



# DNR DEUTSCHER NATURSCHUTZRING

MY VOICE FOR EUROPE'S FUTURE

ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS WITH REGARD  
TO THE 2019 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

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# MY VOICE FOR EUROPE'S FUTURE

## ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS WITH REGARD TO THE 2019 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

Europe has achieved a great deal: peace, prosperity and security. Now the European Union (EU) needs to take the next step and transform the old continent into an eco-friendly and philanthropic community of values. The EU faces a profound transformation of the current economic system, if we refuse to destroy livelihoods and the basis of production for 500 million people. Within the international Paris Climate and the 2030 Agenda agreements in New York, the international community has agreed that sustainability is a guiding principle in politics. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must form the basis for Europe's future and be implemented consistently. In particular, the EU needs to radically reform agricultural policy, strengthen biodiversity protection, enforce social justice and align energy and climate objectives with the Paris climate agreement and to finally implement it to meet the UN Sustainability Goals.

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The UK's Brexit vote and the rising right-wing populist and anti-European trends have raised fundamental questions regarding the European Union's direction and its shared values. The challenges we face such as climate change, the ecologi-

cal crisis, global refugee and migrant movements, our dependence on resource imports, social inequality and the consequences of financial and economic crises can only be addressed by member states' combined efforts. Today more than ever, the people of Europe need the EU. The European Union can only emerge stronger from this crisis if it is further democratised and made more equitable and sustainable as a whole. Our elected representatives in the European Parliament are of crucial importance in achieving this.

A free and caring society as well as an intact environment worth living in has the potential to be the connecting element for a sustainable and democratic Europe.

In the next five years the EU must introduce and promote ecological, social and political restructuring. The EU needs a sustainable energy and transport transformation, the systematic decarbonisation of industry and fundamental reorientation of agricultural policy supported by launching a nature and species protection offensive. The objective is to use significantly less energy, resources and land and to conserve our natural livelihood both here and globally.

## PROMOTING THE EU'S DEMOCRATISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

People's economic activities must be kept within environmental limits to further ensure their safety and wellbeing. Every year people exhaust a year's supply of natural resources faster than the year before. The EU must quickly and consistently reduce its ecological footprint. Although Europe is a desired place

of residence, dissatisfaction and euroscepticism increase within its population. It is therefore imperative that the EU puts people at the centre of policies. Reducing democratic deficits, creating effective transparency of decision making within and between the institutions and fully implementing and consistently enforcing legislation is of crucial importance in this connection. Economy should not be an end in itself but serve people's wellbeing and not be harmful to the environment. Environment protection became an important policy area and citizens appreciate the EU's engagement because they have long realised that clean air, uncontaminated water, an intact nature and a poison-free environment can only be ensured by transnational cooperation and common minimum standards. Therefore the EU needs a serious transition to sustainable development within our planet's carrying capacity.

## REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Strengthen the EU and turn the European Union's vision into the vision of its citizens and a global model for social justice.
- Create an effective shift to sustainable development within our planet's carrying capacity. Make sure that the EU internalises sustainability as an overarching guiding priority principle and adopts targeted measures to achieve the UN Sustainability Goals by 2030.
- Support the call of the 8th European Parliament to align the EU Financial Framework with UN Sustainability Goals – in the end, budgeting falls under means for policy making.
- Work towards abolishing the unanimity rule for fiscal aspects. The unanimity principle thwarts progressive policies. The EU could work more effectively without being blocked by the particular interests of individual states.
- Advocate for abolishing environmentally harmful and climate-damaging subsidies and for the introduction of pollution taxes.
- See to better implementation and enforcement of EU legislation rather than supporting further deregulation to the economy's benefit.
- Call for a more ambitious 8th Environment Action Programme and its implementation. The EU needs overall guidelines for its environmental policy stating and establishing environmental objectives by a strategic and basic framework that includes specific measures.
- ☞→ Advocate for the EU to pursue a trade policy characterised by transparent decisionmaking procedures not thwarting social and ecological sustainable development goals.
- Campaign for a democratic EU tangible for people with both transparent and comprehensible decision-making procedures. Lobbying must be disclosed and regulated and not merely by a mandatory register.
- Promote for all concerned Directorates-General, Council formations and Committees concerned to be involved when legislative procedures relevant to the environment take place.
- Support a participative EU that fully implements the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, thus leading to better decisions and preventing planning conflicts.

