

PRESENTATION **NOTES**

FOR AMBASSADORS



1. CLIMATE TALKS AND ACTIONS

In the mid-1990s UN climate talks were organised to establish legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The very **first UN climate change conference** was held in **1995** in Berlin, Germany.

Six years ago, in **2009**, the **Copenhagen** climate talks that were supposed to reach a very ambitious global agreement **completely failed**.

On the last day of the talks the leaders of the United States, China, South Africa, Brazil and India came up with an **agreement** that was **far worse** than the one already in place.

Since then, all the yearly COPs have only managed to save the negotiation process, leaving the most pressing issue – namely the urgent need for the world to **reduce its greenhouse gas emissions** so **global warming can be limited to 2°C** – completely aside.

Climate activists, environmental organisations and the green political movement have been deeply affected by the outcomes of Copenhagen. But the mood from activists, associations and the green movement has changed. Across the world and in

Europe, several great citizens' and local Greens initiatives are mushrooming.

Many people have understood that the world we live in cannot continue as it is. Many have rolled up their sleeves and come up with great local, national, transnational and sometimes global positive initiatives that have not only helped reduce carbon emissions significantly but also show that long-term sustainable living is possible.

All these **new concepts** such as **fair trade, local agriculture, cooperative banks, local currencies**, the growing development of the **sharing economy** etc... must now be **pushed further** so that they are rapidly noticed by our decision makers and become the norm.

The recent scientific reports show that we are reaching a **turning point on climate change**. We greens want to

1. Ensure that more and more people become aware that significant change is needed and that concrete actions are possible,
2. Help all green initiatives to gain more and more visibility and push them forward,
3. Ensure that decision makers and politicians witness these citizens' demands and Green initiatives and act, in Paris and beyond.

2. WHAT IS THE COP 21?

Six years after Copenhagen, the 21st UN climate talks (also known as the Conference of the Parties – or 'COP') will take place in **Paris** in **December 2015**.

Like in Copenhagen, this 'COP' is supposed to produce a final global agreement to cut greenhouse gas emissions that will have to be implemented by 2020.

Many lobbyists and some states have been trying to undermine the importance and ambition of the future deal despite numerous serious warning by scientists. **World governments must now stop slowing the process down.**



3. WHERE WE ARE RIGHT NOW

The latest scientific report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), published at the end of 2014, presented clear, **unequivocal evidence of the warming of our climate system** and that **human activities** have been the **dominant cause** of observed climate change since the middle of the 20th century. The climate-change impacts are already visible in natural and human systems on all continents and across the oceans.

From 2000 to 2010, global greenhouse gas emissions were the highest in human history. A successful UN agreement in Paris would need to ensure a climatically safe future where global temperatures are limited to well below 2°C so that irreversible changes are avoided.

Governments must put into practice their commitment to limit global warming to well below 2°C.

However, scientists' reports have shown governments are not showing the commitment necessary to achieve this goal. Currently agreed policy puts temperatures on course to hit around 4°C by the end of the century. The remaining 'global carbon budget' – the limit of what we can still emit in the future – must be well below 1000 gigatonnes of CO₂ to have a reasonable chance of limiting global warming below the 2°C line.

4. OUR FIGHTS

In the numerous reports available, such as those produced by the IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – scientists say that to keep warming below 2°C requires „near zero emissions of carbon dioxide and other long-lived greenhouse gases by the end of the century.“

For this we need to fundamentally transform the economy and adopt a global goal to phase out greenhouse gases completely by 2050. The Greens are fighting at all levels to ensure that all governments ramp up their ambition. When it comes to energy, Greens call for energy efficiency and energy saving and demand the end of fossil fuel subsidies and the redirection of investment to a global renewable energy revolution.

Since industrialization began, humans have emitted around 2000 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide, which means that the world is already 2/3 of the way through its total budget. The fact that global emissions are still rising means that the remaining 1000 gigatonnes would be used up within the next 25 years. The **carbon budget is a politically complex issue**, mainly because of the difficulties involved in allocating it fairly among countries. Moreover, respecting the budget would also mean leaving at least three quarters of all known fossil fuels in the ground and therefore stopping any investment in dirty energy sources.

The **UN text** is currently being **negotiated** and there are absolutely **no guarantees** on which elements will be integrated in the final **Paris deal**. For the Greens, the UN climate summit in **Paris will be a rare and crucial opportunity for the world to move forward and speed up the ongoing transformation to a zero carbon / 100% renewable future.**

The Greens have always put a lot of pressure on at local, national, EU and global levels, to ensure that EU governments act at both national and EU levels so that the EU does its utmost to reach an adequate agreement in Paris but also so that the EU starts its work at home and reduces all its CO₂ emissions and pollution as quickly as possible and in the most sensible way.

But of course, for the energy transition to happen as fast as possible, the Greens also have a much more holistic approach. **Climate concerns our ways of life.** Reducing our emissions will not only create great opportunities to create green jobs, it will also enable us to protect our health from air pollution, to protect our soil, water and forests, to protect our favourite food items but also our culture and traditions, to make sure that banks stop investing in dirty and dangerous energy sources, to ensure that our trading partners in developing countries really benefit from our exchanges, to protect vulnerable states etc... Greens defend a vision that makes sense.



5. OUR DEMANDS FOR THE COP21 IN PARIS... AND BEYOND

Although every country will have to contribute to the effort to reduce their climate impact, the EU has to step up its ambition to ensure the future UN climate agreement, a Paris Protocol, is sealed in December 2015 and is up to the challenge of maintaining climate change to well below 2°C.

THE GREENS IN EUROPE DEMAND THAT IN PARIS THE EU

- Increases its current ambition and stops all carbon emission and phases-in 100% renewable energy by 2050
 - Commits to shift public support (finance and policy) away from fossil fuels towards climate resilience and universal and fair access to sustainable energy
 - Commits to more effort to reduce emissions wherever possible. The EU should encourage other parties to the Montreal Protocol to make efficient use of its instruments and urgently agree a global phase-out of fluorinated greenhouse gases
- (powerful gases that are thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide) to contribute to climate mitigation in Dubai in November 2015
- Leads by example, thereby encouraging all countries to make an adequate contribution and drive a race to the top encouraging other countries to step up their climate efforts
 - Sets a binding framework for emission reductions consistent with science and the 2°C objective and ensures that the future deal is binding and that it will apply to all countries
 - Ensures that the process and implementation of the Paris deal is transparent and quantifiable
 - Increases financial support to climate action in developing countries
 - Maintain human rights at the core of climate action

6. MAINTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE CORE OF CLIMATE ACTION

If governments fail to listen to scientists' warnings and citizens' calls, the Greens in Europe will continue to take whatever action is necessary – at every local, national and international level – to ensure that climate catastrophe is avoided and that the change that is so strongly demanded by scientists and a growing part of society is finally backed by governments.

Scientists, citizens and Greens in many parts of the world have given politicians sufficient warnings about the need to reorganise our societies and reduce our carbon footprint.

Let's now ensure that the work gets done.