



**mouvement
écologique**

2 years of the CSV-DP government:

Where do we stand? Where is the journey in the sustainability sector heading?

Prime Minister Luc Frieden recently gave himself and his government a positive assessment of their first two years in office.

Unfortunately, analysis by the Mouvement Ecologique's *Mecoskop* platform paints a very different picture (www.mecoskop.lu). It assesses the implementation of 77 key promises made by the CSV-DP government in its coalition agreement in the area of sustainable development. The sobering conclusion after two years is that of the 77 government statements

- 36 were not addressed, i.e. slightly more than half;
- 36 are in the initial phase of implementation;
- only one is in an advanced phase of implementation;
- no measure has been fully implemented.

It is understandable that after two years, only a few promises can have been implemented. However, it is completely incomprehensible why more of the coalition agreement's targets have not been addressed. The fact that slightly more than half of the measures included in the Mecoskop are still at the 'no progress' stage is very worrying. One might also have expected that more projects would be at an advanced stage of implementation. After all, it is well known that the first two years of a government's term are particularly important in ensuring that projects have a realistic chance of being realised during the coalition period.

Unfortunately, it must be said that this government is not (yet) living up to its own standards. It is not (yet) sufficiently implementing what it promised voters in the area of sustainable development.

It should be emphasised that this situation is all the more problematic given that the coalition agreement has already failed to address numerous essential instruments in terms of sustainability (including sustainable tax reform). If the remaining instruments, which already represent a watering down of what is necessary, are then not implemented or are only implemented hesitantly, this will be highly problematic for Luxembourg's future.

Note: Mouvement Ecologique has reported on the status of implementation to the best of its knowledge and belief. However, it cannot be ruled out that Mouvement Ecologique is unaware of one or two instances of implementation of a statement in the coalition agreement. This will be rectified immediately if the relevant information becomes available. However, individual developments are unlikely to change the overall picture of the government's work.

translated with deeple

1. Key shortcoming: the government's problematic attitude towards current social and environmental challenges

The government repeatedly claims that it wants to shape policies that '*take people with them*'. That sounds good at first glance. But if you take a closer look at what it describes as its 'pragmatic' policies, you realise that this is largely just rhetoric.

Because: **THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT TAKING THE PEOPLE WITH IT!**

Certainly, it is positive when pre-financing for solar installations is finally provided or when the consumption of solar power is promoted. The same applies when a competition is launched to promote individual initiatives for more green spaces in communities or when a climate adaptation strategy is developed. However, a few good – often isolated – measures are by no means enough to bring the government's statement to life or to prove that the government's work ensures that Luxembourg's social and economic model is designed in line with the goals of sustainable development! A policy that ensures that Luxembourg is not the second country in the world (after Qatar) to reach "Overshoot Day" in February!

The big question, however, is: WHERE does this government actually want to take people? The government owes us an answer to this question, for example in the areas of biodiversity protection and sustainable agricultural development.

The Mouvement Ecologique would expressly welcome it if the government were to positively endorse the necessary transformations, set targets based on scientific findings and create the necessary framework conditions for their implementation in a socially acceptable manner. This would require open dialogue in these areas, among others.

There are plenty of positive messages to convey about where the journey should/must lead and why the socio-ecological transition is desirable:

- From a scientific point of view, this is essential if we do not want to destroy our own livelihoods in view of Luxembourg's economic and demographic development.
- Green towns and cities as part of municipal green concepts (!) make them more liveable, promote cohesion and are also important from the point of view of climate adaptation and health protection.

2. Focus on short- to medium-term economic interests – lack of understanding of ecology

In the press, Prime Minister Luc Frieden is often referred to as 'CEO'. Unfortunately, this title also aptly describes the government's work in the area of sustainable development. This is because the entire government seems to want to subordinate everything else to short- and medium-term economic development. Individual ecological measures are welcome, but only as long as they do not appear to conflict with short-term economic interests.