## FOR A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TRANSFORMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS CLIMATE GOALS

Combatting the man-made climate crises is one of the greatest challenges facing mankind. To meet the Paris Agreement's global objective to keep global warming to significantly below 2 or if possible 1.5 degrees Celsius, the EU must considerably increase its climate policy efforts. Only an increased greenhouse gas reduction constitutes a fair share of the EU when implementing the climate agreement. In the near future, the EU needs an ambitious long-term climate strategy aiming at climate neutrality by 2050. For this, it is imperative to tighten 2030 EU climate goals and to adopt and consistently implement effective measures.

### REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- The current EU climate goal (40 percent reduction by 2030 compared to 1990 levels) is not consistent with the Paris objective to keep global temperature rise to significantly below 2 or if possible 1.5 degrees Celsius. According to the latest studies, the EU must reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 70 percent by 2030 and by at least 95 percent by 2050 compared to 1990 levels to make a fair contribution to the 1.5 degree Celsius objective. Advocate for raising the European emission reduction goal to at least 55 percent by 2030.
- For the period between 2021 until 2030, the level of ambition during the review of the European emission trading and effort sharing is not appropriate to send a sufficient price signal relevant to investments. Furthermore, there are currently no technologies to remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere in a way that is permanent, safe, sustainable and financially viable. The yearly reduction of emission permits should be significantly more ambitious in the next EU legislature. Support, as a first step, the introduction of a regional CO<sub>2</sub> minimum price of at least 30 EUR/t for the electricity sector from 2020 that will be continuously increased over time.
- Advocate for reducing energy consumption and boosting energy efficiency by 40 percent and increasing the share of renewable energies to at least 45 percent in final energy consumption by 2030. Solar and wind power are the backbones of future energy supply. Support a fast and ecologically sound and sustainable expansion of renewable energies. Provide incentives for a decentralised energy production generated by citizens and entirely based on renewable energies. In the residential, production industry, agriculture and transport sector energy saving and efficiency measures must be implemented by appropriate objectives, minimum requirements and incentives.
- In the long-term and for climate policy reasons, the EU must end its dependence on the fossil fuel natural gas. Reject investments in CO<sub>2</sub> intensive infrastructures such as natural gas pipelines and terminals, insofar as they do not serve the shift to renewable gas. Support measures to interconnect consumption sectors and decentralised renewable energy storage.
- Provide support for regions undergoing transformation. The profound structural change from an economy dependant on fossil fuels to a climate neutral economy must be structurally and socially cushioned. When pursuing the urgently required closure of coal-fired power plants, people should not be left behind.
- Make use of Brexit's opportunities such as the UK's consequential withdrawal from the Euratom Treaty. This agreement as well as subordinate EU legislation on nuclear safety and EU state aid legislation must be amended to take increasing risks posed by life time extensions of old nuclear power plants close to the border into account.

# SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCE USE

Infinite growth on a finite planet is impossible. When it comes to resources, we are living on credit. The way to sustainability is only achievable by a radical transformation of the economy. The transformation of energy intensive (basic) industries must swiftly be initiated to reach climate neutrality by 2050. The EU budget, together with other accompanying measures, must play a stronger role in the transformation.

## REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Bring research and innovation into line with the great challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, resource scarcity and justice. Mere technological approaches for the energy, transport or agricultural transformation are not sufficient. The shift can only be accomplished with a systematic approach together with society and social innovations as well as an economy willing to take responsibility for the common good.
- Support a sustainable European industry and research policy that particularly promotes market entries of new environmentally sound future technologies. Any research promotion for projects not in line with Paris climate and UN sustainability objectives must cease.
- Support the development of environmentally sound future technologies such as energy storage, energy efficient products, demand-side management, digital remote control of units, durable and repairable products and services that significantly save resources.
- Advocate for the EU to avoid waste and to intensify repair and reuse as well as recycling of products. A consistent recycling economy can only be accomplished by financially favouring products and services developed accordingly.
- Within the scope of the EU Plastic Strategy, support sustainable use of plastics, regulation of micro plastic and global producer liability for plastic applications. Manage the use of plastics by energy and material input taxes and implement reusable applications. Regulate diffusion of liquid plastics – i.e. polymers – within the scope of REACH.
- Advocate for products to only contain substances posing no risk to human health or the environment when it comes to the reuse of materials. Participants of the economic chain must have access to any important information on used materials.
- See to an absolute reduction of resource use in Germany and the EU by introducing an objective for the per-capita consumption of raw materials that will be gradually reduced.
- Take care that the precautionary principle is systematically applied to subsidies and incentives. It is conceivable, for instance, to impose a tax on raw materials and also individual materials as well as in individual economy and consumptions sectors.

## INITIATING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT TRANSFORMATION

For many years, the transport sector, especially the combustion engine, is the problem child of climate and environmental policy and now even increasingly of the European national economies. Motorised private and freight transport is still increasing accompanied by high greenhouse gas emissions. Periodical scandals such as forbidden agreements and systematic manipulations of exhaust emissions measurements and CO<sub>2</sub> limit values, permanent noise and air pollution and nitrous gases and fine particulate matter in our cities are an urgent call for action. Billions of tax subsidies of different kinds and maintaining outdated and inflated infrastructure projects conflict with sustainability.

## REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Champion environmentally sound mobility and cities worth living in by alternative mobility concepts with more walking, cycling and local public transport. The transport transformation requires doubling public transport. Less motorised transport means less air and noise emissions, land use and degradation, more traffic safety and ultimately a better quality of life.
- Sustainable mobility transfers freight transport from road to rail and waterways and requires compliance with high ecological standards. The transition benefits the climate and reduces noise exposure and pollutant loads. Campaign for tax money to be used for expanding and maintaining rail infrastructure. This will require fair competition conditions between modes of transport and an incentive system for transferring freight transport from road to rail.
- Place improving European rail transport high on the agenda on strengthening Europe. A European railway initiative requires a European agreement and an investment initiative for fast cross-border and long-distance train connections within and outside the EU as well as a framework for better cooperation of the respective railway companies. Flanking measures for reducing train path prices support both rail freight and rail passenger transport.
- Call for reducing exhaust pollution from shipping and support the introduction of an emissions control zone for the entire European coastal zone. The North and Baltic sea area where only low-sulphur fuels with a maximum of 0.1 percent sulphur are permitted, should be exemplary for Europe.
- Aviation, by far the most climate-damaging mode of mass transport, is quickly increasing across Europe driven, among other things, by the exemption from kerosene tax. Push for imposing a tax on kerosene over all of Europe and abolishing transport subsidies harmful to the environment. Provide for introducing ambitious CO2 limit values for passenger cars and light commercial vehicles on the basis of actual emissions. Emission free mobility and its interconnection with the energy transition must be promoted by targeted incentives for the transport transformation
- Provide for extensive citizens' participation at an early stage and unrestricted verifiability of government decisions by granting rights of action and information rights in Europe as part of the transport transformation.

## FOR A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

The EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) bears special responsibility to protect our natural resources, since land used for agriculture and forestry represents 50 percent of Europe's total area. Soil, water and air became heavily polluted by intensifying and industrialising agriculture and animal farming and due to high nutrient inputs, greenhouse gases and pesticides which lead to a dramatic loss of biodiversity. The massive use of pesticides significantly contributes to an insect decline of up to 80 percent. However, pollinating insects are indispensable for food production. This clearly negative environmental record is diametrically opposed to global sustainable development goals. Consequently, fundamental changes through a consistent reform of CAP are urgently needed.

## REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Advocate a new agricultural and food policy led by ecological, rural and environmentally sound agriculture that respects animal welfare, with regional value-added chains and highly structured agricultural landscapes. Put human health, biodiversity and animal welfare at the heart of sustainable agricultural policy. Call for an EU-wide export ban for animals sent to slaughter and much shorter transportation times.
- Call for applying the principle “public money for public services” during the current round of reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy and for broad public discussions. Single area payments should be phased out. Subsidies should only be allowed for developing a sustainable system with specific ecological minimum standards for clearly defined services in the fields environment, climate, water, soils, nature, species and animal protection and for preserving rural agriculture. Attractive payments for agricultural services for nature conservation and for developing rural areas in line with environmental and climate goals. Agricultural methods and farming systems that contribute fully to these objectives such as ecological, husbandry systems respecting animal welfare and grazing require special support.
- Promote environmental and animal welfare standards at EU level and their enforcement also in agricultural areas. The departments responsible for environment and animal welfare protection and development policy need to be fully included during the CAP planning phase on EU, member states level, and where necessary, at a regional level. It is important to ensure that all relevant economy and civil society actors participate (partnership principle).
- Advocate for agriculture to meet its legal obligations arising from climate and air pollution control legislation in the future, because agriculture is one of the main sources of climate-damaging greenhouse gases, especially methane and air pollutants such as ammonia. Only clearly defined reduction goals protect the climate, soils, health and biodiversity.
- Provide for significantly reducing the use of pesticides and a reform of the EU approval procedure. The examination of pesticide active substances must be conducted and published by independent scientific institutions. It is also necessary to consider the combined effects of different substances such as environmental and sublethal effects. Monitoring the use of pesticides with a special focus on biodiversity must be mandatory. Damaging substances such as neonicotinoids should be prohibited. Soils should not act as sinks for entire generations of pesticides.
- Advocate for regulating any new genetic engineering procedure under the EU GMO legislation to guarantee compliance with the precautionary principle and the freedom of choice. All plants and animals produced by new procedures must undergo risk assessments before entering the market. Campaign for labelling GMO-fed animal products. Provide for harmonising various “GMO-free standards” to ensure a single internal market. Stand up for maintaining zero tolerance for genetically modified organism in food and seeds that are not authorised.

## FOR AN OFFENSIVE IN NATURE AND SPECIES CONSERVATION

Almost a quarter of all wildlife animals in Europe are endangered or threatened with extinction. Management plans with conservation goals and measures exist only for half of the Natura 2000 reserves established for the protection of endangered species and habitats. Pollution-free air and soils are indispensable preconditions for high quality drinking water and groundwater, the production of healthy food, any economic activity and human and animal

health. The EU is committed to halting the loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems and its ecosystem services until 2020, and where possible, to restore ecosystems. However, the EU will not reach the targets put forward in the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The EU itself must provide funding for nature protection measures it initiated. As a main market for wildlife animals and products the EU also bears central responsibility for taking action against poaching and plundering of endangered species.

## REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Encourage the EU Parliament to immediately develop a biodiversity strategy for the period after 2020.
- Advocate for sufficient resources within an earmarked EU nature fund in the Multiannual Financial Framework that serves to finance Natura 2000 and further biodiversity measures particular those performed by land users. Additionally, strengthen the LIFE programme after 2020 as a targeted funding instrument to support innovative and experimental projects for the protection of biodiversity.
- Help to ensure that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) when undergoing a fitness check will not be opened or watered down and instead, call for specifying the Directive by appropriate guidelines and for fully implementing it to achieve a good ecological water status at a sooner stage. Prevent watering down objectives. Provide for coherence in other European policy areas, particularly transport, agriculture and chemicals in need of alignment with the WFD objectives.
- Violations of EU environmental law need to be promptly identified and consistently penalised by initiating infringement procedures. To this end, the EU's capacity and competence must be significantly strengthened, also regarding remote sensing.
- Oppose any attempt to soften or water down EU environmental laws, for example not to agree to downgrade the protection status of wolves. Provide for the protection status of wolves and other large predators to be maintained and consistently implemented. It is possible for people to coexist with wildlife animals. Wolves and pasture grazing do not exclude each other. Promote appropriate financial and practical support for grazing livestock owners, especially sheep farms that perform an essential contribution to biodiversity and nature conservation.
- Facilitate protection of soils from sealing using concrete and erosion or destruction by inappropriate cultivation practises. Soils are full of life, contain gigantic carbon stocks and are often centuries old – they are "Europe's rainforests".
- Make sure that trans-European green corridors (TEN-G) for the biotope network are developed through an earmarked budget. They should be promoted analogous to the networks for energy (TEN-E) or transport (TEN-T) through the Connecting Europe Facility.
- Develop the current European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) further into a sustainable marine protection fund. Strengthen the promotion of alternative fishing gears enabling fishermen to fish in an environmentally sound way and to generate fair prices for sustainable products. Call for effective and ecological implementation of the EU's reformed Common Fisheries Policy and acknowledge the goal of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to achieve a good environmental status of the European seas by 2020 the latest, based on a coherent and well managed network of protected areas with sufficient unused areas serving as sanctuaries for endangered species and habitats.

