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PARTY OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS
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EQUAL SOCIETIES:

A healthy environment and food, green growth and modern industries

Progressives in Europe must lead a Just Transition that respects the natural limits of our planet. We need a long-term strategy with sufficient investment for the transition to zero-net emissions by 2050 and to fully work to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. This is crucial if we want to try to ensure a halt to global warming and environmental pollution, to protect biodiversity and improving air quality and to improve the well-being of all citizens. Europe needs to deal with the challenges climate change is bringing to all parts of the population, such as droughts, sever snowstorms, floods, spread of new diseases.

That's why we want an ambitious environmental policy to provide a better quality of life for all and an ecological transition that will create opportunities for new jobs, businesses and business models. For us, socialism and ecology go hand in hand,

and we cannot disconnect the wellbeing of citizens from the quality of our environment. Ecological modernisation is a prerequisite for a sustainable and just economy.

The EU must not let the poorest and vulnerable people bear the brunt of environmental deterioration. They often lack the means to adapt to extreme weather conditions – one of the reasons for an increasing number of climate refugees. They find it hardest to deal with flood or storm damages; they often live close to the busiest neighbourhoods with the most polluted air and it is very often their jobs that may be most under threat from the necessary paradigm shift.

For us, the fight against environmental pollution and climate change is also a fight for equality and social justice.

1. We want a new, sustainable economic model, with an economy that protects the climate and the environment. We are fully committed to the target set in the United Nations' **Paris Agreement** on climate change to **limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, aiming at a target of 1.5 degrees Celsius**. For the EU to contribute its share to this global effort, we want a **new EU long-term strategy**, with national targets, aiming to **phase out the use of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) by the middle of the century**. The **EU's climate and energy targets for 2030 on CO2 emissions, renewable energy use and energy efficiency improvement need to be raised** in order to be in line with this long-term goal. Healthy ecosystems, improved **protection and restoration of natural forests and marine areas** will be crucial to attain our climate goals, and to stop the loss of species. Furthermore, the EU should support all Member States that want to **phase-out the use of nuclear power**. We want a society that is fully powered by renewable energies and which takes advantage of improved energy efficiency to make this possible. We want the EU to be an international role model, climate action leader and promoter. The EU must fully deliver on its commitments concerning **climate finance to developing countries**. Climate change mitigation and adaptation must be an integral part of the EU's broader development cooperation. The **EU budget** must be climate-proof. It must be aligned to the commitments made under the Paris Agreement and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. We want a clean energy and resource-efficiency transition that improves people's everyday lives.

That is why Europe needs a Social Agenda for the Energy Transition, to create jobs in a just transition, fight energy poverty, democratise the energy system and improve public health.

The clean energy transition, as well as the shift towards a green and circular economy, have huge **potential for new quality jobs in the green economy** with a strong gender equality dimension. More gender equality leads to more sustainable development. The EU should support regions all over Europe to manage the clean energy transition, especially those that face specific challenges, for example, because their communities and economies depend on heavy industries or mining. We call for a Europe-wide action plan about how to organise this change. We want to **set the right framework for workers and companies to adapt to a changing environment without structural disruptions**. Our vision for industrial policy is about organising ***just* transitions**: changes that support workers from polluting industries to take advantage of new, high-quality jobs and business opportunities in a clean economy. For this purpose, a **European Just Transition Fund** should be set up to finance an education and training system that provides workers with the new skills they need in the green economy, with special emphasis on tackling gender inequalities in this emerging sector, and to find clean solutions for the transport and energy industries.

Today, millions of Europeans suffer from energy poverty; they cannot afford to properly warm their houses in winter.

No one should choose between heating or eating. We will fight energy poverty

by improving energy consumers' rights and information, by ensuring access to clean energy services, and by targeting energy-efficiency measures and renewable heating installations as a priority on energy-poor households. We will ensure that these measures are accessible to low-income and vulnerable households. Europe's building stock cannot be decarbonised by 2050 without a strong focus on these hardest-to-reach groups must be an integral part of decarbonising Europe's building stock by 2050.

3. We want to **make Europe's energy system more democratic**. We want to empower Europe's citizens to not only consume, but also to produce clean energy themselves more easily, with the so-called "prosumers" model. That is why we will foster citizens' engagement in energy production, be it on an individual basis, such as solar panels on people's own rooves, or collectively, through participation in a local energy community.

