

# **ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

## **PREAMBLE**

The natural environment encompasses all living and nonliving things, and the interaction of all living species, climate, weather, and natural resources that affect human survival and economic activity. The environment is threatened as the pace of nature's decline is unprecedented in human history, while human induced climate change has posed the greatest threat to our world. The Earth's climate is warming faster than at any point in the past 65 million years and human activity is the cause. The health of ecosystems is spiralling downwards far more rapidly with land clearing, habitat destruction, and pollution causing the 6th great species extinction in earth's history. The situation is of the gravest concern since every person and life on the planet will be affected by changes in the ability of ecosystems to support life. The health of the oceans, which are by far the Earth's largest carbon sinks, is also threatened due to warming, acidification and deoxygenation. Many ecosystems and global ecosystem services are likely to collapse. Therefore, urgent and sustained local, national, regional and global action is required to ensure a safe future environment. The foods we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink and the climate that makes our planet habitable all come from nature.

## **VISION**

The vision of the Greens is to build a society which lives wisely within the ecological and resource limits of the planet. The vision is to support a holistic approach to justice recognising that environmental justice, social justice and economic justice depend on and support each other. So, united we remain in our awareness that we depend on the earth's vitality, diversity and beauty, and that it is our responsibility to pass them on, undiminished or even improved, to the next generation.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Greens is to take care of our unique natural environment and its resources, ensure their ongoing sustainability for future generations, and to help protect the ecological integrity of our planet. The objective is also to work towards sustainable development and environmental education. It is our duty and responsibility to protect, conserve and take care of the ecosystems and environment.

## **ACTION PLAN**

The disastrous changes by humankind since the industrial revolution threaten the future of civilisation and the future of a majority of species on Earth. Therefore, the action plan is to take measures to protect the environment and biodiversity so that the intensity of climate change will not increase. Also, the action plan is to make decisions regarding management, change of use, rehabilitation or conservation of the environment based on scientific evidence and local knowledge rather than economic considerations. Therefore, the Greens will –

### **Nature**

- Respect all forms of life on earth
- Recognise the rights of nature as a legal concept to protect ecosystems -- central to which are the rights of nature to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, as well as the right to restoration

- Motivate natural and juridical persons (non-human legal entities authorised by law with duties and rights and recognised as legal persons) as well as collectives to protect nature
- Establish effective mechanisms to achieve full restoration and adopt adequate measures to prevent future violations of the rights of nature if an ecosystem's rights are breached
- Manage resources taking into account intergenerational equity, biodiversity conservation, and respect for indigenous and traditional ownership
- Recognise the cultural knowledge of Indigenous peoples as the original custodians of their lands, waters and sky
- Recognise the essential role played by mature forest ecosystems in wildlife habitat, including carbon storage, water supply, soil quality and retention, recreation and tourism
- Apply the precautionary principle and restriction measures in all the activities that can lead to the extinction of species
- Mitigate global warming to maintain a stable climate system conducive to preserving the environment
- Protect UNESCO areas and key ecosystems including wilderness and national parks and not allow mining and logging in these areas
- Minimise forest and land clearance and take measures to halt illegal logging, as these are key contributors to climate change
- Take measures to ban wildlife trade and poaching
- Take measures that slow down the pace of climate warming, improves the health of ecosystems, and adhere to a maximum 1.5 degrees climate change goal
- Take measures to address ocean related issues like warming, acidification and deoxygenation (a fall in ocean oxygen levels), as well as marine habitat destruction

### **Environment and Biodiversity**

- Ensure that persons, people, communities, and societies have the right to access the natural environment
- Adopt measures to eliminate or mitigate harmful environmental consequences in cases of severe or permanent environmental impact, including those caused by the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources
- Fund, encourage, empower and resource public, local and other government bodies for participation and implementation of strategies to protect and manage the environment
- Initiate an effective response in agreement with global agreements and targets to reduce climate change
- Create an adaptation programme and implement mitigation measures for countries severely impacted by climate change and ensure the safety of citizens
- Implement comprehensive programmes on environmental education and make it a compulsory subject in primary and secondary school curricula, as well as at tertiary institutions
- Initiate awareness campaigns to inspire people to work towards environment conservation and sustainable development
- Enforce and prosecute those violating environmental and biodiversity laws and set strict standard on environmental pollution and emissions

- Ensure industry or responsible government bodies clean up and decommission spills, accidents, mining tailings, etc.
- Increase environmental legal aid funding
- Ensure policy statements and environmental standards support local decision-making
- Slow the pace of inappropriate development, which leads to poor air quality, health problems, and exploitation of resources
- Ensure that low income citizens and minorities do not suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards
- Start immediately minimising air pollution and drastically cutting greenhouse gas emissions, and bring together all relevant sectors and organisations to foster collaborative, ambitious action on this so that climate is not impacted
- Build trust and education in climate science and biodiversity issues
- Work towards setting a new global environmental agenda furthering the goals of the UN Convention on Biodiversity -- promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development
- Provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations
- Require all public bodies and businesses to define their own climate adaptation plans
- Revolutionise public transport system/networks to use clean energy
- Make available to the public a pollution register by industry and government and manufacturing processes
- Legislate meaningful environmental protection laws and establish government procedures to implement them
- Provide independent and community advice to government, and discontinue corporate or foreign government donations
- Ensure expanded regulatory responsibility to include regulation of land clearing, invasive species, air pollution, etc.
- Increase community access to decision making processes including consultation processes throughout the project cycle

