

ACT NOW



TO HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS AND REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TO NET 0 BY 2025 IN A JUST AND FAIR MANNER

The climate and ecological crisis are not distant prospects anymore. The atmosphere warmed by more than 1°C and human activities are destroying the ecosystems we rely on, undermining the very foundations of our livelihoods. In spite of warnings, CO₂ emissions are still rising year on year, putting us on a course for an ecological and humanitarian catastrophe.

The Dutch government is far from responding to this crisis at the scale needed. Over the last decades, it consistently failed to curb CO₂ emissions. The Netherlands remains one of the highest greenhouse gas emitters per capita in Europe, and contributes significantly to pollution and destruction in other countries.

THE CRISIS IS HERE AND NOW

Water scarcity, wildfires, heatwaves, extreme storms, already impact ecosystems and communities throughout the world. There is no safe level of global warming or environmental destruction: we have a moral duty to prevent avoidable suffering by immediately reducing carbon emissions and halting the destruction of nature.

TINY CARBON BUDGET

The IPCC warned us of the grave dangers of exceeding 1.5 °C of warming. The carbon budget they computed for a reasonable (2 in 3) chance of achieving this target is extremely tiny. Without mitigation, it would be used up already by 2028. Unconsidered sources such as methane from thawing permafrost could reduce that budget even further. Reaching carbon neutrality by 2050, as in the government's current goal, would imply large scale carbon removal to limit warming to 1.5 °C, passing the burden on to future generations.

PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

If all countries respect their current mitigation pledges, we are heading towards a world at least 3 °C warmer than today this century. Even limiting warming to 2°C, as agreed in Paris, would not prevent the risk of triggering feedback loops, leading to rapid and irreversible changes. With such stakes and uncertainties, the government must adhere to the precautionary principle and maximize emission reduction right now.

CARBON NEUTRALITY

We demand that the Netherlands be carbon neutral by 2025, meaning emissions should be radically reduced and the small remaining amount must be absorbed. Carbon removal or offsetting has technological limitation and ethical drawbacks, even when relying on natural techniques such as reforestation. Offsetting cannot be considered as a right to pollute and the government must prioritize mitigation.

INTRICATED CRISIS

The climate and ecological emergencies go hand in hand. They are two symptoms of a same dysfunctional system and reinforce each other. Deforestation accelerates climate change, wildfires and ocean acidification reduce biodiversity. Both crises cannot be solved in isolation.

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL DEBT

The Netherlands has a historical responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions and environmental damage. It is also a prosperous country with ample technological capacities. It must therefore take the lead on this transition and minimize environmental injustice. This includes taking responsibility for its full carbon footprint, including emissions from imported products and international aviation.

A FAIR TRANSITION

The climate and ecological crisis disproportionately impacts impoverished and marginalized communities. The transition towards a sustainable economy must prioritize the interests of the most vulnerable people in the Netherlands and throughout the world, and be financed by the strongest polluters.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

We do not pretend to have all solutions or strive to impose them on the Dutch public. Instead we propose a national citizen's assembly, mandated with finding socially just solutions to reach carbon neutrality by 2025 and halt biodiversity loss.