

# Shaping Our Future

Concrete political recommendations and demands for coherent and just climate policy along with key conditions for their success; formulated for the local, national and European levels

# The Future We Want



Climate Alliance



# A Good Life – Transforming Our World

Climate justice means assuming responsibility together. It means fairness and sustainability instead of injustice and overexploitation. All policies – regardless of the area or topic – shape our future. Every political decision has global impacts that we must take into account.

The concept of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is described as the interaction and coordinated activities of different policy areas to achieve an overall goal. The importance of policy coherence is emphasised in international treaties such as the Paris Agreement and the Agenda 2030. The EU also recognises the importance of policy coherence in its response to the Agenda 2030. It calls for the implementation of sustainability goals in a full, coherent, comprehensive, integrated and effective manner in close cooperation with all stakeholders.<sup>1</sup> The EU position paper concerning indigenous peoples confirms precisely this concept, emphasises the human rights-based approach of the Agenda and highlights the importance of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention No. 169.<sup>2</sup>

If the existing laws and international agreements were applied coherently, the path to a sustainable future would be guaranteed. However, a glance at political practice shows that many of the authorities and ministries on the EU and national levels do not work together, but rather have conflicting interests: growth and profit often take precedence over justice and human rights. Global partnerships can serve to promote both justice and human rights. The Agenda 2030, with its ambitious goal of “transforming our world” and the principle of leaving no one behind, affirms the power of such partnerships. Sustainable transformation must be based on close cooperation between all stakeholders as equals. Since its inception, Climate Alliance has been building partnerships between indigenous peoples and European municipalities based on this principle. The local level has repeatedly been emphasised as a key stakeholder for implementation of the most important international agreements in recent years, namely the Paris Agreement, Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda. Both municipalities and indigenous peoples help to shape

the local transformation and are thus crucial to these agreements. Indeed, more than two thirds of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depend upon direct action on the local and regional levels.

Integration of the SDGs into the strategies and framework conditions created for their implementation on the EU, national and also local levels is vital. The New European Consensus on Development affirms sustainable development as a long-term vision and proposes a strategy for achieving the SDGs.<sup>3</sup> The EU Sustainable Development Strategy is yet to be updated, however.

Political coherence and the linking of different concepts and policies is very much in line with Climate Alliance's approach: in addition to environmental aspects, effective climate action must also take social and economic aspects into account.

# Recommendations and Demands for Sustainable Development

**The Paris Agreement, which aims to limit the global average temperature to “well below 2°C” and ideally to just 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, was reached at the COP21 UN Climate Conference held in December 2015. These aims cannot be achieved with the national action plans presented in the run-up to the conference – this has also been noted by the Climate Change Secretariat. Thus the role of the local level gains even greater significance as an important complement to the national level.**

**To date, ILO Convention No. 169 concerning “Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries” remains the only international norm guaranteeing the indigenous peoples legally-binding protection and entitlement to a variety of basic rights. The signatories of ILO No. 169 commit to respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. This goes hand in hand with the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) that aims to ensure the co-determination of indigenous peoples in the development and implementation of laws and regulations affecting them or their territories.**

**ILO Convention No. 169 is part of a framework of international legal instruments that include the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).**

In order to implement coherent policies, Climate Alliance has worked with municipalities and civil society organisations from across Europe as well as indigenous partners from Amazonia to develop political recommendations and demands for the local, national and European levels. These are based on the many years of experience in cooperating with indigenous peoples and municipalities in Europe as well as countless delegation trips between Europe and Amazonia.

In line with Climate Alliance’s principles for effective climate action, we strive for coherent policy on all levels that is fair, nature-based, local, resource saving and diverse.

**These recommendations and demands are outlined in detail on the subsequent pages**

# Promoting Sustainable Energy for All



Affordable and clean energy is a major driver of sustainable development. The challenge lies in finding ways to reconcile the demand for sustainable energy with its impact on the environment and natural resources. Currently, more than half of the EU's renewable energy consumption is based on biofuels such as palm oil. This has led to increasing pressure on forests and lands both inside and outside the EU as well as significant greenhouse gas emissions.

Decreasing energy-related emissions will require an overall reduction in energy demand as well as a shift to integrated renewable energy systems based on a mix of solar, wind, tidal and small-scale hydropower. Reducing energy consumption means using less energy to begin with and using what is needed more efficiently.

Unlike fossil fuels, which depend on economies of scale, centralisation and resource extraction, renewable energies make smaller-scale, decentralised systems possible. To ensure their sustainability, all projects – whatever their

size – must be in line with international law and commitments concerning environmental protection, human rights and sustainable development.

