



FOR A EUROPEAN ECOLOGICAL WELFARE STATE

**SAVING THE CLIMATE
AND TACKLING THE SOCIAL EMERGENCY**



ÉDITO

NEW CLIMATE REGIME AND EXPLODING INEQUALITIES: DON'T LOOK AWAY

As you cast your vote in the forthcoming European elections, take a moment and remember: for as long as one can remember, the Ecologists have been the only ones to tell the truth about the environmental crisis, the only ones to warn of the dangers to the planet and to ourselves from the current economic model.

When you go into the polling booth, remember that. Because once again, the other parties are underestimating the seriousness of the situation, or simply denying it. They continue to make easy promises based on false analyses. They are now attacking, or allowing to be attacked with complicit passivity, all the gains made over decades in protecting nature and democracy. To varying degrees, they claim that everything can continue as before. But it can't.

We need to change our model: the obsession with growth is leading to the destruction of the living world, and therefore the human world.

The programme you are reading is based on an irrefutable fact: we have entered a new climate regime that will determine our future. To fail to understand this is to turn your back on reality. Climate change is the greatest threat of our time.

This is a time of choices. We have to adapt to a situation that is worsening every day, and deal with both the worsening social situation and the ecological crisis. Either we continue with the current model and sink into chaos, or we invent the 21st century protections we need.

We are proposing a different approach to public policy: taking care of people and the planet instead of making profit the measure of all things. Far from the caricatures that portray us as disconnected from everyday life, ecologists are the true realists: those who have understood that we cannot make the ecological transition without at the same time building social justice.

For ecologists, there is no question of leaving individuals to face the consequences of collapse alone. The ecological transition must be fair from a social point of view: it is not up to the most modest to foot the bill for an absurd and destructive system. In the face of inflation and rising poverty, we must not pick on the weakest and break public services, but instead reinforce solidarities.



A EUROPEAN ECOLOGICAL WELFARE STATE FOR NEW SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS

The more solidarity there is in Europe, the stronger Europe will be.

We are proposing a model of social and environmental protection based on solidarity: the ecological welfare state, and we are proposing that it be deployed on a European scale, because it is impossible to deal with ecological perils on a national scale alone.

The European ecological welfare state that we are proposing is based on a different political logic. The European ecological welfare state makes the protection of the most vulnerable its compass and therefore makes the reduction of structural inequalities a political priority. The European ecological welfare state pursues the objective of the full health of individuals. It also aims, of course, to save the climate, protect biodiversity and reintegrate the economy within planetary limits.

These are serious times, and we need major changes, both to halt the ongoing destruction of life and to adapt to the new climate and environmental regime. **Our strategy for change rests on three pillars.**

- 1/ We need to **take science seriously**, so that we can take the measure of the systemic crisis we are experiencing.
- 2/ Secondly, we need to understand that the ecological crisis is affecting our social conditions of existence as well as the world of work, and therefore calls for a **new social-ecological contract**.
- 3/ Finally, we need to **put the question of democracy and social dialogue at the heart of transition policies**: we cannot tackle the crisis with political powers that distrust the people.



This is the political shift we are proposing for Europe.

MARIE TOUSSAINT



THE TIME HAS COME TO BUILD ANOTHER EUROPE

THE WAR IN UKRAINE MARKS A TURNING POINT: THINKING ABOUT THE GEOPOLITICS OF THE CLIMATE AND BREAKING OUT OF OUR DEPENDENCIES

We know that we have entered a new climate regime from which we must draw all the consequences, including geopolitical ones.

While the war in Ukraine has quite rightly drawn public attention to the weakness of European defence, the issue of our energy dependence is less obvious. And yet it is **a terrible Achilles heel to be dependent on Russian gas** when we oppose Vladimir Putin's imperialist aims.

The addiction to fossil fuels that the Ecologists have always denounced makes us fragile. All the talk of European power is empty rhetoric as long as Europe does not give itself the means to become energy independent. **There is therefore a twofold urgency in moving away from fossil fuels: ecological and geopolitical.**

We must also understand that it is essential **to produce in Europe what we need in Europe**. We need industrial, food, diplomatic and military sovereignty.

Let's not be naïve: the issue of trade and free trade agreements cannot be totally decoupled from the rise in conflicts. If Europe wants to remain master of its own destiny, we need to build and organise our solidarity instead of thinking that the solution is to weaken our social and economic standards.



A RETURN TO AUSTERITY WOULD BE A POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DISASTER

In the wake of the 2008 crisis, which revealed the fragility of an over-financialised economic model, the European Union returned to its liberal ways, as if nothing had happened, failing to learn the lessons of the crisis and missing the opportunity to embark on a profound transformation.

We are in the process of reliving the same thing, only worse. **Europe's leaders are not really drawing any conclusions from the Covid-19 pandemic.** And yet there are many lessons to be learned: not just health lessons, but political and economic lessons too.

From a political point of view, it is clear that, in the face of a threat that knows no borders, European unity makes us stronger than the juxtaposition of national egos.

From an economic point of view, **we should remember that it was the suspension of the Maastricht criteria** (the famous maximums of 3% public deficit and 60% public debt) **that enabled Europeans to go into debt together to finance the post-pandemic recovery plan.**

From an ecological point of view, this zoonotic pandemic on an unprecedented scale should lead us to truly protect living things, while on the other hand the return of animal species and birdsong when we stop our activities shows that we can still bring nature back.

With the pandemic now behind us, a return to the straitjacket of austerity is the common programme of the majority ruling the European Union: Liberals, Conservatives and Socialists have just jointly adopted a return to the Maastricht criteria as part of the revision of European budgetary rules.

They may well oppose each other in the campaign, but in essence they share the same belief in the objective of growth. A political and social disaster is in the making.

