⁵

Differentiation could also be between national and international flights or long-distance journeys. Still, as already mentioned a tax such as this should be introduced progressively and alongside other re-distributional policies, for example by improving train services and other methods of transport wherever possible. This is suggested as a medium-term proposal whilst more research and development should also go towards taking out the need for kerosene as an airline fuel and ensuring sustainable modes of transport.

15 L. Chancel, T. Piketty, *Carbon and inequality: from Kyoto to Paris*, Paris School of Economics, 2015

Proposal 2 - Climate-proof global investment, finance and trade:

- **Ensure tax justice;**
- **Necessitate governments at all levels to commit to climate-friendly procurement standards;**
- **Incentivise sustainable models of transport by introducing a levy on airline fuels;**
- **Require countries and businesses to commit to carbon disclosure;**
- **Facilitate direct financial support for SMEs and communities to invest in green and social initiatives;**
- **Develop a realistic post-2020 climate finance strategy aligned with the objectives of the Paris agreement;**
- **End fossil fuel subsidies across the whole supply chain;**
- **Require governments to present an impact assessment climate report every year in the budget bill;**
- **Measure economic indicators realistically according to our planetary boundaries and well-being;**
- **Invest in the green economy and ending fossil fuel subsidies;**
- **Make environment and social clauses a binding criteria of national and EU budgeting and part of international trade agreements.**



III. Harnessing inclusive civic participation and responding with effective governance

Remarkably several countries are calling climate emergencies now. The security risk due to global warming has become one of the biggest threats facing our planet and it is already very costly. Yet the situation that we find ourselves in today is profoundly due to political decisions and business realities, whilst the science, finance and solutions are known to be readily available.

Furthermore, only around 100 companies are responsible for the majority of global emissions today. Additionally, less than 150 corporations control 40% of the world's wealth.¹⁶

It is important to note here that we fully support **multilateralism** to work together at international level to find common collective solutions to shared problems. These processes could be revitalised too by more participation of civil society.

Currently, society is subsidising fossil fuel companies who are making profits to the detriment of the environment. Not only is this contradictory to climate objectives but society is paying again for the consequences. Therefore, by changing who holds wealth, and ultimately power will have a huge impact on climate justice. A society where polluters or those who cause damage and decision-makers can be held accountable is central to rebutting policies that either degrade or counter climate objectives.

Consequently, empowerment and democratisation through a deliberative democracy and democratic legitimacy are going to be fundamental to be able to deliver a truly compelling narrative for climate justice. As is the attention given to the capabilities of people and institutions by governing bodies and the way the involvement of civil society is harnessed. This will define also the achievements

¹⁶ *Report of the Independent Commission for Sustainable Equality*, Progressive Society, 2018, p. 68

of public calls and asks, and subsequently the manner in which the recent climate marches are taken into account.

To ensure governing is participatory, citizens need to regain strong civic and political influence across society and to be involved in decision-making at all levels. Primarily we would like to see **equal access guaranteed for all under-represented groups** to decision making by removing hurdles, especially to the participation of women, youth, indigenous and traditional communities. We urge that governments ensure **gender parity** at all levels of decision-making, this is an important step not only in ensuring fundamental rights are upheld but also about empowering a large section of our society that is most first and most affected by environmental degradation. More importantly in many societies women are the educators and responsible for caring for the family and its sustenance, they hold a wealth of knowledge to do this which needs to be valued for climate action too. Equally, government should **include civil society when establishing NDCs**.

This can be done by strengthening social dialogue amongst different communities, strengthening trade unions, ensuring dialogue between employees and companies and consumers as well concerning further planning and decision-making at different levels of governance.

It requires **transparency and accountability** in many aspects of our society and governance structures which will in turn increase trust. Trust in institutions and governance is very important if a collective social-environmental agreement is to be established. This is relevant to ensuring good governance as well as better governing the economy too, ensuring that the economy serves the people instead of being subordinated to it.

In most aspects local governments and municipalities are on the frontline of the consequences of global warming and the ecological transition, consequently their role and their capacities to adapt and mitigate are very important. Implementation of the SECAPs (Sustainable Energy and Climate Plans) is therefore vital. Linking this with social dialogue and the Just Transition concept could also further



motivate methods for sustainable living in towns and cities, by involving citizens in co-creation of new solutions and decision making about the priorities for their immediate environment. In turn, local level governance provides a platform to illuminate local problems to bring more visibility at global level for attention and for finding common solutions. Correspondingly, at European level it would be valuable if the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee had more consequential roles in the legislative process.

Public decision making and participatory green budgeting are ways of enhancing political power. Also having access to various public resources such as education, healthcare, financing, housing and other services. Similarly, independent media and judicial systems are also an important factor in determining the way we regulate our societies and economy. Ultimately, we would like to see also a minister for ecological transition introduced in each country.

Green Youth Councils

To ensure that young people are not only listened to but participate institutionally in designing the future of our common planet. We encourage the establishing or strengthening of already existing youth councils at all decision-making levels aligning them with inter-generational equity as well as reconnecting with the value of nature.

Now, decision-makers are realising the importance and potential for involving youth more in political decisions, be it local, regional, national or international. **Green youth councils** are a successful way of doing this and currently exist in many countries (*see case example from New Zealand at the end of this document*). We urge this to be supported and extended worldwide by the UN Secretary General in order to ensure young people are more involved in decision-making especially on climate-related issues. It would help bridge the generational gap and aim to provide more inclusive social dialogue to find solutions that concern citizens. It offers transparency, accountability and consultation as well as fresh ideas.