As opposed to mega-projects, decentralised small-scale systems reduce communities' dependence on energy imports and greatly decrease the need for infrastructure, thus diminishing ecological damage. Indigenous territories located in areas rich in resources are especially vulnerable to such damage at the hands of extractive industries. A global switch to renewable energies and the decision to leave fossil resources in the ground would be a step toward safeguarding these territories. Ensuring indigenous access to sustainable energy also involves full commitment to the principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as set out in ILO Convention No. 169.

**In light of the above, we make the following recommendations to the EU, national, regional and local levels**

## EU level

- Raise the EU target for renewable energy consumption to 40% in 2030
- Set a binding target of 40% energy efficiency<sup>4</sup> for 2030 in the reviewed Energy Efficiency Directive
- Promote buildings with reduced energy demand in line with the Passive House Standard<sup>5</sup>, rather than the use of smart technology in buildings, in the reviewed Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
- Include the right to self-produce and self-consume energy as part of the reform of the Renewable Energy Directive
- Phase out the use of vegetable oils, especially those that exacerbate deforestation, as a component of biofuel by 2020<sup>6</sup>

## National level

- Establish a political framework and appropriate financing mechanisms for a sustainable and decentralised energy system
- Guarantee the right to self-produce and self-consume energy in national energy legislation
- Take the complementarity between local and national levels into account in renewable energy and climate plans and strategies
- Require renewable energy investors to open project capital acquisition and governance to participation by public and local authorities
- Implement a simplified procedure for small and medium-scale renewable energy project approval
- Incentivise maximum energy efficiency in new builds and retrofits as per standards in line with the Passive House Standard
- Respect the principle of cascading use in the consumption of woody biomass resources
- Limit the use of wood for energy production

## Regional and local levels

- Aim for energy sufficiency
- Implement local renewable energy systems
- Incentivise maximum energy efficiency in new builds and retrofits of public buildings as per standards in line with the Passive House Standard
- Promote civic participation by supporting community energy initiatives and energy cooperatives

# Conserving Our Natural Resources



The availability and accessibility of resources is crucial for sustainable development and poverty eradication, making it a highly relevant issue for the EU. At the same time, the EU's overconsumption of natural resources impacts environment and societies worldwide. Resource extractivism threatens a large number of people and fragile ecosystems. Those most reliant on these ecosystems are especially at risk. The indigenous peoples of the Amazon region are no exception.

Forests offer countless environmental and social services. They provide food, water, medicine and shelter while also helping to regulate natural cycles and safeguard biodiversity. Their role as carbon sinks makes them crucial to the stability of the planet's climate.

Unfortunately, the EU's contribution to forest destruction is significant. Imports such as beef, soy and palm oil, in particular, lead to the clearance of tropical forests. In terms of the deforestation associated with products and

services, the EU is also in the lead. It was the largest importer of deforestation embodied in crop and livestock products between 1990 and 2008.<sup>7</sup>

About 80% of the most biodiverse areas on earth are home to indigenous or tribal peoples and 30% of the carbon stored in the Amazon region alone is in indigenous territories. For millennia, indigenous peoples have prevented deforestation and proved themselves to be skilled stewards of these important ecosystems. We must therefore support indigenous peoples in their protection of the rainforest, as they are the true experts at using their lands sustainably. For this to continue, legal recognition of indigenous territories is essential.

**In light of the above, we make the following recommendations to the EU, national, regional and local levels**

## EU level

- Amend the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to increase support to less intensive production systems such as permaculture and grassland-based livestock systems
- Ensure that free trade agreements are in line with instruments promoting sustainable development and human rights, including binding commitments for the prevention of deforestation where relevant
- Implement the recommendations of the European Parliament resolution on palm oil<sup>8</sup> including the development of a single European certification system
- Require transparent labelling of products, make publication of information on supply chains obligatory and adopt a single unified definition of 'deforestation-free'
- Develop sustainability criteria for feed imports that include indicators on deforestation and lower tariffs for sustainably produced commodities
- Strengthen enforcement of FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs)<sup>9</sup>, expand them to include agricultural commodities produced on illegally cleared land, and ensure they protect the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples
- Extend the VPA process to cover further countries, especially those affected by the illegal conversion of land
- Make the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forest (VGGT) compulsory within the FLEGT framework
- Ratify ILO Convention No. 169 and encourage Member States that have yet not ratified it to do so
- Acknowledge and support the inclusion of indigenous alternatives such as the Indigenous REDD+ (RIA) in international agreements

## National level

- Prioritise fair and sustainable public procurement policies to the extent possible
- Include the obligatory use of at least one EU core Green Public Procurement (GPP) criterion in all public procurement procedures
- Introduce higher taxes on commodities with a high deforestation impact<sup>10</sup>
- Recognise indigenous peoples as direct partners in development cooperation initiatives and include indigenous alternatives in the programmes
- Ratify ILO Convention No. 169

## Regional and local levels

- Prioritise fair and sustainable public procurement policies to the extent possible
- Establish sustainable food chain strategies focusing on fair, local and seasonal food while minimising waste
- Develop territorial planning strategies for the sustainable management of local resources including forests



# Channelling Investments to Support Our Goals



In recent years, we have witnessed an intensification of climate change impacts, economic inequalities, political imbalances, natural resource depletion, energy consumption, trade and migration. The current economic model of endless growth and resource extraction is a major driver of these developments.

