

OUR GREEN DEAL FOR EUROPE - A JUST ONE

WRITTEN BY YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS EUROPE

INTRODUCTION

This Youth Proposal for a Green Deal for Europe is a result of joint forces from multiple organizations and presents a narrative of the future we want, and of the urgent intersectional transformation that is needed in our society. The Proposal presents visions from youth, especially underrepresented youth, for a socially just and ecologically sound future and highlights the momentum for system change. The Proposal is supported by diverse coalitions, initiatives, organizations, and communities, as many are concerned by the current neoliberal, colonial, racist, and capitalist forces in society. We are currently at a tipping point, where we need bold demands and coordinated collective actions to build an equitable, sustainable, and socially just future that we all want to live in. The time for bold collective actions to build a better world for everyone is – NOW!

We celebrate the need for interconnectedness and cooperation within and between communities, generations, institutions, countries, and sectors. The scale of the intersecting challenges that we face can only be tackled with a big, bold, and joint plan. Small, detached, incremental changes won't cut it! We strongly believe that we need a strong united front with a radical vision of the future, rooted in solidarity, justice, and care for our communities and our environment. The solutions need to be fair for all – free from hate speech, racism, sexism, xenophobia, austerity, and ableism, and will need to be critically shaped. This is why we have created this Youth Proposal, which highlights the voices of the people, and the voices of those who have been desperately silenced by the current system. We are building the foundation for shared visions among young people across the continent and we present guiding principles and policy recommendations informed by our lived experiences and voices of the communities we work with and represent.

For two years, [visions were collected](#) from individuals with different backgrounds and disabilities across Europe, and from all genders and sexualities, including women, men, transgender, non-binary, and those who do not fit into labels. The visions for a better and transformed future are divided according to thematic areas and included as principles and policy recommendations. These are not universal, as every country has a different starting point and different steps they need to take in transforming for the better. However, the Youth Proposal can serve as a roadmap for this process and as an alternative to the EU Green Deal. We want a just Green Deal for Europe, that is based on fair and radical system change and that is inclusive of voices from all people, not just the privileged ones.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Values are fundamental beliefs that guide and motivate our attitudes and actions, and help us to determine what is important to us. Values describe the personal qualities we choose to embody, the sort of person we want to be, the manner in which we treat ourselves and others, and our interaction with the world around us – they provide the general guidelines for conduct.

Societies prioritize certain values and these affect the choices that are made, from healthcare and employment rights to resource management. These choices have lasting impacts on the future. Before we start envisioning the future we want to see, it is important to identify the values that we each possess. For the most common and shared values among European Youth, identified through the collective visioning process, see in the next page.

The values and principles that stand out the most from the collective visioning process are **solidarity, trust, respect, love, and equality**.

Solidarity ensures that there is a deep and consistent commitment to community-centered and long-term change and improvement. It can take many different forms, but regardless of the cause and circumstances, its core principles of support, cooperation, and consciousness remain the same. We come from different backgrounds and have different experiences and worldviews, but this doesn't mean some are less capable than others to contribute – we all have strengths and weaknesses which we can use to tackle the climate crisis in a collective, intersectional approach.

Equality is the recognition that all human beings are of equal worth, deserving dignity, equal rights, and equal access to resources, including knowledge and finances.

The benefit of knowing our shared values is two-fold – firstly, when we are clear about our values, they offer us a solid and guiding foundation, which we can rely on in times of facing a common struggle and when important decisions need to be made. Secondly, they can also help us live well and authentically. Being guided by values may give us the courage to change situations together and inspire us to stay true to who we are or who we want to be. By relying on communication, cooperation, respect, and acknowledgment of our different values, we can work together in solidarity, shoulder to shoulder, to achieve the positive change we envision for the future.

¹<https://www.ethicssage.com/2018/08/what-are-values.html>

²https://youngfoee.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/yfoee_manifesto_final.pdf

³<https://take10volunteer.org/solidarity-activism>



VISIONS

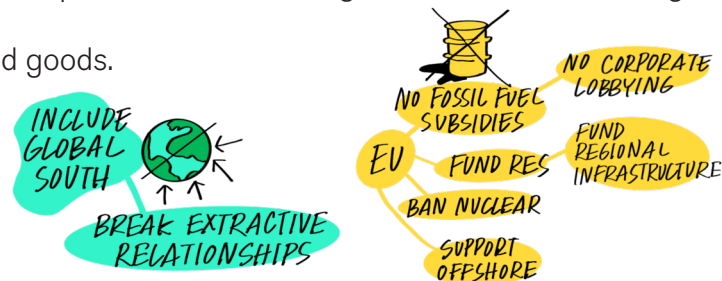
1. Decarbonization: Climate Action, Clean Energy and Smart Mobility

Radical changes are needed to drastically reduce CO2 emissions and decarbonize our society, particularly in our energy and transportation systems. Youth envisions a society based on degrowth, where fossil fuels are banned, sustainable travel options are accessible and safe for all, and renewable energy systems are the norm. Supporting and protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, and including their voices in policymaking processes, are considered essential to ensure just and inclusive decarbonization of our society.

What can local, national and European governments do?

- End the extractive and exploitative relationship with nature and move away from decisions based on profit.
- Meaningfully involve diverse people and communities, including minority groups, in planning and decision-making.
- Resist attempts from big corporations to influence politics.
- Stop exploiting countries in the Global South and ensure seats at the table for everyone affected.
- Redirect investments to developing ethical and sustainable technologies within the energy, transport, and housing sectors.
- Recognize the value of indigenous people as protectors of the world's most crucial ecosystems and benefit from their wisdom, knowledge and participation when restoring nature and remediating the environment.
- Account for emissions and impacts of imported goods.
- Incentivize sustainable use of local resources.
- Promote and support green jobs.

SHIFTING NARRATIVE
AGAINST GAS PROJECTS

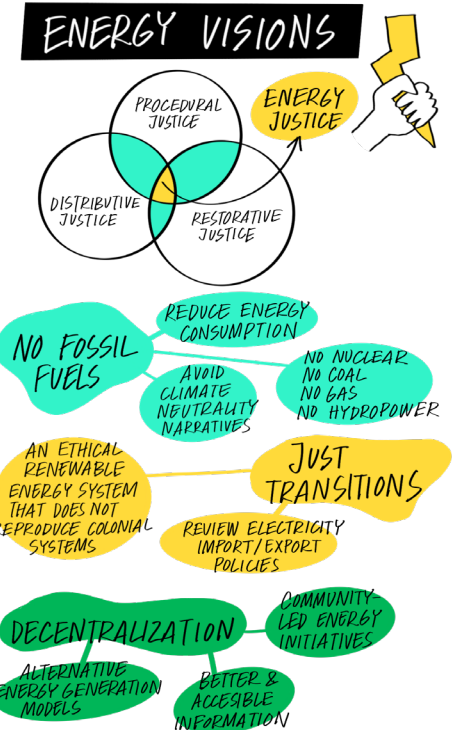


Climate action

- Make polluters pay for their climate and environmental damages (e.g. introduce taxes on activities that are harmful to the climate and the environment, provide exemptions from taxes for sustainable activities and products).
- Stop promoting false mechanisms, like carbon capture and storage and geoengineering, as climate solutions.
- Consider social justice in all climate solutions.
- Declare a climate emergency and try to win public support for climate-related measures.
- Set specific adaptation targets.