In addition to green youth councils it is our duty and responsibility to ensure planetary well-being for present and future generations. Therefore we suggest the implementation in all political systems of a **minister, commissioner or guardian for future generations** representative in their political systems. Their task would be to future-proof all political decisions and major public and private investment decisions, to guarantee that present decisions do not leave future generations worse off. Varying examples of these functions exist such as in Wales and Malta.

In addition we recommend that this person would also be responsible for ensuring that a **'rights for future generations' clause** is included as a guarantee in all international agreements and policy-making across the board. This could be done also through a policy test to establish future-proofing similar to current gender mainstreaming policies.

We propose that youth representatives are from 12 – 18 years old. Elections to the Council could happen in two ways; Partisan method, where interested candidates would be a member of a political party and follow a selection process within the party like for other adult candidates; or non-partisan method where the youth representative would be selected by the other members of the local government level. We believe it should first be implemented at local level where it is not existing already but there is no reason why this shouldn't be extended to regional and national levels, as is already the case in many countries.



Proposal 3 - Engage young people in decision-making through green youth councils

Furthermore, we recommend to:

- **Implement suggested models of civic participation**
(see case example 5 towards end of document);
- **Organise ministries around Sustainable Development Goals**
- **Ensure gender parity at all levels of decision-making;**
- **Equal access for all under-represented groups to decision making by removing hurdles to participation of women, youth, indigenous and traditional communities at all levels.**

IV. A Rights - based approach to climate action:

This includes - inter-country; intra-country; intergenerational rights; human rights; Indigenous and traditional rights; women's rights; nature rights; rights for climate displaced persons; labour rights, rights of access to data, information, knowledge, mitigation, solutions, technology and finance.

Climate justice, by its very definition, must be accompanied by a legal infrastructure effectively capable of granting justice. Since the climate crisis affects every sphere of our society and planet, having a rights-based approach to climate action will be conducive to increasing the targets and effectiveness of climate action and the capacity of communities to contribute to policies, promote policy coherence and synergies between climate action and other policies and by enhancing public support for climate action.

Everyone has an indispensable right to live in a healthy environment. Environmental degradation is negatively impacting the rights to life, self-determination, development, food, health, water, sanitation, housing and jobs. Addressing climate adaptation and mitigation must therefore be guided by relevant human rights norms and principles including rights to participation and information, transparency, accountability, equity, and non-discrimination.¹⁷ Therefore we welcome the report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights which has identified a range of ways in which climate issues impact on human rights commitments of the international community and analyses obligations, inequalities and vulnerabilities.

Recognising the interconnecting dimensions between human rights and nature rights is a fundamental element of climate justice in our view. It is essential too in light of the polluter-pays principle, since the ones who contribute the least to climate change are often the ones to bare the major consequences. Thus, climate

¹⁷ Submission of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to UNFCCC COP 21, "*Understanding Human Rights and Climate Change*"



justice will not be achieved without recognising access to nature fundamental as well as social justice, and building a much fairer and equal society.

Additionally, with an expected increase in **climate displaced persons**, it is important to emphasise the need for solidarity and recognise the rights these victims deserve. They are not refugees, therefore regulated and effective, international legal framework conventions need to be adapted to recognise this as well as equal civil status, rights and access to basic needs for climate displaced persons. It needs to be future-oriented, fair, inclusive and just. Similarly, peace-building initiatives to help reduce insecurity caused by climate change, reflecting the specific needs on in-country displaced persons and communities as well as cross-border displaced persons and communities should be supported. These issues need to also be part of the New Global Social-Ecological Contract.

This should involve building, adaptive capacities and resilience in the populations which are most exposed. Increasingly, land rights and community rights to shared environmental goods (including biodiversity, water rights, and so on) risk being affected both by climate impacts themselves, and by government and private sector action in response to climate change (for example, carbon sequestration through land use, corporate investments in agricultural land).

To deliver a just outcome, it is essential to put the interests of “the furthest behind first” including those who will be most affected and are the least responsible such as youth, women, the poor, indigenous and traditional communities amongst others. This requires respect of fundamental rights, protection against the impacts of climate change and a focus on inclusiveness within all climate action policies.

Participation, transparency and access to environmental justice for all have an important part to play in strengthening climate action and in ensuring that the interests of younger generations are more adequately addressed. Full data on both emissions and climate impacts are available through the UNFCCC but not always in a form which is easily digestible or challengeable by individuals. It can

be counter-intuitive for governments to recognise the value of public challenges to their decisions and we recognise that different governance cultures show a wide range of openness to this sort of approach. Yet it can be, as recent court challenges have shown, a vital element in ensuring greater urgency and effectiveness of climate action. Therefore we recommend that further efforts be encouraged to make the information accessible – both by governments themselves, as part of efforts to communicate the urgency of climate action; and also through facilitation of the work of NGOs in interpreting and digesting information.

Climate Justice can be supported through the guarantee of procedural rights, that are also human rights: i.e. the right to be informed (access to information), the right to participate (public participation in decision-making, social dialogue), the right for unions and others to organise, the right to have your rights protected by the courts (access to justice), as recognised in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration¹⁸ and the rights to social protection.

An international framework for sustainability and environmental rights

Whilst appreciating the existing regional treaties and conventions and the efforts of the UN for a new environmental law instrument last year “Towards a Global Pact for the Environment”,¹⁹ we encourage governments to strengthen and endorse an international framework for sustainability and environmental rights as an essential element for climate justice. Therefore we propose Parties to consider the arguments and recommendations outlined here below and to revise the adoption of such a treaty either on a voluntary basis or to restart negotiations based on the climate emergency.