The clean energy transition is also about **improving public health**. Besides the gradual phasing-out of the use of coal for energy production and the modernisation of heating systems, the transition to cleaner mobility will reduce air pollution and improve citizens' health. **We want a clean mobility transition for accessible and sustainable mobility for all.** Transport is responsible for about a quarter of the EU's carbon emissions. It is a major air polluter in cities, causing hundreds of thousands of premature deaths in Europe every year. Therefore, we call for **stricter emission standards for petrol and diesel cars,** together with

the new rules and strong EU supervision that we pushed for to prevent emissions cheating in the future. We want Europe's car industry to **move to electric and hydrogen power as fast as possible**, or it will be superseded by car producers from other parts of the world. This is why the EU needs a **just transition strategy for its automobile industry**, to maintain and create jobs in this industry. It must prepare the workforce for new skills needed in the transition from combustion to electric car engines. Such a strategy must also support the establishment of a world-leading European battery industry, especially by targeted and increased research and development funding for new generation battery technologies and artificial intelligence, to make full use of Europe's research excellence. It must also be based on the sustainable generation of the extra electricity needed, and the smartening of Europe's electricity grids to support it. The clean mobility transition needs an accelerated deployment of **clean fuel infrastructure**, such as electric car charging points, with the support of the automotive sector. Our clean mobility concept does not stop at electrifying individual transport. We also support **more and better clean public transport** as the best decarbonisation strategy, and urban planning for pedestrian-friendly and bike-friendly cities. A **shift** is needed to bring **more freight and passenger transport from road to rail** and waterways. Aviation is one of the most polluting modes of transportation. We must put a **price tag on the pollution generated by kerosene**. The revenues raised could be used for a European fund for Clean Transport.

Besides climate change, Europe's industries are facing further challenges, including demographic change, resource scarcity, digitalisation and artificial intelligence, as well as increased global competition.

The EU needs a territorially balanced industrialisation strategy to make its industries fit for these challenges in the decades to come.

We strongly support an **industrialisation target and indicators beyond 2020**, that measures not only manufacturing in the narrow sense, but also related industrial services, research, development and innovation, job creation and the quality of jobs, including the closing of the gender pay gap. It will be crucial to **bridge digital divides** to maintain the global competitiveness of European industry. All regions need to have access to digital infrastructure, including rural, remote and less-densely populated areas. Companies must be enabled to more easily adopt new technologies, particularly small and medium-sized companies. It must be a priority to **keep the workforce up-to-date with new skills requirements in the digitalised industry**. We want European funds to support industrial innovation, infrastructure deployment, technology deployment and skilling of the workforce for the green and digital industry of the future. We will stop the race to the bottom on low wages and low standards. We want European products, standing out with quality, sustainability and innovation. Therefore we need European research and development as well as a strong European industry to keep jobs, know-how and production in the European Union.

4. We want big polluters to pay, including outside the EU. To accelerate the switch to renewable energies and make energy efficiency more attractive, we want **Europe-wide taxes on CO2**, in addition to a well-functioning EU Emissions Trading System. The EU's industries must undertake great efforts to modernise their production processes in order to save the climate. At the same time, some countries only apply lax climate laws, giving their industries an unfair competitive advantage. A **price should be put on CO2 emissions of products entering the EU** from countries which are less committed to climate protection, in a way that is compatible with international trade rules. These revenues could party flow into the EU budget and be used to finance the green and just energy transition, and to support the fight against energy poverty.

We want a **circular economy** in Europe. We want to lead Europe's battle to stop wasting energy and resources. We want the European Union's economy to move away from the 'linear' model where raw materials are used to make a product and thrown away afterwards.

We want an economy that respects the waste hierarchy: an economy that is primarily based on waste prevention, and where materials are permanently reused, recycled and only recovered for energy or disposed as measures of last resort.

The EU and its Member States should **set ambitious targets to use resources more efficiently and waste less**. We believe therefore that it is vitally important to step up waste prevention and management strategies, and to be **more ambitious in the development and implementation of eco-design and energy labelling measures** to increase the overall energy and resource efficiency of products. The potential in terms of increased growth and employment **opportunities of the circular economy should be better taken account of in the coordination of the EU's economic policy making**.