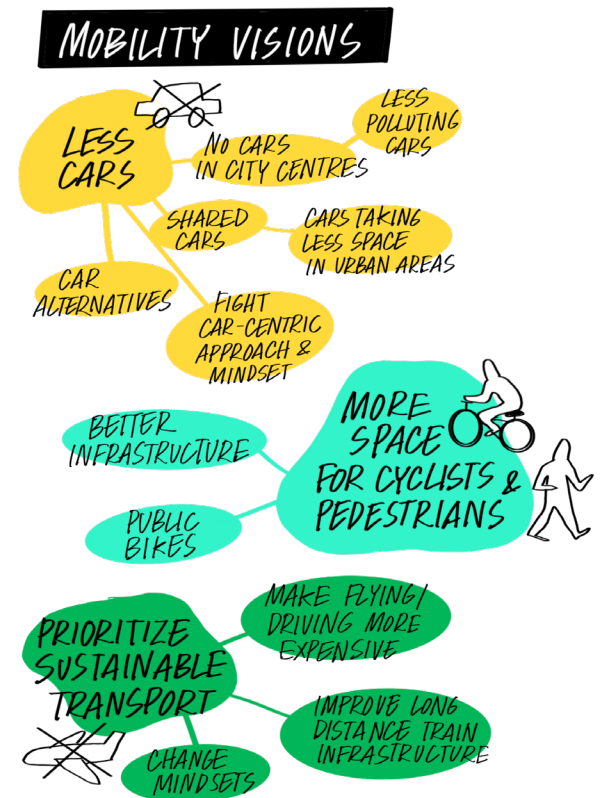
Clean energy

- Ban fossil, nuclear, and hydrogen power.
- Stop subsidizing fossil fuel production and exclude fossil fuels from green/clean energy categories.
- Make fossil fuel companies accountable for their actions.
- Collaborate with other countries to do research on, develop and fund renewable energy systems to make renewable energy easily accessible to every European.
- Stop the energy monopoly, and democratize and decentralized energy production so that people can know and decide where their energy comes from and always have sustainable and ethical energy sources to choose from,
- Acknowledge and tackle energy poverty. Facilitate the process of connecting to the grid and not raise prices for electric energy.
- Encourage communities to create energy cooperatives.
- Set ambitious and specific goals for energy reduction in buildings, transport, etc.



Smart mobility

- Develop a mobility plan, including ambitious targets and solutions accessible to all.
- Fund the decarbonization of the transportation system (e.g. transition to electric cars and trains) and increase carbon taxing.
- Make flying and driving more expensive (e.g. tax airline companies and frequent flyers). The tax income can be used to fund sustainable public transport infrastructure.
- Invest in public transport infrastructure (e.g. bicycle lanes, buses) that includes green areas (e.g. trees along the bike path), so that it is accessible, affordable, efficient, clean, and safe for all. Car alternatives must be as comfortable, rapid, and as direct as cars. This must not come at the expense of further mass exploitation of natural resources and habitats.
- Reallocate space for cars to public transport and cycling/walking.
- Divert traffic outside of towns and leave the centers for cycling and walking.
- Make sustainable mobility education compulsory at schools.
- Provide benefits to businesses that prioritize the development of more efficient vehicles.
- Incentivize people to use public transport and travel sustainably:
 - Provide free or subsidized public transport, at least for marginalized groups.
 - Provide tax reliefs for cyclists.
 - Introduce incentives for private electric vehicles to increase accessibility.
 - Establish cycle-friendly employer certification schemes and reduce incentivization for company cars.



VISIONS

What can businesses do?

- Improving and updating internal policies and investments to be compatible with climate goals.
- Prioritize communities and social and environmental justice – not profit.
- Media corporations can bring publicity to the decarbonization topic.

Climate action

- Stop greenwashing.
- Join the fight to stop corporations' and authorities' extractive relationship with nature.
- Invest in sustainable action plans for the areas they affect.

Smart mobility

- Decarbonize their transportation model. Stop company car schemes and provide e-bikes/e-buses, bike-to-work schemes, car-sharing, and car-pooling instead, as well as benefits to employees who use clean transport.
- Support employees, so they can work from home when possible. Utilize digital technologies (e.g. zoom) to reduce travel and unnecessary commuting.
- Locate their business close to public transport.
- Encourage people to travel via public transport through financial incentives, such as 10% off when booking hotels if you come with public transport.
- Provide customers with information about public transport to make it more accessible.
- Use rail or sea freight instead of trucks or air travel where possible.

Clean energy

- Promote less energy consumption and use more sustainable and local energy sources (e.g. sun and biogas).
- Donate surplus energy to communities and areas suffering from energy poverty.
- Build and invest in energy-efficient or autonomous buildings that utilize renewable energy.
- Fund more community cooperatives.
- Invest in ethical and sustainable banks that don't support fossil fuel companies.
- Provide more diversity of bikes in shops, especially e-bikes.
- Adopt innovative business models for electric vehicles (e.g. energy needs to come from renewable energy sources to be sustainable).
- Use cargo bikes to make last-mile delivery more efficient and sustainable.