¹⁸ Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

¹⁹ For more information see <https://sdg.iisd.org/news/global-environment-pact-recommendations-forwarded-to-unga/>



We recommend this be done by extending the range and protections of the current Aarhus convention, Escázu agreement and the framework principles of resolution 28/11 of the UN Human Rights Council²⁰. In addition, include the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment as well as procedural rights and rights for environmental defenders into an all-encompassing) international framework for sustainability and environmental rights. To help acknowledge the intrinsic value of nature and build a rights-based approach to climate action.

Both the Aarhus Convention²¹ and the Escazú Agreement²² are already existing agreements which guarantee these rights to a sustainable life. Escazú includes the protection of environmental human rights defenders for the first time, consequently as a short-term action to allow its entry into force, we would like to see all Parties that adopted the text of the Escazú Agreement to sign and ratify it.

Whereas Escázu is a regional agreement, Aarhus, although currently signed by countries from the same region is intended to be open to any signatory. A significant step would be to merge and extend the existing agreements to international level yet to keep a focus on regional implementation strategies as well as taking into account that a large diversity of rights exists between countries.

This would strengthen the rights of access to environmental information, participation and justice. It would promote the understanding that these rights are human rights themselves whilst at the same time defending further rights to a healthy environment or the right to clean drinking water for example.

The Aarhus Convention, guarantees access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. The Escazú

20 Framework Principles on Human rights and the Environment, Resolution 28/11 of the Human Rights Council, 2018

21 *Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters*, Aarhus, 1998

22 *Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Santiago, 2018

Agreement goes slightly further in that it includes a “non-regression principle” to prohibit any revoking on any existing environmental protection or laws. It also recognises the right to live in a healthy environment and requires each participating country to guarantee that right in its steps to comply with the treaty. In addition and very important in the current context it includes a specific article on the recognition of Environmental Human Rights Defenders. Similarly Aarhus recognises the right of everyone to be free of penalisation, persecution or harassment.

We recommend that environmental law principles are recognised and reinforced at constitutional level, including the non-regressive principle, a pro-persona and precautionary approach. In addition we would like to see the UN Security Council pass a resolution to protect environmental defenders around the world.

Additionally existing international economic and environmental agreements should be modified to include a **clause to recognise the rights of climate displaced persons** and their right to self-determination to ensure they have full internationally recognised equal civil status, rights and access to basic needs.

More directly, the international community also needs to take action to ensure that those most affected by climate change, and most vulnerable to its impacts, have a full potential and opportunity to participate in discussions in making decisions about the climate emergency.

Proposal 4 – Establish an international framework for sustainability and environmental rights

Similar to this end by ensuring a rights-based approach in long-term strategic planning, aligning budgetary policies with climate goals and stress test all major public and private investment decisions would help avoid back-loading change and locking countries and future generations into expensive mistakes in financing and developing infrastructure.



V. Recognising the intrinsic value of nature

Nature is a public good. It is not a commodity. We are all dependent on nature and we all have a duty to respect, cherish and nurture it. It must be clear that there is no climate ambition without preserving nature.

We are using natural resources faster than ecosystems can regenerate and filling waste sinks beyond nature's capacity to assimilate. Nature-based solutions are the most cost-effective way of addressing the climate emergency and preventing security risks whilst also protecting ecosystems and biodiversity.

Human well-being and our planet would benefit from a deeper reconnection to nature. Building awareness about how we live in harmony with nature, respecting water, land, air and all our species is a crucial part of climate justice. Changing our production and consumption patterns and implementing circular economy are crucial requirements to address the climate emergency.

The current increased depletion of the world's natural resources also illustrates the need for systemic change and making the circular economy fully operational. This includes aligning science and technology with our needs in a sustainable manner and using these tools to improve our lives and our planet.

Therefore the link between humans and nature should be enhanced. Nature should be shared in a cooperative and equitable manner. It needs to be protected from abuse, private monopoly and commercialisation. This means that there is no "putting a price on nature", its **intrinsic value needs to be recognised**; yet the damages made to it need to be quantified. This means rigorously enforcing and strengthening criminal laws which protect nature from degradation and destruction.

It starts with recognising the right of people to live safe and healthy lives, without fear of their residence being exposed to the consequences of environmental damage. This goes hand in hand with finding ways to support and remunerate poor communities for their stewardship of commons could support the eradication

of rural poverty. In addition, their right to stand up and fight for the areas they live is indispensable. There is a need to unite in solidarity and defend those advocates who today face prosecution and fear for their lives for defending the environment. There must be a positive course for action that would help bring attention to the effort of those who nurture nature and help preserve the environment on a daily basis.

The role of **education and raising awareness** is significant in this respect. We believe that changing the curriculum and timetables in schools to better reflect this, as it is already in many cases would prove positive. More time for outdoor learning, more breaks outside, planting and maintaining vegetable gardens or planting trees upon graduation like in the Philippines are just some ways of reconnecting with nature.

This would help address the extinction of species and biodiversity loss we are witnessing. It is fully recognised that the fight of climate action to reduce greenhouse gases absolutely goes hand in hand with addressing pollution, biodiversity loss and degradation of the environment.

We want to see a true shift from piecemeal consideration of individual steps in the right direction, towards an economy-wide assessment of the action needed. This shift in approach is necessary because of the increasing evidence that limits on the planet's carrying capacities are being breached; we need to be confident that action is sufficiently ambitious to ensure we are on a trajectory where human economic activity can live within global limits. Along with the Sustainable Development Goals, the "Doughnut Economics" concept²³, referring to living within social and planetary boundaries is another approach we consider important in valuing both environmental and social imperatives which policymakers need to address. It also helps move the discussion away from simplistic cost-benefit approaches.