Mouvement Ecologique is well aware that consolidating Luxembourg's position as a business location is a challenge, especially in these times. However, in the medium to long term, this will only be possible if the necessary restructuring of the economy takes place in line with sustainable development. With this in mind, more and more industry associations are speaking out, such as the German Federal Association for Sustainable Development on the EU Omnibus Act: 'Across Europe,

- If we now succeed in the energy transition at all levels, including in the area of heat planning, we will become less dependent on gas and electricity imports, the prices of which we cannot influence, and which will also make us less dependent on geopolitical tensions – this is in the interest of everyone, including the economy.

- Focusing on organic farming and improved processing structures now gives farmers a secure future, makes them less dependent on the global market and better protects our environment and their production bases.

- Preserving biodiversity is not only a question of preserving our environment and quality of life, but also a must from an economic point of view – it is the basis of economic performance, including for agriculture and tourism.

- Less consumption, more equitable distribution, conservation of resources, etc. also increase well-being, and a better social distribution of wealth reduces social tensions.

The list could be extended indefinitely. It is regrettable, however, that the government has not formulated these goals and the means of implementation more clearly, involved all stakeholders – including civil society – in the discussion, and sought to consciously and actively win people over to these solutions.

There are hardly any clear messages about what a positive vision of the future/a positive future that respects the limits of ecosystems might look like and why this is necessary.

No: under the slogan of 'taking people with you' and 'not annoying them' – i.e. relying on purely voluntary rather than structural measures in many cases – there is also, to a large extent, an ostrich policy on the part of the current CSV-DP government, which in a sense is a policy of 'business as usual'.

Politicians must take action. This government is currently not doing enough in the area of sustainable development!

48% of respondents confirm that sustainability standards provide a long-term competitive advantage. 53% expect ambitious due diligence requirements to strengthen the European supply industry.'

But the government does not seem to have adopted this view. Instead, its motto appears to be: growth for the economy as the ultimate goal. And in order to 'sugarcoat' this primacy of the economy above all else, it adds: because only in this way can we still afford social and ecological policies.

The government seems trapped in this outdated way of thinking. It is absurd to first promote the destruction of the foundations of life in order to then be able to protect them better. Furthermore, crises are the new normal. If, in times of crisis, the sole thesis is that growth is the solution, then we find ourselves in a spiral that does not solve any

problems in the long term. Certainly, growth in certain segments such as renewable energies and the circular economy makes sense, but not growth as an end in itself with an increase in consumption, resource depletion, rising energy consumption, etc. Instead of more growth, questions of distributive justice can also be part of the solution.

Every day that our economic system is not gradually transformed in line with sustainable development and respect for planetary boundaries is a day lost. It only increases the pressure to act, to make the transition even faster and with greater disruption in the future – because it is inevitable that our economy will have to take greater account of the laws of nature in the future. The only question is: when will the transition be initiated, and will it be a ‘smooth’ process, or will drastic changes be necessary in 10-20 years at the latest? (As a reminder, if the phase-out of fossil fuels had been initiated earlier, as demanded by numerous NGOs, progressive economists and companies, among others, we would not be exposed to the effects of the war in Ukraine to the same extent in the energy sector).

What's more, one gets the impression that the government believes that the laws of nature can be subordinated to the economic system! This is a fallacy, as is the hope that climate change and species loss could take a short break because the necessary reforms to protect them are ‘inconvenient’ for us at the moment and we have other crises to deal with.

The thinking of some members of the government is shaped by the idea that the economy is ‘realpolitik’ and should determine other sectoral policies. The opposite is true: giving priority to ecological concerns is realpolitik, which simply takes the laws of nature into account and thus ensures that the future of the next generations still has a basis.

The following is quoted from the “Avis de la Cour des comptes sur le projet de budget de l’Etat pour l’exercice 2026

“Economic losses

According to the European Environment Agency (EEA)⁶⁰, climate-related disasters (storms, heavy rainfall, floods) caused a total of €1,409 million in economic losses for Luxembourg between 1980 and 2024. The majority of this financial damage (€1,120 million) is attributable to storms, hail and heavy rainfall. Floods, whether river or rain-related, account for the remaining €289 million. It should be noted that no direct economic losses were recorded in the report for heatwaves, droughts or frost events.