Firstly, because **austerity and its cuts in social budgets are fuel for populism.** Secondly, because the social situation of millions of citizens puts them on the brink of the abyss: inflation is suffocating them and the fear of downgrading is on everyone's mind. Finally, and perhaps above all, because we need massive, sustainable investment if we are to give ourselves the means to meet our climate objectives, and even more so if we are to relocate our industry and produce in Europe what Europe needs.



Europe cannot be satisfied with a simple return to the status quo, and the unravelling of the Green Deal under populist pressure. On the contrary, **it's time to change our model and finally adapt to the ecological and social challenges posed by climate change.**

CHANGING ECONOMIC CRITERIA: MAKING HEALTH THE NEW COMPASS FOR PUBLIC POLICY.

Let's return to Covid: it also showed the huge disparities and social inequalities in health. We, Ecologists, believe that this health crisis is a powerful indicator of the dangers threatening our society and of the fact that our economic system is not pursuing the right objectives.

Instead of seeking full growth, we should be seeking full health for people and full health for the planet. The two issues are more closely linked than we like to admit.

All the studies show the harmful consequences of climate change, pesticides, endocrine disruptors and other eternal pollutants on human health. What's bad for ecosystems is bad for us, because we are part of the living world. **Environmental health should be one of the European Union's priorities.** This is not the case today.

What's more, we should be moving away from an essentially curative approach towards a more preventive conception of public health policies. This would obviously be good for controlling healthcare costs, but above all it would be good for the quality of life of our citizens.

Faced with health crises and climate change, we, Ecologists, are the only ones defending a different vision of the economy: **we want to move from an economy that destroys** (our health and ecosystems) **to an economy that repairs** (the environment and social cohesion).

A FEDERAL LEAP FORWARD FOR A EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC SURGE: GET A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY NOW!

The conclusions of the 2022 Conference on the Future of Europe showed that the citizens of the Union want a Europe that is capable of taking effective decisions and action. They are calling for structural reforms of the way the Union works and are ready to move to a federal organisation. They want more Europe, a different Europe.

As a founding act, we are calling for the next term of office to be the occasion for a **European constituent assembly.**



The aim is to build a federal democracy better able to meet the challenges we face. A Europe that fights against social, fiscal and environmental dumping between its Member States, while equipping itself with the means to act for its sovereignty. A Europe that gives itself a framework: **an environmental ceiling that must not be exceeded, and a floor of social rights that must be guaranteed to each and every one of us if we are to prosper and live well.**

Europe has been treading water for too long; the coalition of right-wingers and extreme right-wingers - with the active collaboration of the Liberals and part of the Socialists - now intends to set it on the road to major setbacks. We do not want a Europe that is sinking into social and ecological regression. We are proposing a major political leap forward to counter the major setbacks that are in prospect.

DEEPENING THE EUROPEAN UNION AND STRENGTHENING ITS UNITY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE TIMES

The time has come to start rebuilding the European Union along federal lines, laying the foundations for a **fiscal union**, a **coordinated economic policy**, a genuine **European democracy** and a **common diplomacy, security and defence system** to guarantee the strategic autonomy of the Old Continent.

A **fiscal union**, because Europe needs its own resources in order to make the investments required for the ecological bifurcation and to organise solidarity between States in the face of increasing climatic disasters. Before the dogma of free trade, Europe derived most of its revenue from border taxes. Today, only 25% of its resources come from its own resources, with the rest depending on the goodwill of the Member States. Under these conditions, how can we talk about an integrated Europe? **Let's endow the EU with the capacity to levy taxes**, starting with the extension of the carbon tax at borders to all manufactured products and toxic substances, a climate wealth tax and the introduction of genuine green protectionism. Let's introduce an ambitious, coordinated corporate tax system to prevent tax dumping between EU countries. Let's improve social protection for workers, wages and incomes; let's harmonise social legislation upwards; let's improve the quality of life of our citizens.

A **coordinated economic policy**, to build a solid, mutually supportive European economic fabric, and prevent European companies from systematically finding themselves in a weak position vis-à-vis their American or Chinese competitors. A Europe that acts as one to transform its economy rather than allowing free competition between States, including for State aid. Take the example of pharmaceuticals: we import up to 80% of our active substances from China and India. How can we believe that Member States can stand up to Big Pharma on their own?



During crises, the smaller the economy, the more exposed it is. European economic solidarity was asserted during COVID, only to disappear immediately despite Putin's war on Ukraine. Paradoxically, Europe has not understood that there is strength in unity. It's time to change that.

Common diplomacy, security and defence, meaning not just a European army, but also a common political strategy, to ensure the autonomy and protection of the Old Continent in a world marked by Russia's imperialist drift to the East and the fickleness of the historic American ally to the West.



10 URGENT MEASURES TO CHANGE EUROPE

- Adopt an environmental treaty to **make the protection of nature the norm of norms**.
- Apply a right of social veto to **make the fight against poverty the backbone of Europe** by blocking measures that harm the poorest.
- Finance an ecological sovereignty fund to **take back control of oil and gas companies** in order to save the climate.
- **Lower VAT on 'green' products, made in Europe and good for health**, to make them accessible to as many people as possible.
- **Make the ecological transition in fishing and agriculture** by guaranteeing a decent income for those who make their living from these trades.
- **Create a European public medicines service** to produce the medicines we need in Europe.
- **Initiate an Employment Pact** to protect workers in the ecological shift.
- **Launch a territorialised European industrial strategy** to phase out toxic products.
- **Establish a Constituent Assembly for a federal leap forward** to strengthen the unity of Europe and revitalise European citizenship.
- **Build a Europe of diplomacy and defence** to strengthen our common security.