23 K. Raworth, Doughnut Economics, Seven Ways to think like a 21st Century Economist, 2017



Ultimately people's rights to nature are being threatened. But what is more, an extinction of cultures is also taking place. Significantly, outlined in a recent UN report,

“at least a quarter of the global land area is traditionally owned, managed, used or occupied by Indigenous Peoples. These areas include approximately 35% of the area that is formally protected...and approximately 35% of all remaining terrestrial areas with very low human intervention... The areas of the world projected to experience significant negative effects from global changes in climate, biodiversity, ecosystem functions and nature's contributions to people are also areas in which large concentrations of Indigenous Peoples and many of the world's poorest communities reside”²⁴.

This underlying link of access to nature builds on from the rights-based approach to climate action; the depletion of nature should be seen not only as violating nature rights but as violating the rights of children to have a safe environment. Therefore, achieve a high level of environmental protection, in light of the clear linkages between human rights and the natural environment as recognised in many constitutional systems, human rights need to be recognised and enforced. We recommend therefore to **maintain indigenous and traditional people's control over their territories and underline the importance of land ownership** (especially for indigenous and traditional communities) and explore the **premises of a charter of rights for nature** as requested by many of these communities around the world.

Food systems are an example of our reliance on nature's services; the world's poorest people and least responsible for climate change heavily depend on functioning ecosystems for their livelihoods. Two thirds of the world's population rely on growing their own crops or gathering fish from the oceans and lakes. Yet

²⁴ Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES) of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, 2019

climate changes are bringing severe environmental degradation and hazardous weather patterns, making this even more difficult. Linked with globalisation and international trade, the way we produce, transport and consume our food is not sustainable. Urgent action therefore towards net zero and resilient food systems which supports healthy nutrition for all, rewards small farmers and fishing communities and protects nature is one of our top priorities.

Valuing the world's oceans more is also an important part in redressing our connection with nature. Making up two thirds of the planet's surface and supporting all organisms, providing us with half of the air we breathe, oceans remarkably remain largely unexplored. They regulate our weather patterns, global temperatures and have an immense capacity to store carbon. Yet oceans are bearing the brunt of the climate crisis; directly caused by rising Earth temperatures, extraordinary effects from coral bleaching and rising levels of acidification in addition to the consequences of glacial melting are having enormous effects on our ocean's habitats. These situations are directly affecting livelihoods and ecosystems who depend on this natural resource. Therefore, setting adequate ambition to fight against global heating links inherently to recognising the true value of our oceans.

Nature - based solutions

A move towards **nature-based solutions** should be at the core of a new way of thinking. Contributing to both mitigation and adaptation measures, this is the primary solution to halt environmental degradation caused by global warming and offers protection from ever more hazardous natural catastrophes. Firstly, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions related to and use and changes in land use, secondly by helping capture and storing carbon, and thirdly, by improving the resilience of ecosystems. Moreover, by sustainable management and conservation of ecosystems and restoration of natural habitats to help adaptation, global heating would be reduced and at the same time the challenges of biodiversity loss, natural resource depletion and ongoing severe pollution would be addressed too.



Nature-based solutions are defined by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”.²⁵ This includes preserving natural coastal defences, forests, wetlands or floodplains for instance to help regulate water flows and provide a range of natural protection and services. It would help protect communities against sea-level rise, floods, storms, salination and more.

Projected as able to provide one third of mitigation measures by the IPCC in the window of opportunity for reducing global temperatures between now and 2030, they are deemed to be the most cost-effective solution to mitigate global warming and provide adaptation at the same time.

Implementation of such measures should be done by assessing land-use and ownership. Participatory planning and inclusive dialogue between all levels of government, with businesses, industries and the communities concerned is recommended. Likewise planning authorities should work to identify drivers and barriers to increasing such measures. Much of the implementation is cost-effective as it is also about protecting natural areas. Nevertheless, investment will be necessary to provide the right skills and tools to manage natural-based solutions. A sufficient part of this should be attributed to conservationists, scientists and researchers to increase scope for assessing and mapping ecosystems in order to take informed decisions for conservation and management as well as urban use. Establishing a rights-based approach again to participation in decision-making as well as the access to the data are of course fundamental to the means to achieve this. Cooperation partnerships between regions and countries should also be established to help support implementation.

²⁵ <https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-ecosystem-management/our-work/nature-based-solutions>

Proposal 5 - Require a more adequate target of nature-based solutions in NDCs

Furthermore we recommend:

- **Governments establish adequate targets for embracing nature-based solutions, both in terms of mitigation and adaptation;**
- **More ambitious targets are set for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;**
- **The sustainable stewardship of commons be supported by guaranteeing autonomy of indigenous people and traditional communities regarding the control of their territories.**



CASE EXAMPLES

This section aims to highlight some examples of struggles and injustice in the face of global warming where people are suffering severe consequences already. In addition, positive policy examples are also illustrated that can be used as a basis for further policies to develop better climate justice.

Case example 1: Melting the Inuit way of life

In 2005, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), on behalf of Inuit in Canada and the US, launched a petition at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The petition sought relief from the human rights violations resulting from climate change caused by greenhouse gases emissions from the United States. Although rejected, it shone a light on the link between climate change and human rights, and revealed the significant pressures already borne by Arctic communities.

Almost fifteen years later, nothing has changed, or for the worst. The Arctic is experiencing the effects of climate degradation faster than any other place on Earth: surface air temperatures are warming up at twice the rate of those over the rest of the globe, terrestrial snow cover is progressively declining, and the last twelve years have witnessed the twelve lowest sea ice extents on record²⁶.