Given its size, Luxembourg did not, in fact, record the highest economic losses in absolute terms. Nevertheless, in relative terms, the country is among the most affected.

More specifically, it ranks third in the European Union in terms of economic losses per km², at €543,089/km². It is surpassed by Belgium (€600,130/km²) and Slovenia, the latter occupying first place with €911,559/km².

In addition, Luxembourg ranks second in terms of economic damage per capita, with a figure of €2,980 per resident.”

3. Purely selective measures will not achieve the goals of preserving the foundations of life and shaping a positive future

Anyone who looks through the Mecoskop analysis will see that it is not as if nothing is being done. Pre-financing in the field of solar energy is being addressed, and the expansion of the tram and rapid tram networks is also progressing (albeit somewhat more slowly due to various changes to the original plans). preliminary work has been done on the EU’s ‘nature renaturation’ strategy, measures are being taken to improve rail transport, selective projects to green up towns are being promoted, work is being done to improve opportunities for taking over farms, and so on.

This is certainly positive. But we must not delude ourselves. These important initiatives should not obscure the fact that, in reality, the measures taken are wholly inadequate in relation to what is actually needed. The decisive factor in determining whether the initiatives taken are sufficient is not how much effort a ministry puts in, but the extent to which the goals set (in the areas of climate and biodiversity, resource conservation, etc.) are actually achieved.

The fact is that these isolated measures do not lead to, among other things,

- the extinction of species in our landscape or the problematic situation of our waterways could be curbed by today’s agricultural practices;
- the energy transition could be sufficiently advanced in all sectors – the effective reduction in CO₂ emissions required in the medium to long term could be achieved, including at the level of buildings and the industrial sector;
- harmonious development of the country is ensured through strong regional planning and, for example, urban development, road infrastructure and activity zones no longer jeopardise the preservation of green spaces;
- the economic system and production processes are increasingly restructured in line with sustainable development (in terms of energy consumption and CO₂ emissions, resource use, circular economy, etc.)

The government's work therefore remains a long way from meeting the requirements of sustainable development. Luxembourg must address the important issues of transition much more rapidly, as otherwise our country will not be resilient enough for the future.

Of course, there are positive developments, such as the inclusion of PIBien-être in the 2026 budget. In principle, it is welcome news that this dimension has been included in the budget for the first time. However, only two pages have been devoted to PIBien-être, essentially as an appendix, without any influence on the government's spending policy, which should actually be the goal. The Chamber of Employees calculated that only about 14,9% of the state budget is spent in line with PIBien-être. Furthermore, the five (!) indicators selected to assess PIBien-être are highly questionable and not very meaningful. For the environment, for example, the proportion of fine particles in the air was chosen. As important as reducing these particles is, this pollution is by no means representative of the actual problem.

Another case study: CO₂ emissions and compliance with binding reduction targets. Luxembourg is currently achieving its CO₂ emission reduction targets, as the government repeatedly emphasises. But the fact is that these are not falling to the required extent and are even showing an upward trend in two sectors – and even targets that have already been set in key sectors (including industry) seem to be called into question in some cases. An honest discussion of implementation, which could also lead to open talk about what improvements need to be made to the climate and social plan, looks different.

4. A Ministry of Environment, Biodiversity and Climate with weak political standing – lack of integration of environmental issues into sectoral ministries

According to press reports, Environment Minister Serge Wilmes played a positive role at the COP30 World Climate Conference in Belém. This stance is to be welcomed.

However, in Luxembourg itself, it is impossible to say in which areas environmental policy has actually made real progress during the first two years of the government's term. Nor is it possible to say what goals, priorities and focal points the Ministry of the Environment would like to set for the remainder of the legislative period.

On the contrary, one gets the impression that the Department for Environment regularly loses out on relevant issues that affect other sectoral departments. Reform of agricultural policy, halting further soil sealing and landscape fragmentation, strengthening biodiversity conservation, creating a legal framework for soil protection... the voice of the Ministry of the Environment is barely audible at national level.