Steering financial flows in a more responsible direction is an important starting point for change. Depending on how they are directed, investments can either impede or foster a sustainable future. The EU, its Member States

and local authorities can all contribute to fair, resource-saving and nature-based approaches by avoiding high-risk assets and divesting from ethically and ecologically unsound investments. International financial flows must be in line with long-term strategies on climate and sustainable development.

**In light of the above, we make the following recommendations to the EU, national, regional and local levels**

## EU level

- Divest from all fossil fuels related investments as well as companies violating human rights and contributing to climate change or environmental degradation
- Require that Member States elaborate basic ethical and ecological standards for the investment of public funds, such as the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Criteria<sup>11</sup>
- Demand greater transparency in the investment of public funds
- Create an EU classification system for sustainable assets<sup>12</sup>
- Maximise coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by working with International Financial Institutions in addition to other relevant stakeholders<sup>13</sup>

## National level

- Divest public funds from all fossil fuels related investments as well as companies violating human rights and contributing to climate change or environmental degradation
- Establish and expand assistance for local authorities to execute divestment and reinvestment strategies<sup>14</sup>
- Ensure the accountability of national parent companies for the social and environmental wrong-doings of their subsidiaries
- Elaborate basic ethical, ecological and social standards and make them compulsory for national and sub-national level investments
- Establish transparent screening mechanisms to monitor investment conditions and integrate these into policy frameworks<sup>15</sup>

## Regional and local levels

- Divest public funds from all fossil fuels related investments as well as companies violating human rights and contributing to climate change or environmental degradation
- Compile and share guidelines for investing public funds in ecologically and socially responsible assets – preferably locally
- Exchange with other municipalities about divestment and reinvestment strategies

# Principles and Preconditions for Sustainable Development

To successfully implement the aforementioned recommendations and demands, several principles must be integrated into the political consciousness. Global partnerships, cooperation based on fairness and solidarity, education and awareness raising, appropriate legal framework conditions as well as

financial support are essential if we are to successfully transform our world for the better. This transformation, sustainable development and the goal of guaranteeing a good life for all is a challenge for each and every one of us.

## Building Bridges – Local Partnerships with a Global Impact



Interacting with other communities and experiencing other realities first-hand fosters understanding for other cultures, provides opportunities for mutual learning and prompts action. It also opens up new perspectives for alternative social structures, ways of life and concepts. Climate Alliance helps to build bridges between

European municipalities and indigenous communities. These global partnerships are an important opportunity for municipalities to acknowledge their global responsibility and to campaign for climate justice according to the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities".

## Fair in the Future – Supporting Education and Awareness Raising



Education creates opportunities and has a lasting impact on our lives. Encouraging critical thinking through awareness raising, political education and capacity building are essential drivers of socio-economic and ecological justice. Classic educational institutions and external learning centres as well as cities and towns play an important role. In addition to

campaign work and educational offers for all age groups, differentiated and critical perspectives on a variety of topics help in the development of a thriving global civil society. We need transparency, freely available information and opportunities for participation for successful awareness raising and comprehensive capacity building.

## Sustainable Financial Support



Even the best ideas and recommendations cannot be implemented without the necessary funding. To give subnational authorities and indigenous peoples the means to truly make a difference, we must adapt funding conditions to their realities and facilitate applications for funding.

Through its financing instruments for external cooperation and assistance, the EU is a main source of funding for indigenous peoples and local authorities alike. Simpli-

fying processes and criteria for EU funding, taking into account the specificities of decision-making in subnational authorities, and making funds more readily available for smaller scale projects is essential to improve access to funding.

We must ensure that financial flows coming from various initiatives and institutions are channelled in the right direction so that they can support ambitious projects.



# Climate Justice – A Holistic Approach

Truly sustainable development calls for an understanding that the hurdles we face are not only environmental, but increasingly also of a social and economic nature. The policy recommendations set out in this paper are thus fittingly based on Climate Alliance’s principles for just climate action:

- FAIR** — acting in ways characterised by respect, transparency and the spirit of partnership.
- NATURE-BASED** — contributing to sustainable, closed-loop systems that bring the needs of society into harmony with nature.
- LOCAL** — concentrating on the local sourcing of goods and energy.
- RESOURCE-SAVING** — leading to the use of fewer resources, not more of them.
- DIVERSE** — making optimal use of differences and understanding that there is no one size fits all answer.