The Arctic is also still home to millions of Indigenous people, on whose livelihoods climate change already has a major impact according to the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (2014). Yet, as most Indigenous people around the Earth, they have contributed the least to global greenhouse gases emissions, and have some of the smallest ecological footprints on Earth²⁷.

²⁶ Arctic report card
²⁷ United Nation University (2008).

Take the approximately 47,000 Inuit in Inuit Nunangat (Canada)²⁸. While most of them now live in permanent settlements, they still depend on the surrounding ocean and sea ice for their food, their income, and their culture. More than 80% of Inuit in the Canadian Arctic take part in harvesting activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping, notably marine mammals²⁹. What is not processed as food is used to create artisanal goods, which are essential to Inuit economy. 'Country food' also includes duck, caribou, fish and berries, and is a main part of Inuit families' diets; besides its nutritional benefits, it is also more economical than purchasing imported foods³⁰. However, following temperatures increases and the thinning and shrinking of sea ice, marine mammal and caribou populations are decreasing and migrating further north. Climate modification is also making hunting more dangerous, as it decreases predictability of the weather and of ice movements. In the Canadian territory of Nunavut, 56% of the Inuit population is classed as food-insecure; decline in traditional hunting practices and changing environmental conditions are among the main determinants of local communities' food insecurity³¹.

The loss of sea ice is more than the loss of hunting grounds; it also reduces communities' possibilities to travel and meet, and results in the disappearance of many traditional practices and cultural sites. Current generations cannot transmit traditional hunting skills to the young, thereby also risking the loss of craft and arts based on hunting by-products.

Not only are Canada's Inuit communities more exposed to climate change, they are also more vulnerable to its impacts than the general population. In 2011, only 45.6% of Inuit were employed, compared with 60.9% of all Canadians³²; and in 2016 the medium individual income for Inuit in Inuit Nunangat was four times lower than for

28 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2018). Inuit Statistical profile 2018.

29 Hovelsrud, G. K., McKenna, M. and Huntington, H. P. (2008), Marine Mammal Harvests and Other Interactions with Humans. *Ecological Applications*, 18: S135-S147. doi:10.1890/06-0843.1

30 Hovelsrud et al. (2008)

31 Beaumier, M.C., & Ford, J.D. (2010). Food Insecurity among Inuit Women exacerbated by socio-economic stresses and climate change. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 101(3):196-201. Available here.

32 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2016). Inuit Priorities for Canada's Climate Strategy.



non-Inuit in the same region³³. Inuit are also affected by chronic issues such as high suicide rates, substance abuse and addiction, which have been attributed to the rapid societal and cultural changes undergone within the last generations. Increase in financial insecurity due to the loss of traditional hunting revenues, as well as the loss of traditional culture, will only further increase these issues.

Meanwhile, some see the Arctic diminishing sea-ice extent as an opportunity for oil and gas development, mining, and shipping. If nothing is done to help the Inuit communities to adapt to the irreversible changes that are already occurring – and if no action is taken to decrease greenhouse gases emissions now – they may well have to turn to such industries to survive. Not only do they risk losing their traditional culture for good along the way, but they will also be swapping their sustainable way of life for a carbon-intensive one – and we will only have ourselves to blame.

Case example 2: Towards a New Global Social-Ecological Contract

The forgotten in the Jiu Valley, the challenges of transition for a region defined by coal extraction

The tiny town of Aninoasia found in the picturesque Jiu Valley in Transylvania, Romania could easily be overlooked were it not the first reign in Romania to become insolvent. The earliest mention of the town was in 1453 but once the last generation of pensioned coal miners pass away, the town is likely to go in the same direction.

The Jiu Valley was home to a cluster of mining towns which employed about 50,000 workers in 1989. By 2016 this had fallen to 4,700. The mines were unprofitable and part of a long-term World Bank restructuring programme and part of the EU's State Aid regime.

³³ Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2018). Inuit Statistical profile 2018.

Aninoasia was a tiny mono-town dominated by the coal mining industry. In 2013 it became the first town to declare bankruptcy after the coal mine was closed in 2007 and the local government ran out of money to pay utility bills. Public lighting was cut off for a few months. Most of the young population has left leaving behind pensioners living off their state pensions of €100-€150 per month. This is the only source of income for the town. Once it goes, the town will too.

Inclusive successful change - Bilbao

Bilbao is one of the few examples of a successful, inclusive transition which took one of the most polluted cities in the EU and transformed it into a clean, vibrant and prosperous one. Located in the Basque region of northern Spain, it became a hub for heavy polluting industries which produced ships, steel and machinery. Consequently pollution and environmental degradation was serious. The 1973 oil crisis was the first major shock which undermined the region's volume-based economic model. Unemployment soared to 25% by the mid-1980s,³⁴ and 50% for youth. Population levels declined as people moved elsewhere.

Urgent action was needed. There was a recognised need for political consensus to facilitate transformative change and rebuild the city. However, it wasn't until a devastating flood in 1983, which wrecked the historic city centre, that political momentum for real change was achieved. A 'Strategic Plan for the Revitalisation of Metropolitan Bilbao' was agreed by different political parties and launched in 1991. It encompassed a 20-year vision. The main aim being to rebuild the city by regenerating public land.

Models of the transformation were on public display and communicated to residents

³⁴ Jörg Plöger (2007) Bilbao City Report, Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion Report, n. 43, London School of Economics and 37Political Science, London



so everyone was informed about changes and vision of the plan.

To deliver the long-term strategy, various levels of government, public authorities and trade union representatives came together in a special committee called the Bilbao Ria 2000. A limited company was also established for the purpose of overseeing the, planning, sale and buying of land.