This Ministry of the Environment simply lacks profile. It would seem unfair to blame the current Minister of the Environment (alone) for this. Rather, environmental policy needs to be integrated into all government departments, as this is the only way to ensure the success of the socio-ecological transition. A government decision would be necessary to give the Ministry of the Environment a stronger mandate to support the integration of ecological issues into sectoral policies and to be more actively involved in their work at an early stage.

It seems that dossiers move forward when they clearly fall within the remit of a particular ministry. Minister for the Economy Lex Delles is pushing ahead with the expansion of solar energy, while Minister for Transport Yuriko Backes is promoting the expansion of public transport. But then, when several members of the government are involved (keyword: circular economy) and there may still be diverging interests (keyword: reduction of pesticide use), the situation is different. This is despite the fact that members of the government like to talk about good cooperation in public... the facts show that the reality is different.

Whenever more structural, far-reaching measures are required (which necessitate integration into other policy areas), there is a lack of clout and enforcement. Key issues include: strengthening regional planning (is this even still a topic of current government policy?), consistent promotion of organic farming, energy transition at the operational level (CO2 emissions in the industrial sector are currently on the rise); regulations on the construction of solar power plants, promotion of the circular economy... little is happening. Even the European Environment Agency gives Luxembourg a poor rating for promoting the circular economy, for example.

5. There is a certain degree of dialogue with civil society – but a genuine, solution-oriented exchange requires more

Mouvement Ecologique is represented in a whole range of government advisory bodies and contributes positively and constructively to these. Mouvement Ecologique also regularly draws up concrete proposals and suggestions in line with sustainable development (within the framework of legal opinions, etc.). In addition to critically monitoring social developments, it is particularly important for Mouvement Ecologique to continually develop and communicate positive ideas and visions for the future. Examples include greening towns and villages, simplifying procedures in nature conservation law, the climate plan and its socially acceptable implementation, and much more.

Based on this understanding, Mouvement Ecologique regularly seeks dialogue with ministries and administrations in order to promote open exchange between all stakeholders. Mouvement Ecologique has held discussions with various members of the government, and the talks to date have been conducted in a consistently positive atmosphere.

Similarly, Mouvement Ecologique has enjoyed good cooperation with trade unions on various issues, particularly with regard to the climate and social plan, for which joint proposals have been developed.

On the other hand, however, this should not obscure the fact that there is a lack of structured dialogue with civil society in key areas. This is particularly regrettable with regard to Environment Minister Serge Wilmes, Agriculture Minister Martine Hansen and Regional Planning Minister Claude Meisch.

Only two meetings have been held with Environment Minister Serge Wilmes in the last two years (in addition to a joint exchange with Minister Lex Delles on the climate and social plan). Another meeting has been on the agenda for months, but has not yet taken place.

There has been no real discussion with members of the government on important issues, such as the reform of the Nature Conservation Act. At the first and only meeting, Agriculture Minister Martine Hansen stated that she was not interested in regular exchanges. As a result, there is currently no constructive dialogue on how to reconcile biodiversity conservation and agriculture. It should be noted that Mouvement Ecologique has been campaigning for years for such an open discussion between all stakeholders, initiated by the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture. Only Minister for the Economy and Energy Lex Delles has approached Mouvement Ecologique in the past as part of an ongoing exchange.

The discussion is not about the government's specific position on Mouvement Ecologique. **However, it raises the fundamental question of how the government views constructive dialogue and exchange with civil society actors.** How important and valuable does it consider the knowledge, expertise and vitality of civil society to be, and does it proactively involve civil society accordingly? And how a discussion can lead to a real exchange of arguments, so that the opinion of a Mouvement Ecologique, for example, can also be incorporated into a government project. It is regrettable that the measures provided for in the coalition agreement (see Mecoskop: promotion of voluntary work and various initiatives to encourage it) have not been addressed, or have been addressed only to a limited extent.

The government likes to talk about citizen participation. This is justified. Thousands of people are directly involved in NGOs. NGOs strive to use the diversity of their members' ideas to contribute constructive proposals for the development of society.

Shouldn't the government do everything in its power to harness this source of knowledge, commitment, energy and creativity? Unlike most ad hoc citizen participation processes, non-governmental organisations can also play a more structural role when government decisions are pending. Is this perhaps why the government prefers loose participation processes?