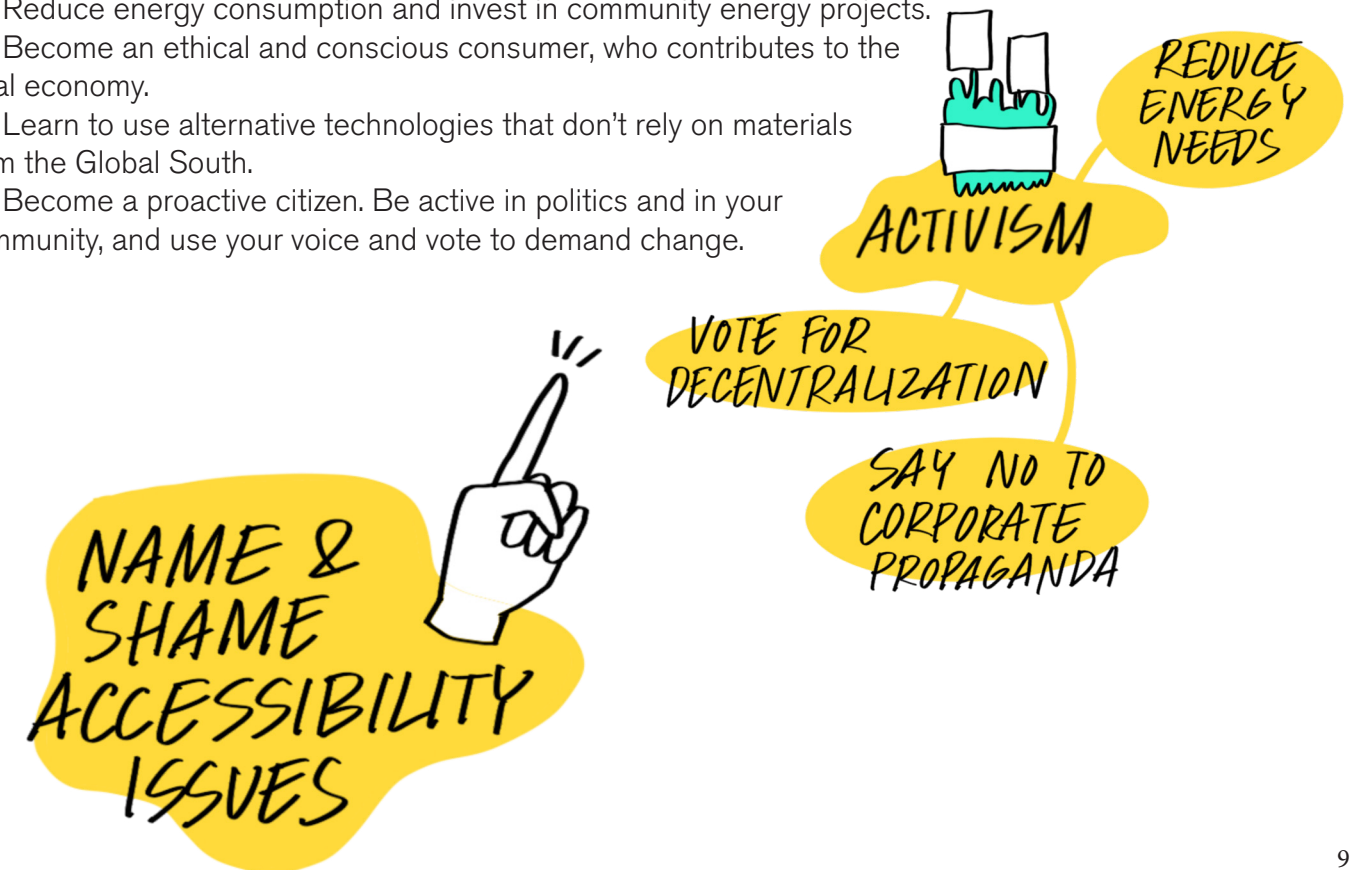
What can communities do?

- Shift cultural norms and opinions, and establish a new mobility culture to fight the car-centric approach and mindset.
- Help ensure the transition towards a more sustainable society is just when it comes to resource use.
- Help tailor messages to local communities and ensure representation and solutions put forward are diverse and inclusive.
- Engage in critical thinking and be informed about current policies and education, to make informed climate action.
- Raise awareness and organize education about renewable energy and safe ways to take public transport and cycle/walk (e.g. at schools or youth movements for both parents and youth).
- Promote active mobility for physical and mental health e.g. offer free walking tours, create events and groups where people can cycle and walk together, develop bike-sharing initiatives, and map safe walking and cycling paths for children.
- Provide platforms for people to report on mobility and safety issues and suggest changes.
- Mobilize to stop energy monopoly and protest against fossil fuel plants near neighborhoods.
- Establish CO2-free neighborhoods: Invest in and create fair local energy cooperatives to decentralize and democratize energy systems.
- Develop initiatives for sharing resources (e.g. bikes, materials) and establish community repair stations.
- Reclaim parking places for creative community spaces (e.g. playgrounds).
- Create local incentives for sustainable businesses.



What can people do?

- Educate themselves and other people, and change mindset and behavior accordingly.
- Say no to propaganda from corporations.
- Use sustainable ways of traveling such as walking, cycling, public transport, and car-sharing. If a car is needed, buy the most sustainable and efficient.
- Avoid flying for non-essential reasons. If necessary, choose the greenest airline.
- Work from home if possible to avoid unnecessary commuting.
- Report issues related to mobility, accessibility, or safety on dedicated platforms.
- Reduce energy consumption and invest in community energy projects.
- Become an ethical and conscious consumer, who contributes to the local economy.
- Learn to use alternative technologies that don't rely on materials from the Global South.
- Become a proactive citizen. Be active in politics and in your community, and use your voice and vote to demand change.



VISIONS

2. Circular Economy: Sustainable Production, Consumption, and Trade

This topic covers visions and recommendations for local, national, and European levels and prioritizes solutions based on the real needs of affected communities and that are improving the lives of people while protecting the ecosystem and preventing a climate catastrophe. The visions covered in this section would aid the collective planning towards reallocating finances and investments to models which guarantee just access to basic goods and services to all.

What can local, national and European governments do?

- Stop treating nature as a resource for unlimited exploitation and as a landfill for waste, and start acknowledging and protecting ecosystem services.
- Introduce an economic system oriented towards the common good, happiness, and well-being (e.g. fair income distribution, less neoliberal).
- Provide easily accessible information on how our actions impact the world and our natural environment.
- Implement real prices on products that include damages to the environment and climate, to change behavior in the Global North and so the Global South can be properly compensated.
- The Global North pays to a repair fund, managed by an independent commission.
- Consult indigenous people during the development of trade agreements with the EU regarding corporate activities on indigenous lands. During these negotiations, indigenous people should be supported by experts to prevent misrepresentation and balance power dynamics.
- Restrict investments underpinned by (neo)colonial actions and realign EU trade agreements with indigenous values and needs.
- End the Energy Charter Treaty and stop Investor-State Dispute Settlements (ISDS) from being included in trade agreements.
- Implement regulations to hinder international corporations from taking over local markets.
- Ensure unsustainable practices are not exported through trade schemes.
- Reduce VAT on local food and products.
- Regulate the use and extraction of limited materials.
- Apply the principle of “reduce-reuse-recycle” when transforming to a circular economy. Minimize waste and stop exporting it to the Global South.
- Prohibit the use of plastic bags and other disposable plastic products.
- Develop proper waste infrastructures, including an optimal number of containers depending on the type and amount of waste generated in a specific area.
- Create digital platforms and applications for easier connection between citizens and waste collectors and processors.
- Stop funding incinerators.
- Restrict the availability of pseudo-sustainable choices.

What can businesses do?

- Stop treating nature as a resource for unlimited exploitation and as a landfill for waste, and start acknowledging and protecting ecosystem services.
- Contribute to a society and economy based on degrowth, happiness, and environmental well-being.
- Engage in needs-based production, not overproduction.
- Change to a circular economy, but consider how different countries might be affected.
- The entire hospitality industry should provide vegan/vegetarian alternatives.