**Our recommendations take a holistic, big picture approach that will prove critical to success. By implementing the policy recommendations outlined in this document while striving for political coherency, we will be well on our way to achieving a good life for all.**



Rio Negro community hosting Climate Alliance Austria, Brasil

# Appendix

- <sup>1</sup> "A Sustainable European Future: The EU Response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Council Conclusions" (June 2017)
- <sup>2</sup> Council Conclusions on Indigenous Peoples (May 2017), based on "Implementing EU External Policy on Indigenous Peoples" (October 2016)  
<http://bit.ly/2gWq7Xe>
- <sup>3</sup> "The new European consensus on development – our world, our dignity, our future" (Juni 2017)  
<http://bit.ly/2w2YEBQ>
- <sup>4</sup> European Parliament resolution of 23 June 2016 on the implementation report on the Energy Efficiency Directive  
<http://bit.ly/2x7ELFI>
- <sup>5</sup> "Active for more Comfort: Passive House"  
<http://bit.ly/2wBVklo>
- <sup>6</sup> European Parliament resolution of 4 April 2017 on palm oil and the deforestation of rainforests (2016/2222(INI))  
<http://bit.ly/2vl0GD6>
- <sup>7</sup> The impact of EU consumption on deforestation, technical report 2013  
<http://bit.ly/1IKhwz>
- <sup>8</sup> European Parliament Resolution of 4 April 2017 on palm oil and deforestation of rainforests (2016/2222(INI))  
<http://bit.ly/2vl0GD6>
- <sup>9</sup> Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) aims to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber. A Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) is a legally binding trade agreement between the European Union and a timber-producing country outside the EU. The purpose of a VPA is to ensure that timber and timber products exported to the EU come from legal sources. The agreements also help timber-exporting countries stop illegal logging by improving regulation and governance of the forest sector.

- <sup>10</sup> The impact of EU consumption on deforestation, technical report 2013  
<http://bit.ly/1IKhwLz>
- <sup>11</sup> The Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Criteria is a set of standards for a company's operations that socially-conscious investors use to screen investments. ESG refers to the three central factors in measuring the sustainability and ethical impact of an investment in a company or business.
- <sup>12</sup> Financing a sustainable European economy, EU High-Level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance (July 2017)  
<http://bit.ly/2vwQYi7>
- <sup>13</sup> "A Sustainable European Future: The EU Response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Council Conclusions" (20 June 2017)
- <sup>14</sup> In Germany, the Federal Ministry for the Environment's publication, "Den ökologischen Wandel gestalten: Integriertes Umweltprogramm 2030" repeatedly refers to "the development of a catalogue for the environmentally just investment of public funds".
- <sup>15</sup> In Norway, the Ethical Guidelines for the Government Pension Fund Global (GPF) have been in place since 2004 and are evaluated by the Council on Ethics. It provides an evaluation of whether investments in specified companies are inconsistent with the ethical guidelines.



# Legal Notice

Published September 2017  
All rights reserved



Climate Alliance

Climate Alliance  
European Secretariat

Galvanistr. 28, 60486 Frankfurt am Main  
Germany  
T. +49 69 717139-0  
E. europe@climatealliance.org  
climatealliance.org

Climate Alliance editorial team: Thomas Brose, Silke Lunnebach, Sara Schmitt Pacifico, Annika Sutter and Sarah Mekjian

External editorial team: Janina Wich, Splendid Design Co. and Denise Dewey (English version)

Authors: Thomas Brose, Silke Lunnebach, Sara Schmitt Pacifico, Annika Sutter and Madlie Le Bihan, Climate Alliance, Clara Weichelt, Dimitra Kyriakopoulou, Anatoliki S.A., Zoltan Hajdu, Focus Eco Center, Erik Fuhlbrugge, Municipality of Zoersel, Patricia Kandler, Climate Alliance Austria, Bernadette-Julia Felsch, State Capital of Munich, Community of Sarayaku, Andreas Wolter, City of Cologne and with the support and information of all project partners

Design and graphics: Splendid Design Co. [www.we-are-splendid.com](http://www.we-are-splendid.com)

Printed on 100% recycling paper (Blue Angel)

Pictures:

Page 1: Reflex Environmental Association / Climate Alliance Hungary  
Page 11: Patrice Bamberg  
Page 13: Climate Alliance Austria

This publication has been produced in the framework of the project "EYD 2015: The Future We Want – Local Authorities for Sustainable Development" with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Climate Alliance and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



**A good life is simple**  
overdeveloped.eu



Climate Alliance of European cities with indigenous rainforest peoples | Alianza del Clima  
District court of Frankfurt am Main | Registry No: VR10149 | VAT ID: DE244331692 | Presidents: Holger Matthäus and Tine Heyse