The logo for MECOSKOP features the word 'MECOSKOP' in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are split into two colors: 'MECOS' is in red and 'KOP' is in green. The 'O' in 'MECOS' and the 'K' in 'KOP' are stylized to overlap, creating a continuous loop-like shape.

6. Under the guise of reducing bureaucracy: deregulation – in Luxembourg and at EU level

However, the results of the first two years of the government's work are even more problematic: unfortunately, not only is the government far from doing enough to promote sustainable development, it is also in the process of taking steps backwards.

Under the guise of reducing bureaucracy, which is certainly justified in some areas, and under the motto 'more incentives, fewer rules', deregulation is taking place at the expense of sustainable development. This is clearly the case both in Luxembourg and at EU level.

Some examples:

- **Reform of the Nature Conservation Act as part of the "Méi a méi séier bauen" initiative:** The government argues that the reform bill would remove administrative hurdles in order to speed up construction and thus address the problem of housing shortages. However, even key players in the construction industry argue that the provisions of the Nature Conservation Act are not the main problem in the implementation of construction projects, or at most only in a few isolated cases. Other obstacles are far more fundamental (e.g. the financial situation of local authorities, private ownership, etc.). Others argue that the focus should be on renovating existing buildings, as this would allow housing to be mobilised much more quickly. However, the government is sticking to its plan to amend the Nature Conservation Act and is also falsely claiming that this deregulation would benefit nature. This is despite the fact that the ministry's scientific advisory committee (Observatoire de l'environnement naturel), along with environmental organisations and even the Chamber of Architects (OAI), has warned of the negative consequences for biodiversity and the greening of towns and villages. For months, and in some cases years, the Mouvement Ecologique has been putting forward concrete alternative proposals to solve real problems without leading to further destruction of green spaces and biodiversity.

- **Mercosur Agreement:** Years ago, the parties in this government were highly critical of the Mercosur Agreement, the agreement between Europe and the South American states. Today, the government has done a complete U-turn, without any fundamental changes having been made to the text of the agreement, and has become a supporter – at the expense of environmental and social standards and ultimately also against our small and medium-sized Luxembourg farmers;

- **Reduction in pesticide use:** The Minister for Agriculture repeatedly emphasises that regulations prohibiting or reducing pesticide use must be feasible for farmers. The result: at EU level, Luxembourg is far from being one of the countries pushing for stronger regulation – and, in parallel, increased promotion of alternatives – even though high levels of pesticides can be found in conventionally produced food, in the air, soil and water, in bee pollen and even in children's hair in Luxembourg.

- **Supply chain law, wolf protection, deforestation law, New Green Deal, etc.** The list of examples where Luxembourg has very specifically sided with those who want to slow down progress goes on. This somewhat relativises the otherwise positive efforts of Environment Minister Serge Wilmes at the COP in Belém: when it comes down to it at EU level, when Luxembourg could and should play a concrete role in decision-making, we all too often find ourselves on the 'wrong' side of history and speak out against clear guidelines in the interests of sustainable development.



The government says it doesn't want to "annoy" people and wants to "bring them along." But the question is: Where to? How does the government intend to make Luxembourg more sustainable, resilient for the future, and a more livable place for its people? And with what tools?

CONCLUSION

If a government has only addressed half of the selected key statements in the coalition agreement in the area of sustainable development, this can only lead to a negative assessment of the government's work.

This government must finally engage in an honest debate about the direction Luxembourg should take, so that we can live within the limits of this planet and leave behind a 'Luxembourg worth living in' for future generations, rather than too many burdens. Persisting with today's pragmatism and all its negative consequences: No!

This government recently presented a strategy for making Luxembourg more resilient. However, it only touches on the question of how Luxembourg can become more resilient in social and environmental terms. This is to ensure that growth does not exceed the limits of natural resources (water, soil, biodiversity, climate, etc.) and that social inequalities do not lead to increased tensions, among other things.

This also means that we must establish a **Ministry of the Environment with a clear profile**, integrate environmental aspects into all sectoral ministries, and **optimise cooperation between ministries**.