- Provide easily accessible and transparent information about the sustainability of the whole supply chain, the final product, and the recycling process of the company (e.g. include a carbon footprint declaration on every product).
- Stop planned obsolescence and produce products that are of high quality and durable.
- Stop the practice of “fast fashion” and use/promote the subsidization of sustainable textiles such as hemp and linen.
- Help revive arts and crafts in order to enable repairs of objects.
- Buy fresh, locally produced groceries to reduce packaging and transport.
- Reorient production towards upcycling and zero/low carbon footprint.
- Minimize waste and resource use.
- Take responsibility for the recycling of their products.
- Contribute with organic waste to biogas production.
- Provide incentives to implement a solidarity economy.
- Stop exporting waste to the Global South.

What can communities do?

- Consume less, minimize waste, and introduce a no-waste mentality within the community. Spread a culture that doesn't support fast fashion, but where products are exchanged, repaired, and recycled.
- Enable a sharing economy within the community.
- Support farmers who use natural/permaculture practices.
- Prepare food at home and avoid processed food as much as possible.
- Support and stand in solidarity with indigenous people and other minority voices during EU trade agreement negotiations.
- Support local and sustainable production.
- Create digital platforms and applications for easier connection between citizens and waste collectors and processors.
- Encourage ecotourism as a separate branch of rural tourism.
- Strengthen the relationship between trade unionism, environmentalism, and the social solidarity economy.
- Strive to achieve a better quality of life for all through entrepreneurship and collaboration.

What can people do?

- Consume less, minimize waste and help introduce a no-waste mentality in society. Spread a culture of repairing products instead of buying new ones.
- Support farmers who use natural/permaculture practices.
- Buy fresh, locally produced groceries to reduce packaging and transport.
- Encourage other people to support companies that care about the environment.
- Purchase more consciously and choose products that do not consist of palm oil, as the palm oil industry is responsible for huge amounts of deforestation.
- Be more mindful consumers.

VISIONS

3. Depollution: Air, Water, and Soil

A healthier environment and sustainable future can only be achieved if the pollution of air, water, and soil is effectively addressed. We are part of an irreplaceable ecosystem that has been drastically damaged by human activity. Widespread pollution of air, water, and soil is not only affecting human health and livelihoods, but also nature's balance and ecology. It is vital to acknowledge that air, water, and soil are connected and inseparable. They must be kept healthy and clear as pollution in one will contaminate and harm the rest.

We demand environmental remediation through the removal of pollutants and contaminants from the air, water, and soil, the introduction of legislation and policies that will protect and restore healthy nature, and a society that acknowledges, values and upholds nature's original custodians (e.g. Indigenous peoples). To restore the health and quality of the air, water, and soil, collective restorative action is required by all levels of society, including governments, businesses, and people.

What can governments do?

- Make ecocide a crime applicable to both business and state authorities.
- Implement laws recognizing ecosystems and natural communities as right-bearing entities.
- Contribute to changing the narrative from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism.
- Work with other governments and intergovernmental organizations to improve existing international treaties such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to address pollution and include an environmental remediation clause.
- Make environmental health and wellbeing of nature a priority when considering any investment, development, and improvement projects.
- Have a retrospective and prospective climate justice model that will force polluters and companies to pay for their climate and environmental damages.
- Ban advertisement of polluting goods and services, and introduce taxes for climate-harming business models.
- Give training and subsidies to farmers that do not use chemicals (including nature disturbing pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides), as they not only damage aquatic and soil life, but also make wastewater treatment more difficult and costly.

Have a greater number of inspectors and regulators to ensure both businesses, as well as communities, are abiding by air and waste management regulations.

- Prohibit production and usage of microplastics, and introduce decontamination action plans.
- Adopt counter urbanization as a policy to both reduce human-caused pollution in urban areas, and also allow people to enjoy nature and self-sustainable living.
- Support the creation of polycultures and consult ancient knowledge systems to identify sustainable ways to improve air quality, soil fertility, and human wellbeing.

Air

- Establish air quality monitoring stations across the country and provide easily available air quality information to citizens.
- Ban the use of diesel fuels and subsidize the transition to cars using methane or electricity from renewable energy sources.
- Invest in public transport that will be powered with renewable energy and have a minimum carbon footprint through using recycled materials and/or upgrading existing vehicles to become carbon neutral.
- Address pollution in space caused by old satellites, rocket parts and space stations which is creating plastic cemeteries in high seas.

Water

- Establish strict control and protection of rivers and lakes, including construction and tourist activities near lakes.
- Make all rivers and lakes safe to swim by installing treatment plants at the inflow of sewage into rivers and introduce strict agriculture and in-land aquaculture farming regulations.
- Prohibit the use of water sources for bottled water production.
- Consider environmental and socio-cultural impacts before establishing hydropower plants.
- Protect the oceans and seas by introducing stricter ship regulations, which will prohibit the use of environmentally toxic ship paint and polish, and dumping of fishnets and other waste in low and high seas. In addition to expanding companies' social and environmental responsibility to collect and treat their waste, states should invest in, and develop ocean cleaning technologies.
- Ensure all rivers and lakes are safe to swim through installing treatment plants at the inflow of sewage into rivers and enforcing strict agriculture and in-land aquaculture farming.
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Soil

- Close landfills and create a zero-waste society with improved waste collection, treatment, and disposal.
- Introduce subsidies for organic producers.
- Prohibit production and trade of plastic bags and other types of disposable and single-use plastic products.

What can businesses do?

- Redirect investments to green investments, which commit to promoting environmentally friendly business practices and conserving natural resources (e.g. production and discovery of alternative renewable energy sources, implementation of clean air and water projects, sustainable and regenerative agriculture)
- Implement and ensure climate-friendly practices (e.g. installing high-quality filters on factory chimneys, installing insulation, using renewable energy, and construct roofs with solar panels and gardens).
- Stop producing and selling polluting vehicles.
- Cease environmentally damaging fishing techniques and dumping nets and other waste in seas.
- Stop producing and farming genetically modified (GM) fish and animals. Escape of farmed GM fishes poses grave danger to native and wild fish due to their altered genetic structure and intense farming-caused disease and parasites.
- Ensure that climate and environmental impact and restoration are part of their social responsibility. Companies must contribute to climate justice by paying for the past and present damages caused to Indigenous tribes and lands.

What can communities do?

- Establish environmental projects involving professionals and young people to reduce pollution (e.g. creating communal gardens, developing new technologies in the industry, agriculture, etc.).
- Form local and regional grassroots groups to investigate sources of pollution and develop action plans to keep the environment healthy and clean.
- Encourage local and regional authorities to plant fruit and nut trees in public areas (schoolyards, kindergartens, ministry yards, municipalities, state-owned arable land) to improve air, soil, and water quality, as well as animal and human welfare. Harvested products and income generated from its sale can be used for supporting socially vulnerable groups and funding local projects to address pollution.

What can people do?