It's job was to oversee implementation of the transformation. Decisions were taken by consensus but all parties around the table had the same goal of transforming, and therefore saving the city from ruin.

The heavy industry was moved from the heart of the city, the harbour was rebuilt further out at sea which is more practical for the modernisation of the shipping industry. The city centre was brought back to the people. More public spaces were created, a conference centre was built to attract international visitors and create jobs, a modern public metro system was installed, the football stadium was rebuilt, and the Guggenheim Museum Europe was secured. Transit around the city was improved by new bridges and transport links via town planning which brought together neighbourhoods that had previously been separated by boundaries related land-use. Property values increased for all residents, all sections of society were able to find a new place in the regeneration and the city continued to thrive as the heartbeat for the Basque people.

The success of this model was based on three pillars -

- i) Politics - Politicians taking ownership of the need for transition and being directly accountable to the citizens;
- ii) Vision - A shared vision of the what the change would look like. This was key in building public consensus behind the upheavals the transition would cost;
- iii) Financing the transition;

- iv) And project managing the transition - This happened in stages to ensure financial stability and reduction of risk also that the agreed plans were delivered in full whilst managing obstacles as they arose.

Bilbao's example demonstrates the political feasibility and architecture needed for inclusive successful change³⁵.

Case example 3: - A country with a negligible contribution to the causes of climate change, but facing massive challenges from climate impacts; Bangladesh

Bangladesh is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Its low elevation, high population density and inadequate infrastructure all contribute to this, along with its reliance on agriculture. With a population of 165 million, in a relatively small, low lying country, Bangladesh presents a particularly difficult situation as sea levels rise. It is estimated that between 10 and 30 million people could be displaced from the southern coast by 2100. These people will either be displaced within the country, moving perhaps to Dhaka³⁶, already the world's most densely populated city, or else join the growing numbers of international climate displaced persons. These sudden large numbers of people have the potential to destabilise an already volatile region.

The country has always been susceptible to cyclones, but with rising sea levels these are now potentially far more damaging and deadly. Other problems that are increasing and expected to increase include river bank erosion, drought, and

35 S. Kumar, A. Americo and C. Billingham, *The New Social Contract: A Just Transition*, FEPS and Change Partnership, 2016

36 Belt, Don. (2011) The Coming Storm. National Geographic Magazine. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2011/05/bangladesh/>



salinization of drinking water and crop land³⁷. These are problems that undermine the stability of life and the potential to build up a stable economic and social base in the country, thus further weakening the country's ability to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Although a wide variety of adaptation and mitigation measures have been put in place in Bangladesh, the sheer scale of the problem threatens to overwhelm the already fragile situation. Given the country's very low levels of GHG emissions, at 0.5 tonnes of CO₂/capita, and a total CO₂ emissions of 84,546.47 kton/year, amounting to roughly 0.36% of global GHG emissions³⁸ for 2.18% of the global population, the situation of Bangladesh is a clear example of a country which is being forced to pay a disproportionate share of the cost of climate change while not contributing very much to the problem.

Case example 4: Food (in)security and security for small holder farmers

Speaking at the COP17 in Durban in 2011, former President of Ireland Mary Robinson mentioned the words of a female farmer from Zambia whom she had met the day before: she did not have a car, in fact she did not even have a bicycle, so why was she paying the price for climate change?³⁹

The price this farmer was referring to is one the most significant threats posed by climate degradation: food insecurity. By unpredictably lowering yields through disrupted weather patterns and increased extreme events, climate change affects all four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization and stability.

37 Climate Displacement in Bangladesh, Environmental Justice Foundation, <https://ejfoundation.org/reports/climate-displacement-in-bangladesh>

38 <http://cait2.wri.org/>

39 <https://ccafs.cgiar.org>

In 2017, Zambia ranked 190 out of 220 countries in terms of fossil fuels emissions, with an estimated 0.3 tCO₂/person⁴⁰. Meanwhile, it is currently one of the countries with the highest vulnerability to food insecurity, predicted to increase by 21% by the 2050s in a medium emissions, low adaptation scenario⁴¹. This pattern occurs all over the African continent, and to a lesser extent across South-East Asia and Central America. Developing and least developed countries, in most cases low greenhouse gases emitters, are also the most vulnerable to food insecurity. Not only do they have reduced access to markets, but they are also the most impacted by climate modification: South Asia and southern Africa are estimated to be the two regions to suffer the most negative impacts on several important crops, in the absence of adaptation⁴². This is particularly true for low-income agricultural economies that are net food importers, as they are doubly affected by climate change: domestic agricultural production is reduced, and food prices on global markets increase⁴³. A similar statement is valid at household level, with agricultural producers who are net food buyers being particularly vulnerable to food insecurity.

The 2014 IPCC Assessment Report estimates that changes in temperature and precipitation – without considering the effects of CO₂ – will contribute to increased global food prices by 2050, within a range of 3 to 84%. However, climate change does not only lead to a gradual price increase; it also affects price volatility, notably through adverse weather events. While wealthy households can face high variations in food prices by adjusting non-essential expenses, poorer households usually already spend a disproportionate part of their income on food, and any sudden increase in price will result in forcefully reduced consumption. Additionally, increased incidence of extreme weather events reduces incentives to invest in increasing agricultural food production, especially for poor smallholders with limited access to credit or insurance. This results in lower profits, further threatening future food security.

