



POLICY PAPER ON THE SELF-CONCEPTION OF MOUVEMENT ECOLOGIQUE



THE MOUVEMENT ECOLOGIQUE —DYNAMIC, CRITICAL, COMMITTED— DEVELOPING VISIONS FOR TOMORROW

The biodiversity crisis as well as the climate crisis currently pose existential threats and therefore immense challenges. If and only if our society induces THE pressing and ineluctable change of course, we will manage to preserve our natural environment and resources, and those of future generations. According to scientists, immediate and consistent action is vital in order to limit the temperature increase to less than 2 degrees and to prevent the ecosystems from collapsing. Also, the continuous global decline in biodiversity calls for profound reforms.

In contrast to this dramatic development, more and more people (also in Luxembourg) raise their voice to advocate a different social and economic behaviour. The evolution of this trend lends us courage and hope, as people all over the world campaign for sustainable development. The economic model based on constant growth is questioned worldwide, also by recognised economists. Many projects are launched in which networks, communities and a multitude of initiative groups (amongst others) concretely demonstrate how a new, more sustainable lifestyle in the future could make a real change.

As human beings and as a society, we possess enough strength, knowledge and courage to render our society more sustainable and to improve the quality of life - away from the growth mania towards more solidarity, towards a deceleration of our lives and towards an environment that is worth living in.

ACCORDING TO ITS SELF-CONCEPTION, THE MOUVEMENT ECOLOGIQUE DEFINES ITS ROLE AND THE EMPHASIS OF ITS WORK WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

1

Developing visions and concepts of the future

People need visions and ideas about how to build the future and master the challenges it poses. Positive images and concepts are fundamental in order to tackle the necessary changes.

This is why the Mouvement Écologique – as a politically independent body that is part of civil society - contributes to the development of positive visions for the future in addition to its critical and constructive work on current social issues. This is done in partnership with citizens and social organisations in Luxembourg, in Europe and worldwide.

2

Natural limits and ecosystems as fundament for human action

Today's social and economic model ignores the limits of the planet and the laws of nature, and thus the interests of future generations.

The Mouvement Écologique consistently stands up for a future model that focuses on the limits of nature, and the finite nature of resources and ecosystem services. In doing so, it relies on scientific facts and technically based arguments.

3

Commitment to the human being as one living being among many others on this planet

We humans are occupying more and more space in this world. As a result: we must admit that we are living in the age of the so-called "Anthropocene"* , meaning "the age in which human beings dominate the earth".

The Mouvement Écologique sees humans as part of the natural environment. The human being is one living being among many. Which is why the Mouvement Écologique is committed to improving the living conditions of all people and future generations, and - in parallel - is equally consistent in its commitment to respecting and protecting all living beings and their livelihoods.

4

Global justice and solidarity as a guiding principle

Despite the adoption of the so-called Millennium Development Goals and despite many other achievements in recent years, the social and economic model of the countries of the North is based on the exploitation of the people and of the resources of the countries on the southern hemisphere.

The Mouvement Écologique questions developments that are at the expense of the countries and people of the South and advocates for reforms in the sense of global justice. It shows solidarity with the Friends of the Earth organisations in the countries of the South and advocates for a paradigm shift in economic, agricultural and trade policies.

(*) Anthropocene: naming of a new geochronological epoch: namely, the age in which humans have become one of the most important factors influencing biological, geological, and atmospheric processes on Earth. (Eckart Ehlers)

5

For a social transition in the sense of a more sustainable and more solidary society

Guiding principles and models such as constant economic growth, competitive thinking, consumerism and profit maximisation destroy the natural foundations of life and do not bring us humans more satisfaction. What we need is a deep transformation of our society along with fundamental reforms.

This requires a high degree of willingness to engage in dialogue, a far-reaching change of perspective to promote understanding of different views, and proactive measures in favour of disadvantaged groups.

According to the Mouvement Ecologique, social transition must be based on the values of togetherness, inclusion, the common good and the promotion of regional economic cycles, among others. The Mouvement Ecologique stands up for these social goals and raises its critical-constructive voice even in conflict-laden areas. It accompanies socio-political decisions and calls for a relevant political discourse in our society.

6

Addressing the climate and biodiversity crisis at the same time as the social crisis

The climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis are closely linked. In parallel, social disparity and ecological problems are two sides of one coin. People with fewer financial resources, for instance, suffer the most from energy poverty and are more likely to live in an environment with a lower quality of life. At the same time, the inequality of wealth distribution is growing and the poverty rate is increasing.

The Mouvement Ecologique is consistently committed to working on common responses to these crises. The Mouvement Ecologique categorically rejects supposed solutions that try to play these crises off against each other. The guiding principle of the commitment of Mouvement Ecologique is the linking of the social and the ecological question in the sense of comprehensive environmental justice.

7

Beyond technical innovations, our society needs change in values

Technical progresses are of fundamental significance for social transition and are absolutely crucial, though not sufficient in themselves! Ensuring today's consumption of energy, meat and resources in a sustainable way, will simply be impossible! The belief that technical innovations alone will guarantee the preservation of our climate and biodiversity, is a mere fallacy.

That is why, in addition to technical innovations, the Mouvement Ecologique advocates a rethinking in terms of sufficiency, of «less is more» - while taking social justice into account. The Mouvement Ecologique will raise the issue that excessive consumption, the possession of more and more, does not make people happier and is not viable from the point of view of sustainable development. It will make its contribution to the appropriate transition of our society.



8

Inducing structural changes and assuming political responsibility

The necessary course corrections cannot be achieved with moral appeals to individuals. A sustainable social and economic model must not be left to the responsibility of individuals and depend on the bad conscience or sole discretion of the individual.

Therefore, the Mouvement Ecologique is focussing primarily on improving the political framework conditions: environmentally harmful production processes and products must be banned or taxed more heavily, while framework conditions for a more sustainable lifestyle must be made extensively possible and improved at all levels (economy, mobility, housing and construction...).

9

Bring the individual on board and support pioneers

Beyond socio-political reforms, however, it is also necessary to bring the individual on board and accompany him on his way to a more sustainable lifestyle.

It is crucial that people show, through their everyday behaviour, that adopting a different lifestyle is possible. In addition, our society needs people who claim new social standards so that this new lifestyle becomes attractive for many others. Those pioneers should benefit from the necessary support.

Therefore, the Mouvement Ecologique will continue to formulate concrete suggestions for a more sustainable lifestyle; together with the Oekozer Pafendall, it will pioneer and consult and advocate for increased citizen participation.

10

Democracy, networked thinking, education and empowerment as fundament

In order to implement change, our society needs people who want to be involved and who are able to participate in social development and in shaping the future of their society. A comprehensive right to information, political education and social participation for all groups within the population are basic requirements to achieve this goal.

The promotion of democratic structures, political education and networked thinking are of particular importance to the Mouvement Ecologique. Besides, the Mouvement Ecologique will also focus on and strengthen the commitment of young people and strive to address different population groups. The Mouvement Ecologique will continue to actively contribute to the strengthening of people's commitment, and it will promote opportunities for involvement in decision-making processes and participation within its own structures.