5. We want **a pact for consumers' rights and protection,** including a legal framework for collective redress. **Artificial intelligence** offers many opportunities, if it is mastered well. We will foster development and regulation of artificial intelligence that serves the citizens. It should be illegal to design a product or software program in a way that makes it artificially out-of-date or useless within a known time period (**planned obsolescence**). EU rules are needed to guarantee that products are designed to last longer, become easier to repair or to reuse. We will take **measures against greenwashing**, false and misleading environmental marketing claims. Consumers should have no doubts about the eco-friendliness of the products and services they buy. Neither should consumers be worried about the impact of recycled materials on their health. That is why we are calling for a Europe-wide framework to **guarantee that toxic materials are kept out of the recycling stream**.

A European strategy for a non-toxic environment must also ensure that all products are safe, and eliminates people's exposure to toxic chemicals, including endocrine disruptors.

Microplastic particles should have no place in cosmetics, such as in face scrubs or toothpastes, as they wash into rivers and seas, where they can harm wildlife and ultimately find their way in the food chain.

As the PES we want to protect our biodiversity, rivers and ocean habitats as they are directly linked to our own well-being. The **plastic pollution**, especially of our planet's oceans, lakes and rivers, has to stop. We have to drastically reduce the use of single-use plastics, and we will support measures for the overall reduction of the use and

inappropriate disposal of plastic. We strongly support the ban on the use of plastic in the production of goods where cleaner and more sustainable alternatives are available, such as for plastic straws or plastic cutlery.

6. We want a European agriculture and food sector that produces healthy, quality and affordable food while preserving nature and biodiversity. Agriculture and sustainable fishing methods have a key role to play in environmental protection and climate action.

The EU´s support for agriculture should support farmers in their transition to more sustainable production methods and climate mitigation, focusing more on organic production, good animal welfare, preservation of biodiversity, sustainable forest management and sensitive landscapes.

Our continent has witnessed a massive decline in bees and other essential pollinators. This trend can be reversed by **a more restrictive use in pesticides**. We call for a fully transparent authorisation process and for the continued strict application of the precautionary principle: Pesticides such as Glyphosate, and neonicotinoids, should not be used if there are doubts about their effects on human health or on biodiversity, or if they are potentially or verifiably dangerous.

Europeans must be able to expect high-quality safe consumer products, food and water all over the continent.

Europeans have equal rights as consumers wherever they live.

That is why we call for a **ban on dual food and product standards**. Foodstuffs and products sold under the same name have to have the same quality everywhere in the EU. We will **tackle dodgy food claims**. Food products must not be labelled healthy when they contain too much salt, fat or sugar. Europeans have the right to the same food safety and water quality standards across the continent. We will scale-up preventive action against **food waste**. **Water and sanitation are public goods** that must be accessible for all Europeans, both in rural and urban areas.

The pollution of the air, water, and soils does not stop at national borders. The European Union offers the unique opportunity to set continent-wide rules and standards to protect what we drink, what we eat and what we breathe. The “better regulation” agenda must be used as an opportunity to achieve this with clearer, stronger and more efficient rules, and should never be used as a way to lower regulation standards. We call for a **new EU Environment Action Program** that shall guide the European Union’s environmental policy for the next years.

Making Europe’s societies and economies more environmentally sound will demand lots of changes to the ways Europeans are used to living, working, producing and consuming. But these efforts are necessary. To benefit all, the transformation must be carefully framed and organised.

We want a real strategy to frame the economic, social and environmental changes needed. This would help local, regional and national governments, as well as companies and individuals, to anticipate and plan the transformation and ensure that it benefits all citizens as well as the environment.

Strong public services and investments are at the heart of the eco-social transition. As the Party of European Socialists, we will organise these changes in a socially fair way that we create a healthy living environment for all Europeans, protect workers, open up new quality jobs and business opportunities, and leave a cleaner and sustainable environment for future generations.

As the Party of European Socialists, we are fighting for equal societies. In this resolution we have focused particularly on our priorities for a just and sustainable environmental transition. It goes hand-in-hand with the other resolutions for this PES Congress, that reaffirm our commitment and plan for a social Europe, progressive economy, empowering youth, true gender equality, a fair world, progressive asylum and migration policies, and a stronger democracy in Europe.

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