40 Global Carbon Atlas (2017)

41 Met Office / World Food programme, Food Security Index.

42 IPCC Fifth Assessment report (2014).

43 IPCC Fifth Assessment report (2014).



This vicious circle only further increases inequalities at both household and country levels, as expenditures for education, health or infrastructure development are reduced to compensate for increasingly unstable and high food prices. Nevertheless, if no action is taken to stop and adapt to climate degradation now, food availability will reach too low a level for the most vulnerable to access it. Yields in essential crops such as maize or wheat could decrease by almost 20% all across Africa by 2050, resulting in significant undernourishment levels and increased reliance on humanitarian aid. Zambian farmers will need help – or they will indeed pay a very high price for our emissions.

Budgeting and prioritising small holder famers in India and the Himalayas

India's agriculture census points out that as much as 72 percent of India's farmland is held by the marginal farmers with holdings below one hectare, against less than 1 percent in large holdings of 10 hectares and above. The number of marginal farmers is likely to increase to 90 per cent by 2025. The distress that marginal farmers undergo in India is enormous, particularly the lack of irrigation. Out of the total 64.57 million hectare net irrigated area, 48.16 percent is accounted for by small and marginal holdings. This means that for more than 50 per cent of small and marginal holdings .farmland irrigation is yet to reach farmers, who rely entirely on rains for their crops.

Budgeting and prioritising small holding farmers

In the interim budget presented before the general elections in April-May 2019, the Modi government announced PM-KISAN scheme under which it offered Rs 6000 a year to 120 million farmers holding cultivable land up to 2 hectare. The income from such schemes can be helpful to protect the small and marignal farmers from market and price fluctuation and absorb the inflationary cost increments.

In the recently announced Union Budget 2019, the government announced some big schemes for rural India, including 'zero-budget farming'. It considered 'zero budget' because costs of raising the main crop are offset by the income that farmers earn from intercrops. Under this method, chemical fertilizers and pesticides make way for locally available and environmentally friendly cow dung and cow urine, jaggery and pulse flour. The budget also laid down upgradation and regeneration of traditional industries so that a huge number of marginal farmers will join the economic value chain. Road connectivity is vitally important for farmers and the budget announced building over 125000-km of rural roads in the next 5-years using clean technology, thereby reducing the carbon footprint. The budgetary allocation sets the tone for farmers to align better with the market. The objectives are as follows:

To double farmers income by 2022 especially the small and marginal farmers through better strategizing and policy implementation

Helping farmers through lower interest rates especially those farmers engaged in animal husbandry and fisheries

Improving farmers skills and income and allowing greater participation from agro-industry

The budget aims to strengthen traditional knowledge-based innovation systems for food security in the face of climate change, through participatory action-research

While the emphasis is towards market agriculture, the budget encourages for traditional mixed farming system



The Himalaya Example

In the Indian Himalaya region comprising 10 Indian states, small and marginal farmers, especially in the central and eastern Himalayas, having observed climatic changes that have impacted their agricultural produce, have responded through traditional knowledge that include landscapes, cultural and spiritual values and customary laws, innovation and biodiversity thus increasing resilience and yields.

The Himalaya region has witnessed rising temperatures, decreasing precipitation and changing rainfall patterns. Weather patterns are more extreme and unpredictable. In Central Himalaya region there has been increased frost and in the Eastern Himalaya region there has been reduced rainfall. The climate changes have led to reduced agricultural productivity. Farmers through traditional knowledge and innovation have adapted to the climate changes, for example in the Central Himalaya villages, farmers have responded by planting broadleaved trees and harvesting more water, while in the Eastern Himalaya farmers have responded by changing cultivation practices and switching to more drought-tolerant varieties.

It is critically important therefore to promote recognition of the value of traditional farming systems and biocultural innovations by the scientific community, the government and investment for innovation to confront new challenges.

Case example 5: Models of participation

Youth councils -

Wellington City Youth Council in New Zealand is a good example of where this has been successful. Where the regional council failed in providing a late-night bus service that was supposed to serve young people, the youth council consulted young people in a proposal that put forward ideas for a service that was in the end very popular and is now one of the most profitable bus services operating

in Wellington. By first consulting young people about their evening activities, locations, times and planning the youth council was able to better see the needs of the users. This improves scope for social, cultural and sports activities within a city and reduces the need for private cars.⁴⁴

Youth councils usually a formally recognised group or board of people that provides representation, take decisions and set directions to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities.

In New Zealand this is done by making submissions to your council on matters of interest or concern to young people; making a submission to government on an issue affecting youth in your community; creating a petition to the council or government; speaking at a youth council meeting; or speaking at a council meeting.⁴⁵

Colombia's popular consultation model shows what sort of control can be gained for local communities – and by the environment – by a full implementation of Escazú. Over the last decade, communities have organised nine popular consultations, in which the communities have voted against extractive projects by private companies, and have been able to prevent them from proceeding. In 2018, however, the Constitutional Court overturned a decision by a local court giving the go-ahead to a popular consultation which had halted oil extraction in the Cumeral municipality. While Colombian law lays down that it is obligatory to respect the results of such consultations, the Constitutional Court suggested an exception for investments of national importance, and called on the Government to legislate to allow for these to have effective immunity. The 10 instances of the Popular Consultation (“consulta popular”) blocking extractive industries have been accompanied by rapid development of local participation, activism, and awareness.

44 <http://www.myd.govt.nz/documents/resources-and-reports/publications/a-guide-for-local-government-an-introduction-to-youth-participation-2008.pdf>
45 <http://www.myd.govt.nz/young-people/youth-councils-local-government.html>



In Ireland, citizens assemblies, have been very well received, are a way to increase participation. They have helped deliberate on and helped many understand complex issues. Abortion being the best example of the discussions in Ireland which led to the overturning of the 8th amendment last year.