### **Sustainability**

- Work towards sustainability of natural resources, increase the use of renewable resources and recycling and reuse initiatives while reducing consumption patterns
- Give precedence to environmental and health considerations during project assessment and implementation
- Work for a transformative shift to a sustainable future, where innovation will be harnessed to tackle environmental challenges, such as during clean up procedures
- Guarantee the public's right to know about the health and environmental aspects of pollution
- Introduce environmental impact and improvement analysis into all public planning decisions
- Create a bio-security system to prevent the introduction of pest plants, animals and diseases
- Preserve seeds and flora in their centres of origin

### **Justice**

- Support a holistic approach to justice, recognising that environmental justice, social justice and economic justice depend upon and support each other
- Deal with environmental issues with due consideration to gender, indigenous knowledge and cultural dimensions
- Strengthen legislation and implement greater efforts to full enforcement and prosecution of environmental crimes
- Increase UNFCCC Paris Agreement commitments on emission reductions, climate finance, capacity building and technology transfer
- Advocate for an international agreement to conserve and enhance carbon sinks and reservoirs, including forests, coastal and estuarine areas, etc
- Support and implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals

### **Reduction**

- Encourage small families, a circular economy, and a shift to low carbon products, services and processes, and do away with avoidable consumption
- Reduce energy demand to help reduce CO2 emissions
- Reduce the demand for high-carbon products and services, especially space heating, travel and meat consumption
- Introduce a carbon tax and possibly carbon rationing to drive change throughout society
- Ensure that transport and infrastructure policies support cleaner air and maintain fuel efficiency standards

### **Pollution**

- Hold individuals and organisations responsible for their pollution and penalise them for it
- Require industries to systematically audit and publish their use of toxic chemicals, and establish binding timetables for them to reduce such use
- Guarantee public's right to know about chemical usage and emissions
- Take responsibility for the control, storage and monitoring of all radioactive waste derived from manufacturing industry, medical sources and nuclear power
- Reduce the use of toxic chemicals and the production of waste to support a circular economy
- Require enterprises to maintain records of effluent quality and quantity
- Recycle all sewage and ensure no toxic material is discharged into the public sewerage system
- Take measures to ensure pollution does not remain pervasive and does not continue to pose a direct threat to human health and the environment

### **Mining, Waste and Toxic Chemicals**

- Tax and penalise industries responsible for emission of hazardous wastes and chemicals into nature
- Reward or subsidise industries working towards the curtailment of hazardous waste discharge
- Levy hazardous substances in proportion to their toxicity
- Ban import of toxic, hazardous or radioactive waste for treatment, reprocessing or disposal
- Phase out persistent and bio-accumulative materials (POPs)

- Prevent release of hazardous chemicals and materials into the environment and rehabilitate affected environments where possible
- Permit no new coal mines or deep sea oil and gas exploration
- Give a timeframe to the existing coal mines to shut down their operations
- Ensure that industry takes responsibility for the life-cycle and packaging of their products
- Work with unions and industry to reduce the use of harmful chemicals in workplaces
- Curtail use of natural resources so sufficient resources are saved for future generations
- Define in domestic law all responsibilities under international environmental treaties
- Strengthen the national parks and reserve systems that are comprehensive, adequate and representative of all the unique ecosystems

### **Energy**

- Initiate a transformation programme to reduce domestic carbon emissions by ensuring substantial state funding and changes in the behaviour of ordinary citizens
- Set energy efficiency standards and invest in energy efficiency in all sectors, especially industry, transport, and housing (including funding for retrofitting)
- Fund and support renewable energy programs at all levels of government

### **Finance**

- Encourage long-term ecological thinking in the finance sector
- Require full disclosure of the climate-related risks on all investments
- Establish a sustainable financial system recognising finite resources and inequality issues
- Promote innovative environmental solutions and adopt sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Invest in waste reduction, recycling and reuse sectors as part of a circular economy

### **Institutional Support**

- Recognise the need for appropriate education and training, skills, technology, infrastructure, access to resources and information for enhanced environmental management capabilities
- Constitute a national and international body to promote and integrate research and development on public health, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation
- Establish a system for monitoring, approving and licencing new and established products and production processes
- Issue guidelines to manufacturers and district authorities for the full labelling of all products for sale
- Make available statistical information relating to worker exposure and waste management through a public register and upon request
- Create a strategic climate emergency agency directly responsible to the Head of State with the power of veto over any government policies that are inconsistent with the climate emergency targets
- Establish ecological sustainability institutions to focus on issues of ecological integrity and preservation
- Support UNESCO initiatives and protection of World Heritage sites

## Other Measures

- Safeguard water supply for all citizens and promote water conservation and water quality
- Provide investment to develop the expertise needed to allow waste recovery industry to thrive
- Minimise pollution in waterways and aquifers, in the air, and on land, by applying national standards
- Protect rivers, wetland habitats and seas from loss and pollution including plastic pollution
- Protect all old growth forests
- Discontinue public subsidies or support for private large-scale irrigation and water storage or foreign ownership of water resources
- Not allow new water bottling plants to be established until their sustainability and overall benefits are established
- Encourage manufacturing processes that use recycled materials as they require less energy than those exploiting primary natural resources
- Ensure that the cost of using natural resources takes account of the environmental costs of their extraction or harvesting, processing and disposal
- Determine global availability of resources and identify sustainable patterns of resource use
- Minimise consumption of all natural resources and, in particular, non-renewable resources for which supplies are reaching the limits of availability
- Fund R&D and pilot projects in key emerging technologies such as solar radiation management and artificial meat
- Ensure national and international sustainable management of fisheries including protection of breeding grounds
- Convert to less intensive agriculture and assure a reduction of pesticide use encourage small scale farming
- Rehabilitate lands to original habitats where possible

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