

Adopted Resolution

On Fighting Climate Change: From Civic Action to COP21 Diplomacy to Civic Action

“If you have ever looked in wonder at a wildflower meadow in summer or a frozen spider's web in winter, you know that nature is beautiful and has a value beyond money. Greens are environmental activists and we understand the interdependence of nature and ourselves in a way that other political parties do not. We know that sustainable development means managing our natural resources wisely so that our children and our children's children will still have a viable planet to live on.” (Steve Emmott)

COP21: Deal or no deal that is the question!

This December at the global COP21 climate conference in Paris the international community has the obligation to act on catastrophic climate change and to move towards an ambitious and just global agreement that on average keeps global warming to below +2C as compared to pre-industrial levels. We European Greens urge all the heads of states and governments to seize this moment and to come up with a binding global climate deal to that effect.

A lot of time has already been lost in this fight, because leaders year after year have listened more to narrow economic interests, in particular those of the fossil industries, than to the voices of the people. This time it must be different. Climate change will not only impact future generations. It is already wreaking havoc in regions all over the globe. Climate change can also be a catalyst for regional conflicts, security issues and the displacement of people.

Over the course of 2015 a great array of actors has mobilised for the fight against climate change ranging from academia to NGOs and green civil society, from green businesses to faith-based communities, including the Laudato si' encyclical by Pope Francis', from environmentally conscious political leaders and judges to some institutional investors and celebrities. We European Greens have always been part of the climate movement. We know: COP21 in Paris will only become a transformative moment on the road towards the end of the fossil fuel age and the decarbonisation of our economies, if broad pressure from as many corners of society as possible forces governments to move. We will support the efforts to turn Paris into a point of departure for even stronger citizen-led mobilisations in the future. No movement at climate negotiation tables without strong climate movement on the streets. We will therefore support the non-violent, peaceful and progressive actions and climate demonstrations around the world that will take place alongside the climate talks - especially on the 29th of November and 12th of December. In Paris the Greens will be present with delegations from all our member parties, and we invite everybody to join also. We call on the French government to respect and support all peoples' right to join these peaceful demonstrations.

We realise that the COP21 will not achieve every necessary and desirable goal. The pledges that countries have made for their respective national contributions against climate change, the so-called INDCs, are insufficient and would lead – in a best case scenario – to a global temperature rise of around 3 degrees. The EU must accept its responsibility as a climate leader and ratchet up its targets so that they reflect the urgency of a shift to a fully renewable energy system and ending the era of fossil fuel extracting and use. We regret that the EU did not pledge carbon neutrality by 2050 before going to Paris. Greens will continue to fight for this goal. Also the

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pledges from rich countries to help financing mitigation and adaptation in the poorer countries still fall short and this issue must be addressed with adequate plans for financing through concrete means such as additional pledges from developed nations and fewer restrictions on knowledge transfer. But in any case the Paris conference must deliver the deal that has evaded us since the dismal failure of climate diplomacy in Copenhagen. It must provide an ambitious decarbonisation and climate vision – Keep it below 2! –, set binding marks on the basis of the INDCs, guarantee just climate finance, plot a policy-maker’s climate roadmap post-Paris including regular climate reviews and an enhancement mechanism in the future, as in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the world will have to commit to higher climate commitments than presently offered.

Post-Paris: We are in for the long haul!

We European Greens will focus our continuous climate activities on three dimensions of action:

Promote the necessary climate and environment friendly transformation of our economies.

This challenge has to be dealt with day to day in our cities and municipalities. Cities and urban areas are not only the home of half the world’s population, they are also generating around 80% of global economic output and account for 70% of global energy use and energy-related greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) emissions. Low carbon urban development strategies, prioritizing investment in transport demand management, non-motorized and low emission transport and mobility, reducing all relevant GHG from air transport and shipping as well as building efficiency, renewable energy and the creation of a circular economy, will be key drivers for effective climate action. It is also our ambition to show the social and economic opportunities of a successful fight against climate change. The carbon neutral economy is not a sheer vision anymore, it is an option that we can choose. If we mobilise the political will, we have the technological, financial and human resources to raise living standards in order to meet everyone's needs, reduce poverty and abolish hunger, make cities socially fair and inclusive and restore and protect the world’s natural environments. Green innovation in realising these goals will also have to address our financial system to break with shareholder greed, corporate welfare and short-termism.

Join the global fossil fuel divestment movement, because “it is not realistic, that those profiting from destruction are likely to stop it”.

Our aim is the divestment from fossil fuels and the delegitimisation of polluters and their business. To stop the devastating impacts of the fossil fuel industry, 80% of known fossil fuel reserves underground must stay where they are. We want carbon pricing and the phase out of fossil subsidies. We build alliances to raise public awareness. We call out the carbon lobbies and fight for more transparency. We practise solidarity with actions of peaceful civil disobedience against false “solutions” like new “clean” coal plants, fracking or nuclear energy. The global divestment movement has already achieved remarkable successes, with fossil fuels divestment commitments summing up to 2.6 trillion USD (Sept 2015). This is something we want to build upon together. On Global Carbon Divestment Day in May 2016 we will mobilise in cooperation with NGOs to make our municipalities, our banks and other institutions divest from fossil.

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Combine the fight against climate change with the fight for Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Justice.

Our fight against climate change is closely linked to our fight for human rights, social justice and gender equality. We demand equal representation in the decision making processes, the promotion of human rights in climate negotiations and a just distribution of resources from the Climate Fund worldwide. For this we will seek partnerships with Green actors from the global south in the preparation of the 2017 Global Greens Congress in Liverpool to address social concerns, the engagement for justice, environmental and climate goals together, respectful of human rights and especially those of minorities, indigenous people and women, with a particular focus on the rising question of climate refugees. Our work in the Global Greens will provide member parties with support in this regard, where they seek it.