Emergency climate council to address global warming could help track, analyse and offer solutions to adaptation and mitigation. For instance the situation in India this year, where severe heatwaves and droughts led to many people dying from lack of access to drinking water or the areas where people have lost their homes due to flooding etc. An emergency council would offer a space firstly for people to ensure their voices are heard and that they received adequate help. It would also be tasked to plan and prepare the community better for natural disasters.

Assemblies where people are randomly selected to represent are considered most effective so participation is fair and varied. This could be a way also to help communities negatively impacted by global warming.

Case example 6: Towards an inclusive green economy: the case of the distributed renewable sector: Kenya and Bangladesh

Ensuring equal opportunities through decent inclusive green employment and by putting in place enabling legal and regulatory frameworks, the distributed renewable energy sector can help empower families and small businesses to generate and consume their own energy as also it helps the poorest communities and households, access to green goods and services, a key dimension to delivering climate justice⁴⁶. Furthermore, whether connected to centralised electricity grids, off the grid or micro-grids, the growth of renewable energy ‘prosumers’ contributes to both climate mitigation and the democratisation of energy.

46 Poor people’s energy outlook 2018, Practical Action, 2018

In **Kenya**, while nearly one million units of Solar Home Systems have been sold, the market serves the easiest to reach first and, in some parts of the country, SHSs are not available at all. To ensure greater inclusivity and reach, the Kenya Off-grid Solar Access Project (KOSAP)⁴⁷ started targeting 14 poorer counties with the aim of connecting 600,000 households as well as community facilities. The off-grid renewable sector also provides opportunities for creating new employment opportunities and better working conditions. The International Renewable Energy Agency projects that the off-grid renewable energy sector will create 4.5m direct jobs globally by 2030, 2.9m of which will be in the deployment of solar home systems and solar lamps.

In **Bangladesh**, the solar home systems sector currently employs over 127,000 people, with over 4.5m systems installed to date.⁴⁸ To ensure both inclusivity and pathways to sustainable employment through productive and decent work, the ILO put in place programmes targeting unemployed women and men in rural districts for competency-based training courses on the installation and maintenance of solar home systems on the installation and maintenance of solar home systems.⁴⁹

Case example 7: Green budgeting and taxation reform in Finland

Finland shows that a country can build sustainability and justice concerns into its public budgeting process, both on the revenue and expenditure side to help achieve its sustainability goals in a socially just way. The country was the first in the world to introduce a carbon tax, in 1990, since then it has implemented a number of environmental tax reforms (ETR). The Finnish carbon tax level is one of the few in the world estimated by the World Bank to be above the lower bound required

47 Kenya Off-Grid Solar Access Project (KOSAP)

48 S. Trace, Inclusive, green Jobs and the informal sector, The Economist Magazine, 2019

49 Employment model in renewable energy (Solar home systems), Green Jobs, Asia Pacific Green Jobs Network, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 2012



by 2020 to meet the goal of the Paris Agreement, and research has found it to be the most effective carbon tax in Europe. Although the overall level and scope of environmental and carbon taxation could and should still be increased to help achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs, the country has been a pioneer in implementing effective, and progressive environmental taxation.

Research has shown that the most significant determinant of the overall impact on income distribution is the way the carbon tax revenues are ‘recycled’ back to the economy, with attention paid to the regional and distributional effects. Finland has recycled income from the carbon taxes, partially through reductions in income taxes, as part of an effort to shift the tax burden from labour to pollution, and partially through government expenditure. Since higher income earners in Finland are also more intensive consumers of energy the tax shift has been broadly progressive.

Although revenue from the carbon tax is not earmarked for specific spending purposes, a new development on the expenditure side of the budget represents an interesting innovation in green budgeting.

From 2018, the government has requested that all main budget appropriation, as well as taxes, be justified and explained on the basis of how they are connected to advancing Finland’s sustainability priorities. This will expose remaining fossil fuel subsidies and other counter-productive expenditure to enhanced scrutiny, as well as making the government’s spending on sustainability priorities easier to track. Finland is thus a leading example of how sustainability budgeting can be used to enhance economic, social and environmental sustainability on both sides of the ledger, while ensuring that distributional issues are prioritised and effectively managed.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS FEPS INITIATIVE

This declaration, guiding proposals and policy paper aim to serve towards the UN Climate Action Summit on 23rd September 2019 in New York.

It aims to offer a multi-disciplinary approach. Importantly it will set out the environmental, social, economic and financial arguments together as they are the root causes of climate injustice.

Whilst acknowledging the varying strands of climate justice theory this initiative will mainly focus on how to bring about key changes that will raise targets, assure political and social guarantees and help create long-term, solid and holistic solutions.

The objective of this initiative is threefold and reflects the objectives of the New York summit:

1. Help **raise ambition and increase targets** on climate action by offering key guiding proposals to be considered;
2. **Prompt transformative changes** by promoting debate and progressive values in the way we regard the fight against global warming, highlighting the importance of ecological, economic and socially-based policies; and
3. **Generate political commitment** by emphasising the importance of successful political processes to concretise action against global warming.
4. **These guiding proposals are aimed towards** decision-makers, climate advisers, the UN Secretary General, Progressive political leaders and parties, EU and other national leaders and policy-makers.

This initiative aims to bring fresh-thinking into the core of this debate. The approach intends to be **positive** to help build around the belief that change is attainable. It needs to be **participatory** in the sense that if it does not offer ownership of the process or provide a just transition or does not apply to certain sectors of society it will not be successful. It aims to be above all **progressive**, abiding by the traditional values of social justice, fighting inequalities and caring for our common well-being.

A new comprehensible **vision** is needed to ensure adequate targets in tackling global warming. This requires also a progressive **strategy** that encompasses environmental, social and economic protection.



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