- Support local organic producers and climate-conscious service providers.
- Get informed about human rights and environmental regulations to hold businesses and state authorities accountable.
- Learn about the rights of nature and different ecosystem services (e.g. provisioning, cultural, regulating, and supporting services).
- Become stewards of nature and contribute to societal and cultural change.

VISIONS

4. Sustainable Food Systems & Rural Areas

The current system of inequitable industrial agriculture, aquaculture, and factory farming is eroding public health, worker safety, local economies, racial justice, animal welfare, a stable climate, biodiversity, and the resilience of the ecosystems we depend on. To date, only small streams of funding and political support have been invested in sustainable alternatives.

We need a massive expansion of diversified, organic, and ecologically regenerative farming systems that are based on practices that draw carbon out of the atmosphere and produce abundant, nutritious food, using less energy and water. These systems create greater resilience to climate change and are healthier for people and the planet. We must also direct resources to create fair, local, and regional food systems that ensure good jobs and healthy food for all. This shift is essential and achievable.

We cannot avert a climate crisis unless we support a rapid transition from large-scale, chemical-intensive food production towards diversified, organic, and ecologically regenerative food systems. In order to meet our climate goals, we must also drastically reduce the consumption of animal products and reduce food waste.

These actions will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help conserve water, soil, and biodiversity, and will make farmland more resilient to floods, droughts, and other climate events. Through the collective visioning process, European Youth has contributed with the following visions for sustainable food systems:



What can local, national and European governments do?

- Financially support small-scale, young, and organic farmers and cooperatives.
- Increase organic farming initiatives and reduce the number of industrially-farmed animals.
- Support companies and people to start composting.
- Ban synthetic and other harmful pesticides, such as herbicides and fungicides.
- Implement infrastructures to manage food waste. Change food safety regulations so more food can be donated (e.g. change the “best before” and “used by” labels) and support companies and people to start composting.
- Put in place a legislative framework for the protection of peasants' rights (UN Declaration Rights Of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas – UNDPOP).
- Increase the number of parks and public gardens. Ensure that everyone in the city has access to a garden to grow and (re)connect to food.
- Ensure a fair and balanced representation of small farmers and big agribusinesses in lobbying.
- Stabilize the price of crops on the European market and guarantee that farmers are able to sell their produce.
- Develop certification schemes for ethically produced food so it is recognizable on the market.
- Restrict the selling of seasonal foreign fruits.
- Provide impartial and independent education on food and sustainable agriculture to all via online and offline materials and media.
- Instead of establishing shopping malls, plant forests, and parks that are accessible to everyone.
- Local authorities can organize educational workshops for farmers to increase the quality of agricultural and aquacultural production, but also the food that we ultimately eat.
- For the next generation of farmers, fishermen, fisherwomen, gardeners and horticulture and arboriculture experts, review and upgrade related curriculum to be responsive and conscious about biodiversity and climate crises.

What can businesses do?

- Engage in sustainable farming.
- Choose food providers more carefully. Include more organic, local, and fresh products, and less animal-based products, in their menus and supply chains. Donate everything that would be wasted.
- Balance portions, or provide smaller portions, at restaurants, so less food is wasted.
- Agro-businesses must step back from the lobbying/policy arena.
- Connect with farmers to close the loop wherever possible (e.g. feed livestock with leftover food).
- Popularize “ugly food”.
- Invest in increasing soil fertility and recycling nutrients efficiently.
- Farmers can directly supply their communities with the necessary products

FEED LIVESTOCK
WITH SURPLUS



OPTION FOR
SMALLER PORTIONS
AT RESTAURANT



What can communities do?

- Establish community farms/gardens.
- Provide incentives and support for young and local farmers.
- Offer people land where they can grow their own food.
- Engage in alternative and sustainable food production e.g. community-supported agriculture (CSA) and food cooperatives.
- Help connect urban and rural environments.
- Learn from local or Indigenous peoples about already existing food systems and practices.
- Practice solidarity with marginalized groups and help ensure access to food for the whole community.
- Teach children the importance of sustainable food production, the meaning of the food we consume, and where it comes from.

COMMUNITY
GARDENING



FOOD COOPERATIVES

⁴<https://foe.org/resources/regenerative-agriculture-campaign-position-paper/>

VISIONS

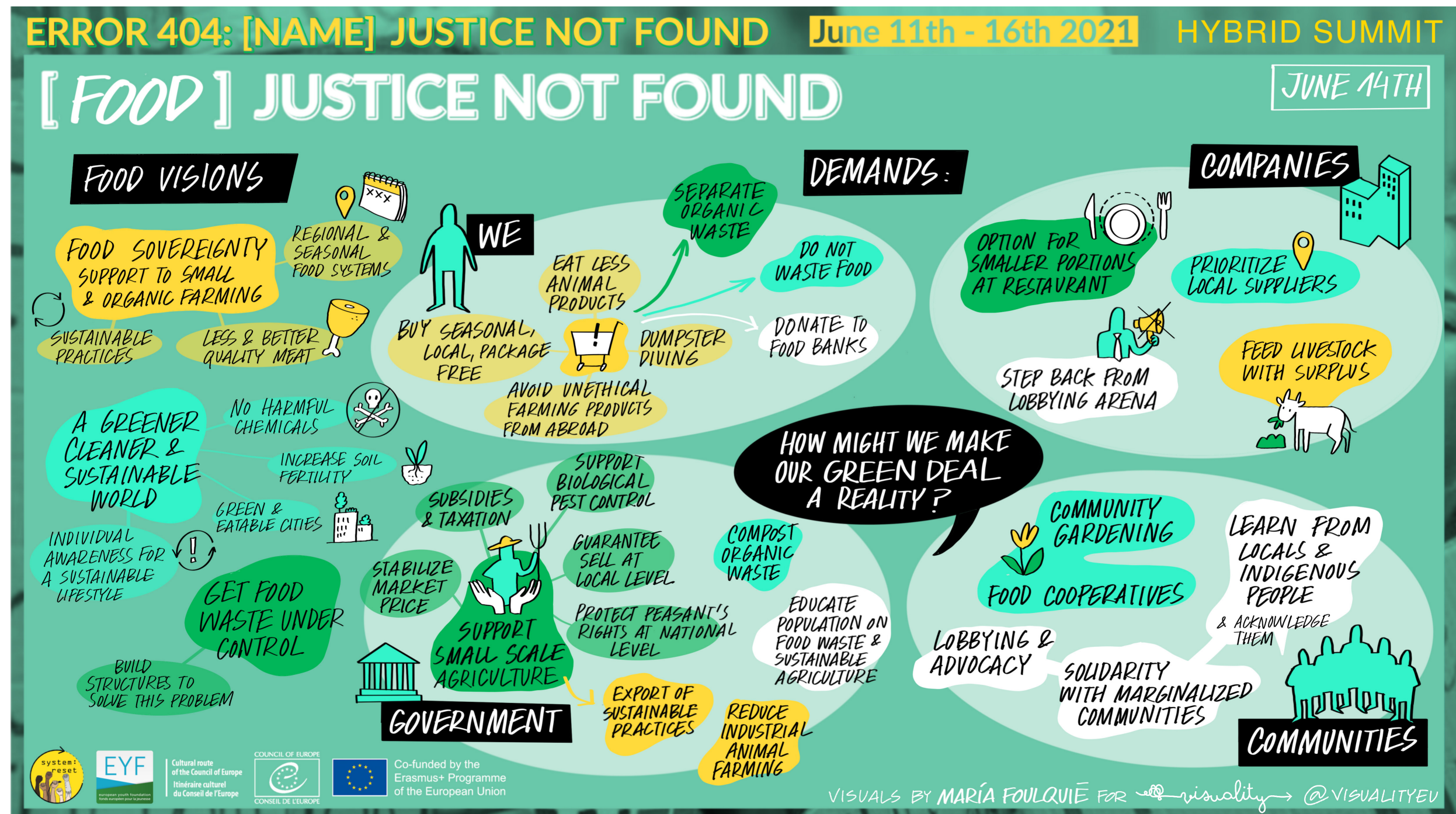
- Help transform land used to produce feeds to land used to produce food directly for people.
- Bearing in mind environmental and biodiversity needs, plant fruit trees in public areas, which are accessible to everyone.
- Advocate for access to public/community gardens in urban areas where citizens can rent an affordable plot to produce their own food.
- Become aware of the importance of environmentally sound agricultural and food production practices, so farming as a profession is more appreciated.