However, it also means that **purely economic thinking** is no longer the sole driving force behind political decisions in day-to-day business, but rather the long-term preservation of natural resources and human well-being. In this respect, we must say yes to genuine bureaucracy reduction, but **no to deregulation under the guise of bureaucracy reduction**.

To achieve this, the **creativity and knowledge of non-governmental organisations and the population** must also be given real importance.

This is not least a question of political credibility, which would also lead to greater public confidence in politics and its ability to act.



MECOSKOP

Monitoring der Umsetzung des Regierungsprogrammes



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ANREGUNGEN DES MOUVEMENT
ECOLOGIQUE FÜR DIE
LEGISLATURPERIODE 2023-2028

HOME



Liebe Besucherin, lieber Besucher,

Wir freuen uns, dass Sie sich für das «Mecoskop» des Mouvement Ecologique interessieren.

Im Mecoskop werden 77 zentrale Versprechen im Bereich nachhaltige Entwicklung aus dem Regierungsabkommen aufgegriffen und ihr Stand sowie die Qualität der Umsetzung aus Sicht des Mouvement Ecologique bewertet.

THE MECOSKOP - The MECOSKOP, a barometer for the implementation of the government programme

Is the government actually implementing what it promised in its government programme in the area of sustainable development? Monitoring and reviewing this is the basic aim of the 'Mecoskop'.

In a clear and illustrative way, it allows us to show the extent to which the government is living up to its own claims and the promises made to its citizens.

However, the Mecoscope is also intended to provide an incentive so that ministries feel even more challenged to implement the relevant requirements of the coalition agreement.

The Mouvement Ecologique withheld 77 key promises in the area of 'sustainable development' from the government programme.

What are the operating principles of the Mecoscope?

All promises are assessed as objectively as possible. A kind of barometer of the implementation of the measure during the legislature is used each time to visualise the implementation in practice.

A distinction is made between four phases of implementation:

 According to the information available, the implementation of the measure has not yet been initiated.

 The implementation of the measure is, as far as is known, in preparation.

 The detailed implementation is in progress.

 It has been implemented.

In addition, photos of government officials show which ministry is responsible for implementation on the basis of its remit. However, the following comment should be noted: certain topics and, in particular, instruments appear in several sections of the government programme. It is not always clear which ministry or ministries are responsible for implementation (in a leading role). The assignment was made to the best of our knowledge and belief.

However, since the entire government is apparently involved in certain points, the Mouvement Ecologique has also presented some promises in this way.

The quality of implementation from the point of view of the Mouvement Ecologique is also assessed as far as possible. After all, it may well be that a promise has been made, but its implementation is highly problematic from the point of view of the Mouvement Ecologique.

This assessment is presented in the form of 'smiley faces'.

On which information does the Mecoskop base?

The **evaluation** of the implementation of measures is carried out exclusively on the **basis of publicly available information**, e.g. statements by those with political responsibility, (preliminary) drafts of laws and regulations, the processing of these in committees (such as the Council of State and the Chamber of Deputies), etc.

In the context of the evaluation, the Mouvement Ecologique has *only to a very limited extent* addressed additional questions to ministries and administrations: this would not have been possible in terms of time and personnel.

Moreover, it is also the government's responsibility to ensure, through a good communication policy, that the public is regularly informed about the status of its work. Since the 'Mecoskop' is regularly revised, an **update** can be made at any time. We are grateful for any information that could help to complete the information.

Incidentally, the *Mecoscope* is updated continuously, but at least every six months. However, this is not done daily, so it is quite possible that there may be slight time delays.

Creating and updating the *Mecoskop* requires a lot of work and is therefore also cost-intensive. If you would like to contribute to this with a donation, we would be very grateful to you in advance. The donation accounts of the Ökofonds Foundation: CCPL LU96 1111 0734 1886 0000 or BCEE LU31 0019 1100 4403 9000. Note: MECOSKOP. Donations to the Ökofonds foundation are tax deductible.

Do you have any suggestions, questions or would you like to inform us about developments that have not been taken into account? Then email us: we are open to any suggestions: email: meco@oeko.lu - subject: 'Mecoskop'