

# TELL THE TRUTH



## **ABOUT THE CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY, WORKING WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS TO COMMUNICATE THE URGENCY FOR CHANGE**

*We are facing an unprecedented global emergency of our own making. The sustained rise of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions is increasingly disrupting the complex climate system, unchallenged by insufficient mitigation efforts. The rampant destruction of nature poses an existential threat to our societies.*

*The government is failing to acknowledge the extent of the crisis. The climate and ecological emergency is rarely perceived as a priority. On the contrary, it is consistently marginalized as a secondary concern that should not question economic goals. Only if the people confront the crisis in its full severity can they accept the urgency for change.*

## **IT'S HERE, IT'S NOW**

These crises are not distant prospects anymore. The atmosphere already warmed by more than a degree and we are in the midst of a 6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction event. The last 5 years have been the warmest on record. Last summer, most of the northern hemisphere, including the Netherlands, experienced record heatwaves, leading to increased deaths. Sea level rise is a real threat to our country. It could reach more than a meter by 2100, and much more afterwards, rendering flood protection obsolete.

## **RAPID, FAR-REACHING, UNPRECEDENTED CHANGES**

These are the words of the IPCC. After decades of inaction, there is no more time for an incremental transition. Facing the climate and ecological emergency requires quick and substantial changes in all domains of our social and economic system.

## **SPEAK THE TRUTH**

For decades, climate scientists, activists and politicians tried their best to maintain a hopeful narrative about the climate crisis and ecosystem breakdown. They were afraid the extent of the crisis would drive people into apathy. But far from encouraging action, positive stories gave us all a false sense of time and safety. Only if we confront the crisis in its full severity will we be able to mobilize at scale.

## **THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO COMMUNICATE AND ACT ON THESE EMERGENCIES**

It is the duty of the Government to protect its citizens and thus be honest about the existential threats they are facing. It is the most credible messengers for times of crisis and can ensure the urgency is understood by a wide audience. Unless the Government communicates openly about the emergency and acts accordingly, it cannot expect its citizens to understand the urgency for change.

## **A CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY**

The Government must declare a climate and ecological emergency. In doing so, it must acknowledge the direct threat we are facing, recognize that the environmental crisis needs to be tackled as an issue of priority, and that this will necessitate fundamental changes to our current social and economic system. Such a declaration would not grant any form of emergency powers, but would send a strong message and allow citizens to call-out policies that are not in line with answering to the emergency.

## **CLIMATE COMMUNICATION**

Though the government is the most credible messenger for communicating on the environmental crisis, other institutions such as the media and education have an extremely important role in explaining the emergencies we are facing and ensuring they are properly covered and communicated on.

## **SWITCHING TO EMERGENCY MODE**

Emergency mode is not panic. When confronted to an emergency, humans can act very rationally, becoming laser-focused. Numerous personal and historical examples show that when confronted with an emergency, people can rapidly shift their priorities, mobilize, act.