- Call for reducing underwater noise in our seas as required by the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Promote intense activities against littering the oceans within the scope of the EU Plastics Strategy, the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the action plans of the regional marine conventions OSPAR and HELCOM. The objective to reduce plastic waste items by 50 percent by 2020 is only achievable by introducing ambitious measures relating to conservation of resources, waste prevention, waste management and ecological product development and substitution.
- Stop all projects and political initiatives to exploit mineral deep-sea resources and stand up for a strict ban on commercial whaling.
- Stand up for a European and global ban on ivory trade and for an EU Lacey Act, a EU regulation prohibiting the import, possession and sale of animals illegally caught in their home country and exported. Currently animal smugglers can openly and legally sell such animals, insofar as they are only protected nationally in the country of origin but not by CITES or the EU wildlife trade regulations.

## STRENGTHENING EUROPE'S ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Global costs arising from the harmful effects of chemicals amount to more than ten percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP). REACH, the central piece of EU chemicals legislation, is currently under review. REACH's potential in view of sustainable development regarding production and handling of hazardous substances is far from exhausted. The European strategy for a poison-free environment could bring significant ecological achievements, better health protection and could serve as a model to initiate similar developments in other regions of the world. More than 430.000 people die prematurely in Europe as a consequence of air pollution. Pursuant to the European National Emissions Ceilings Directive (NEC) stricter emissions limit values apply to air pollutants from 2025.

### REQUESTS TO FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Place human health and not merely economic interests at the core of EU chemicals legislation and strategies under review. Watch out that this does not happen at the expense of animal welfare. Call for a worldwide ban on animal testing for cosmetic products and for the member states' consistent implementation of the EU Animal Experiments Directive.
- Advocate for effectively implementing the chemicals regulation REACH in line with the 2020 sustainability goals. Substances of very high concern (SVHC) need to be regulated in compliance with the precautionary principle and replaced by safe alternatives, and the consumer information right in REACH must be strengthened accordingly.
- Call for better coordination of legislative activities regarding chemicals, products and waste in view of sustainability and a clean circular economy. According to the precautionary principle hazardous substances in consumer products must be regulated and may not enter the recycling circuit. The polluter pays' principle must apply; it is unacceptable that society bears the repair costs for the economy's environmental impacts.

- Support regulation of endocrine-disrupting chemicals (ED) in consumer-oriented products to be strictly aligned with the precautionary principle. Call for extending the French prohibition of bisphenol A (BPA) in food packaging to the whole of the EU. The preventive prohibition of active endocrine-disrupting chemicals as stipulated in pesticides legislation must remain unaffected.
- Advocate for higher air quality standards and reducing air pollution within the scope of the Air Quality Directive when undergoing a fitness check.
- During legislative procedures, pay attention to whether the European precautionary principle is applied. Europe's citizens must be able to rely on higher priority to be given to environment protection and human health than to economical interests.

## CONTACT

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The German League for Nature and Environment (DNR) is the umbrella organisation of 89 organisations working in nature, animal and environment protection and together representing eleven million people. The organisations under DNR's umbrella are united by the goals to stand up for biodiversity, resource protection, combatting climate change and a sustainable and environmentally sound economy.

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