What can people do?

- Eat and buy more vegetarian, local, diverse and package-free food (e.g. at farmer's markets).
- Eat less, and better, animal products.
- Not waste food.
- Be aware of how food is produced and where it comes from.
- Join groups and educate themselves.
- Demand food justice at the local, national, and European levels.
- Learn from Indigenous communities and their ancient knowledge systems (e.g. how they have produced food and managed the land for hundreds of years while maintaining healthy ecosystems and preserving biodiversity.)
- Support sustainable farming practices that preserve biodiversity and natural cycles of life
- Join community gardens and groups of solidary exchange.



STEP BACK FROM LOBBYING ARENA

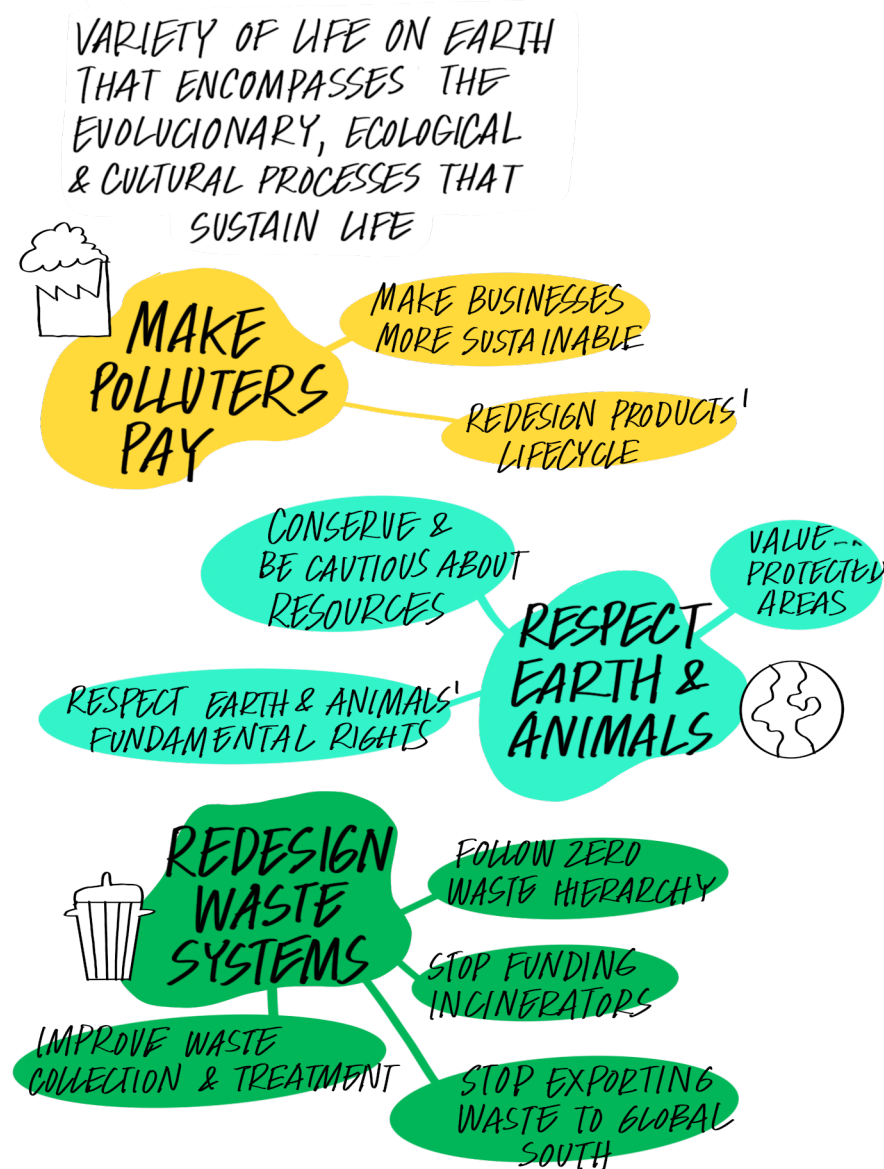


VISIONS

5. Commons: Protection & Restoration of Ecosystems

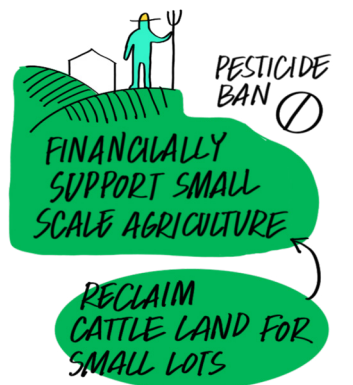
The Commons refer to natural and cultural resources that are shared by everyone e.g. water, forests, and groundwater resources. This topic focuses mainly on proposals and visions that recognize that Mother Earth, nature, and all other living beings have fundamental rights, which should be respected. Many visions focus on fostering the connection between people and ecosystems and developing a society where people are in harmony with nature and work collectively to conserve, restore and protect ecosystems. Instead of prioritizing the Global North's boundless quest to access and extract natural resources, the Global South's right to access and preserve its own healthy ecosystems should be prioritized.

BIODIVERSITY VISIONS:



What can local, national and European governments do?

