



## **STOP CLIMATE CHANGE! CLIMATE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE NOW !**

Besides the economic, financial and social crisis, there is another crisis we are living – the ecological one. The EL highlights that the ecological crisis already has a dramatic impact today which can and most probably will assume a catastrophic dimension in the near future.

The 2007's UN report showed that the concentration of carbon emissions were the highest of the last 650 thousand years, twice the amount which can be absorbed by the ecosystems. In 2008, more than 300 'natural' disasters, hundreds of deaths and more than 200 million people affected were counted. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that every year 150.000 people die as a result of climate changes, 85% of them being children. Moreover the IPCC reports that an average increase of 2°C will have disastrous effects on the biodiversity of the biosphere.

The restoration and protection of ecosystems should be designated as one of the top priorities in decisions of production and investment. The EL considers that Global climate problems must be solved globally.

The EL underlines that the goals set forward by the EU until 2020 are not sufficient and that they are based on market principles (carbon trade markets). Furthermore, the EL enhances the fact that even the meager goals defined by Kyoto Protocol were systematically delayed and denounces the amount of "exception" situations.

The EL considers that despite the formal assumption of sustainable development as a priority over the last years, the answers to the problems raised by climate change have been anchored to weak solutions and even worse implementation plans.

The EL points out that the dominant conception of sustainable development lays down in two prominent lies:

1. Not taking into account the externalities generated by economic and technological developments. These are causing globalized threats, which can not be confined to the time and the space in which they are produced.
2. Setting specifically the responsibility of going back to sustainable patterns on every citizen, each of us being designated as the only responsible for the preservation of biodiversity and maintenance of natural resources. This is the conception of the environmentally responsible citizen that is put forward to excess by the supporters of "green capitalism". Models of production and the highly unsustainable consumption of the capitalist societies are not questioned.

For lots of governments and international organizations, environmental problems are out of the society (in the air, in the land, in the water...) and are seen as technical and not political problems.

On the contrary, EL considers that the decision making process on environmental solutions is not only a question of technical alternatives but of political choices. A sustainable society would pass through the reinforcement of democratic procedures, by the redefinition of the role of the governments and States and Regions of the world, and through the fight for social justice.

The Copenhagen Summit, in December 2009, will most probably be the last time when the United Nations Committee on Climate Change meets at governmental level before the end of Kyoto Protocol, which runs out in 2012. We should not miss this opportunity!

The EL believes that we can not speak in sustainability of resources and of environment without taking into consideration the different social forms of appropriation of those resources. Environmental problems do not affect everyone in the same way. In fact the poorest, the workers, the peasants, the women, the indigenous people and in general the most vulnerable populations are the utmost affected.

The EL considers environmental problems are, thus, mainly distribution/redistribution problems.

Tackling environmental problems as social problems implies assuming social justice and redistributive justice as integrated parts. The generation and maintenance of environmental and health inequalities are mainly the result of social dynamics of unequal distribution of resources and unequal power relations.

As a consequence, EL proposes to strive in parallel for:

- 40% reduction of CO2 emission by 2020 in developed countries (compared to the level of 1990);
- fighting the carbon emissions trade and other fake solutions like Clean Development Mechanisms;
- adequate financial and technological support for developing countries, which should and must be managed by the UN;
- the right of every citizen to have access to clean energy.

The EL also strives for a public intervention oriented towards the effective definition of the territorialized resources and of new energetic patterns. We stand for a strong public energy sector.

Finally, the EL considers that cutting down military expenses could provide a major contribution to the financing of climate change mitigating and adaptation. EU leaders have said that the developing world will need 100 billion euros a year by 2020 to help developing nations combat global warming. Direct costs of the Iraq war alone to USA have been more that 500 billion euros by the end of year 2008.