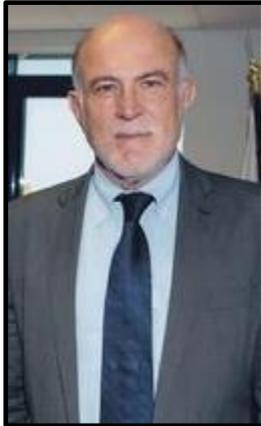


Planet in a state of emergency

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The Paris Agreement

Five years ago, on **December 12, 2015** in Paris, **195 countries agreed on a visionary, sustainable and progressive policy framework** that sets out exactly what needs to be done to stop climate deregulation and reverse its impact.

The departure of the United States

Just a month ago, on Wednesday, November 4, **the United States became the first country to formally abandon the Paris Agreement** and is no longer committed to any environmental or climate change goals nor required to report carbon emissions to the UN.

The departure of the United States, at a time when the planet has been declared in a state of emergency, means unfortunately that the Paris Agreement covers now only 80% of global air pollution emissions instead of 97%, as the United States is one of the biggest polluters.

At the same time, **there are concerns that other countries will follow the US withdrawal**, thus jeopardizing an agreement reached after long consultations, tensions, pressure, compromises and eventually mutual concessions.

The green agenda and the EU Green Deal

It is a fact that the initially great expectations arising from the Paris Agreement were significantly reduced. **Today's distance from the global targets for curbing global warming is enormous** and Europe's strong political will is not enough.

But as the world changes, new hope emerges. Important examples are the ambitious "green agenda" presented by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, as well as the [European Green Deal](#) presented by Vice President Frans Timmermans ahead of the [COP 25](#) (UN climate conference) and embodying the commitments of the new Commission.

These two texts laid the foundations for the transformation of Europe's economy towards sustainable development, aiming, while protecting the environment for the sake of intergenerational justice, to also directly improve the daily lives of European citizens.

No longer a concern for scientists only

The most optimistic development is, however, that the issue of climate change is no longer a concern only for scientists and activists, but for millions of people around the world. This becomes evident,

for instance, from **last year's student demonstrations in many cities calling for governments to take action against global warming.**

According to the scientific community, in no case should overheating, compared to the pre-industrial era, exceed 2 degrees Celsius. Otherwise, mechanisms will be activated that will actually cause more overheating that we will no longer be able to control.

When carbon dioxide is released it takes about 20-30 years for the atmospheric system to react.

This means that if we somehow magically stopped today all greenhouse gas emissions, global warming would still continue to rise for about 20 years because of the emissions of the recent decades.

Global emissions are showing no sign of decline

As it is pointed out, "the time limits for taking decisive measures are now narrowing dangerously". Despite years of debate, **global emissions are reaching record levels and showing no sign of decline.** Man-made global warming is already causing more heat waves and periods of prolonged drought, rain and floods.

According to scientific research, **in the period 2015-2019 there were extreme conditions such as a high increase in average temperature, rising sea levels and changes in the chemical composition of the oceans,** while over 30% of the world's population now lives in areas with heat waves lasting at least 20 days a year. What is more, the risk of getting sick or dying from fever-related causes has been steadily rising since 1980.

What an increase of temperature means for humanity

With the risk of self-sustaining climate change now visible "on the horizon", it is extremely important to understand **what an increase, higher than 4 ° C , of the average temperature will mean** for humanity, and how inaction - as long as there is still time - brutally violates our most fundamental human rights.

According to the World Bank, "a world with an average temperature increased by + 4 ° C is likely to be a world in which communities, cities, and countries will experience extreme disruption, damage, and population displacement, with many of these risks spreading unevenly. It is possible that the poor will suffer more and the world will become more fragmented and unequal than it is today."

The poorest countries in the world will suffer more

It is certain that **the poorest countries** in the world but also the **climate-wise vulnerable areas**, such as the Mediterranean, **will suffer more.** It is estimated that, until 2100, the average income in the poorest countries will be reduced by 75% compared to a world without climate change. In a sense, however, this will probably be a less important aspect of climate change.

According to the World Health Organization, **between 2030 and 2050, the climate crisis will be responsible for 250,000 additional deaths each year** caused by malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat stroke. Entire communities will disappear, at a huge social cost. The general estimate is that by 2050 200 million people will have been displaced by the climate crisis, with many studies raising that number to as high as 1 billion.

The Paris agreement itself is not enough

With science warning us that we have a few years before a collapse of the earth's climate, there are no excuses or pretexts for not taking action now. **The Paris Agreement sets out exactly what needs**

to be done to stop climate deregulation and reverse its impact. But the agreement itself is not enough as long as governments do not take steps to end the use of lignite, oil and gas, as long as they still invest in new fossil fuel fields, as long as they do not protect forests and seas.

We urgently need to change direction, focus on the use of renewable energy sources, reduce emissions, develop sustainable infrastructure, strengthen sustainable agriculture and sustainable forest and ocean management and invest in the green economy.

If we act now, we can reduce carbon emissions in 12 years and limit global warming to a 1.5 °C temperature increase. In any other case the consequences will be impossible to predict.

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