- Facilitate and engage in dialogues that highlight intersectional perspectives on biodiversity and include indigenous voices as original custodians of the land.
- Ensure the protection of nature and ecosystems is prioritized at all institutional levels (e.g. by implementing a council that consists of representatives from each institution and that develops guidelines and regulations underpinned by the rights of nature).
- Limit urban development and occupation of land (urban spaces belong to people, not cars or corporations) and increase the share of natural and protected areas. Ensure all kinds of infrastructure don't harm the environment and are available for use by different people, including those with special needs.
- Consider forests as national treasures to be protected at all costs.
- Hire permanent forest guards to safeguard biodiversity.
- Develop a national biosecurity plan against diseases that come with imported trees, as they may eradicate native trees and forests.
- Implement effective and efficient disaster risk reduction plans and establish a task force to prevent and increase capacity to deal with natural hazards and other climate-related crises (e.g. floods, wildfires, increased hurricanes).
- Fund and support local and regional authorities to develop action plans to protect and restore endemic and endangered animals, plants, and fungi.
- Raise public awareness about the importance of ancient woodlands, dead woods, native trees, and diverse habitats.
- Criminalize EU-initiated land grabbing in the Global South.



What can communities do?

- Advocate for fair and equal distribution of resources both within Europe, as well as between the Global North and the Global South.
- Engage in public consultations and get involved in societal discussions.
- Set up communal initiatives with the purpose of learning about different ecosystem services and ways to get involved in land restoration and environmental protection.
- Establish a good community where everyone feels welcome and that contributes to the integration of city life and nature.

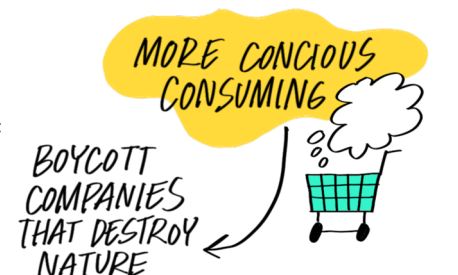


What can businesses do?

- Change the ingredients of their products to minimize biodiversity loss (e.g. no palm oil in food).
- Stop selling products with unnecessary plastic packaging to protect animal and ocean well-being.
- Contribute to the establishment of more green areas by making room for more natural life on their premises.

What can people do?

- Learn about the importance of preserving the natural state and balance of the environment and the interconnectedness between humans, nature, and all its living beings.
- Boycott companies that destroy nature.
- Move from a human-centered (anthropocentric) to a nature-centered (ecocentric) worldview.
- Learn from indigenous people, who are protectors and custodians of some of the most biodiverse regions.
- Contribute to raising awareness about environmental issues and advocate for more citizen engagement in environmental protection.



⁵<https://iasc-commons.org/about-commons/>

VISIONS

6. Arts, Culture, Education and Learning

Visions under this topic imagine a better society at all levels, where free time is spent with our loved ones, and where our community, friends, and family is the foundation for everything that is being created. Individual and collective knowledge, skills, and local know-how are integral parts of everyone's life.

Education should be free for all, accessible in various forms, and present objective information. Learning about our environment and climate, as well as integrating indigenous people's knowledge and perspectives is specifically important. Schools should be an open and safe place, where no racial, homophobic, or sexist discrimination is tolerated and where different cultural identities are respected. Schools should have a garden where students can learn about e.g. biodiversity and food production, and should also include alternative ways of learning outside of the schools e.g. walks in nature.

What can local, national and European governments do?

- Change education to happen more outside and in nature.
- Implement anti-bullying and parenting programs at schools.
- Offer free therapy sessions for students (both individually and collectively).
- Fund sustainability pilot projects in schools.
- Attempt to break down gender stereotypes in the education system, including at schools and in training for teachers.

The following topics should be included in school curriculums: climate and social justice, racism, colonialism, neocolonialism, the framing of indigenous people as protectors of life and biodiversity, civic education, intersectionality, sex education, alternative social systems and economies, emotional intelligence, critical thinking and reading, communication, collaboration, creativity, gardening, repairing, how to adapt to changes, how to learn successfully, how to remain calm in new situations, how to know and understand ourselves.

What can communities do?

- Help build a society build on care and solidarity
- Raise awareness and provide education for youth on the climate and environment
- Support sex education and provide a safe space to talk about it.

What can people do?

- Support sex education and provide a safe space to talk about it.

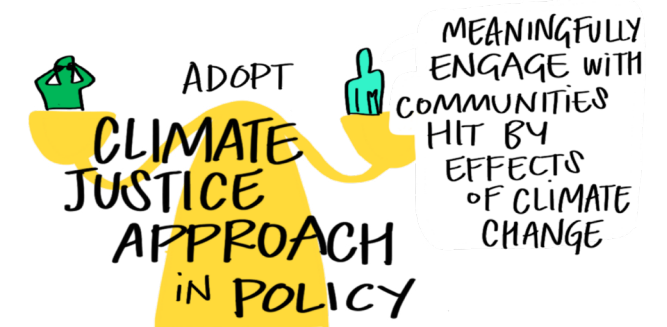
VISIONS

7. Governance and Decision Making

This topic focuses on proposals and visions for a society where decision making is transparent, belongs to the people, and includes the voices of the most marginalized individuals and communities in Europe and beyond. The visions below are highlighting the need for a transparent and just system, where governments (a) take responsibility for tackling environmental issues and function as role models, (b) decisions are being made in a collective and participatory way, and (c) global power dynamics and the capitalist system are challenged.

What can governments do?

- Develop appropriate and comprehensive laws, regulations and policies with genuine intention to tackle environmental issues, that goes beyond setting mere targets.
- More power/influence should be given to the Global South in global climate politics.
- Ensure that climate politics is a meeting point for good dialogue, not a battlefield.
- Include the protection of the environment in the constitution.
- Establish a climate council.
- Ensure crisis recovery and climate actions take into account gender issues.
- Increase gender equality in governments.
- Obligate all political organizations and spaces for debate to have female participants.
- Increase the power of indigenous people in decision making and protect their rights.
- Adopt and implement the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Adopt universal basic income, as it encourages a better work-life balance and promotes other activities such as volunteering.
- Focus on political solutions, not on opinions and individual solutions.
- Amend the Procurement Act so that the service provider with the most sustainable solutions and the highest quality wins.
- Introduce financial measures such as wealth and CO2 footprint tax.
- Implement large funding programs to achieve the necessary changes.
- Tax carbon emitters and wealthy people and reinvest the money in sustainable projects for transformative change.
- Develop long-term strategies based on public engagement.
- Ensure all decision making processes are transparent.
- Reduce bureaucracy.
- Lead by example.



What can communities do?

- Develop initiatives to drive change at a local level e.g. establish citizens' assemblies and local councils where people can get involved and develop demands to the local government.
- Support, and stand in solidarity with, Indigenous peoples in their global campaigning and lobbying for political, cultural, and human rights.
- Lead by example (e.g. present successful models already tested in the community)
- Communities nurture diversity, openness, and inclusion, sexism, and racism are unacceptable. People connect in communities, act in solidarity and protect each other and the environment, do creative projects and improve the quality of life. Mental health is an important topic and isn't stigmatized.

What can businesses do?

- Take action and recognize their responsibility as big players in society.
- Reduce advertising that promotes products or services that are unsustainable or unhealthy, and handle sensitive data properly.
- Implement flexible working policies and fewer working days for their employees, allowing for freedom and independence in the workplace.

What can people do?

- Get organized and take an active part in decision-making initiatives.
- Use their voice and power to demand a more just and transparent system of governance.
- Know their rights as citizens and push for the government to include people in policy creation.



VISIONS

8. Financing the System Transformation

To initiate radical system change, finances need to be redirected towards supporting well-being and social justice and redistributed from the Global North to the Global South and former colonies. Youth envisions governments taking financial responsibility for their current and previous damaging actions and stop financing activities that are harmful to the environment. Companies also need to step up their game, as “business as usual” is not accepted anymore!

What can governments do?

- Reallocate financial means to protect life and social justice and establish an intergenerational monetary fund to ensure natural resources are equally used across generations.
- States in the Global North should contribute with reparations and support to colonized countries in the Global South (e.g. restoration fees to be paid by specific countries, established through EU law).
- Develop new ways of measuring value-added and well-being (instead of GDP).
- Practice transparency in all spending decisions that are related to public finances.
- Stop financing coal and gas production and create new (green) low-carbon jobs.
- Not invest in corporations and not rescue banks, airlines, or other companies that are harmful to the environment.
- Implement an environmental tax reform, including wealth and CO2 taxes. Reinvest the money in sustainable projects for transformative change.
- Ensure that the rich contribute to at least 1 % of the payment of natural disasters, to help write off debts of underdeveloped countries.
- Review policies for importing and exporting electricity.
- Introduce minimum and maximum wages to decrease financial disparity and overconsumption.
- Allocate funds to both state and local levels, so that local civil society organizations and the private sector can be involved.
- Provide free or subsidized housing.
- Develop guidance on communication and how to inform and involve the public in decision-making processes about public spending.

What can businesses do?

- Invest in development and prosperity, not for profit.
- Replace “business as usual” with more socially and environmentally responsible visions that contributes to the financing of the system transformation.
- Stop financing coal and gas production.
- Create more new (green) low-carbon jobs.
- Use pre-existing knowledge, especially indigenous, as a cost-effective way towards transformation.

What can communities do?

- Listen to science, including social science, and to indigenous people and communities. They deserve the time, space, and platforms to take the lead in stopping the climate and biodiversity crises.
- Avoid the narrative of climate neutrality, as it is poorly defined.
- Start a campaign against the use of GDP as a measurement.
- Establish an alternative economic system for the community.
-

Healthcare and social justice

Young people all over the world are strongly affected by the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, on top of all other political, economic, and social injustices they experience. A Green Deal for Europe and our response to the climate crisis need to consider all these interconnected injustices. In addition, we must acknowledge

and include the most underrepresented youth, who are oppressed by the current system and excluded from accessing and participating in institutional frameworks. The impacts of climate change are intersecting with other identities that people have e.g. race, sex, and gender, thus, the social aspect must be acknowledged and addressed in EU policies if we want to achieve a just Green Deal for Europe that leaves no one behind. Climate justice means social justice, and an intersectional approach plays a crucial role in achieving that goal.

What can governments do?

- Make sure that everyone has access to basic necessities of life (e.g. food, clean air, water) and to education.
- People should be prioritized over profit and marginalized communities should be at the center of the discussion.
- Involve citizen assemblies and other local groups in decision-making.
- Ensure that everyone has decent work and salary.
- Help fight the shaming of certain groups in society.
- Provide accessible healthcare to everyone (guaranteed by law).
- Fairly compensate all care work (either at home or in society).
- Improve working conditions (i.e. working days, hours, format).
- Increase the minimum wage and lower the unemployment rate.
- Ensure no discrimination towards minorities in the employment process. Every public sector should have a diverse representation of employees.
- Implement laws that forbid employers to give workers unpaid internships, and zero-hour and short-term contracts indefinitely.
- Support and encourage companies to integrate gender equality measures.

What can businesses do?

- Prioritize people over profit.
- Provide decent work and salary for all.
- Reduce the number of working hours and provide flexible and sustainable working conditions (e.g. remote working is available to all where possible).
- Not turn cases of injustice into marketing opportunities, but try to understand why people need solidarity and support.
- Provide a diverse, transparent, and positive working environment where no one is discriminated against and mental health can be openly discussed.
- Fund sports activities for all youth and not only for those that are talented and highly skilled.
- Provide daycare for employees' children.
- Produce clothes that are not gendered.
- Help break down gender stereotypes at all levels of training.

What can communities do?

- Empower people to speak up and provide help to vulnerable groups and individuals in the community.
- Be more open and create structures of solidarity and care to increase resilience in the community. Share resources with less privileged communities.
- Help ensure that all occupations are treated with respect and dignity.
- Establish strong and trustful unions that protect workers' rights, people's dignity, and address any power imbalances at the workplace.
- Ensure everyone has a role to play in the community.
- Organize multicultural events without discrimination.
- Raise awareness on climate justice.
- Recognize and support people with disabilities without stigma or judgment.

What can people do?

- Educate themselves and be aware of their own privilege and that of others.
- Put pressure on governments to take action and implement legal solutions.
- Be a role model to inspire others.
- Be open, fair, and understanding towards other people, and create a fun, sociable, and relaxed environment where everyone feels comfortable and welcome.

CONCLUSION

This Youth Proposal presents European youth's values and visions for the future we want to live in. Representing thousands of voices that need to be heard, young people, and especially marginalized young people, have identified the way forward for a just and inclusive Green Deal for Europe. Youth are calling for climate and social justice, and it is essential that their voices are considered and acted upon when decisions and institutional frameworks are being developed. This Proposal shows that European youth is engaged, full of fresh ideas, and ready for change. After months of brainstorming, visions and solutions for 9 different sectors are presented in this Proposal - now, what is left is their implementation!

The climate crisis is significantly impacting people around the world and those who suffer the most tend to be people already in vulnerable situations. Youth from underrepresented communities should therefore be included in the decision making processes and need to be present when decisions impacting them are made by others. The current system allows these inequalities to continue and allows the perpetuation of policies that usually disadvantage marginalized people.

We are at a turning point, and decisions taken today will not only affect the present, but will have great implications for the future. In light of this reality and the multi-leveled crises which affects youth the most, we are demanding to be included in decision making and major shifts of the society. Participation of youth in decision making will provide a holistic approach to the challenges that we are currently and will be facing, and lead to the achievement of intersectional transformation through the adoption and implementation of policies for the planet and the people.

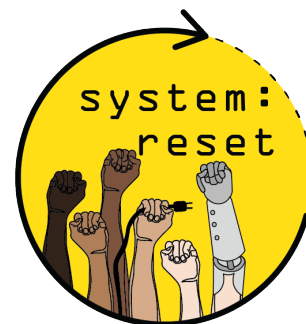
DISCLAIMER

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