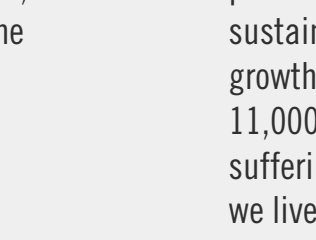


PRINCIPLES FOR TRANSFORMATION

HOW THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL CAN ACHIEVE SYSTEMIC CHANGE



A "MAN ON THE MOON" MOMENT

Plans for a 'European Green Deal', unveiled at the end of 2019, were presented by the European Commission as a "man on the moon" moment, which it claimed would herald an economic paradigm shift. But while the language is full of promise – echoing calls made by Friends of the Earth and our allies for many years – the strong rhetoric disguises only moderate proposals. The package may go further than the European Union has before, but it falls short of what's needed to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. Bold and urgent action – taken in solidarity with those most impacted and most vulnerable, and recognising Europe's historical responsibility and greater capacity to act – is required to achieve the systemic change we need.

From the outset, the European Green Deal has focused on 'green growth'. This failure to challenge the paradigm of increased consumption and endless economic growth means the proposals are fundamentally flawed and will prevent Europe from bringing our socio-economic system within all planetary boundaries in time to avert climate and ecological breakdown.

Just one week before the European Commission released its growth-oriented plan, the European Environment Agency published a five-year review of Europe's environmental

performance that concluded the EU "will not achieve its sustainability vision by continuing to promote economic growth and seeking to manage the impacts". This was after, 11,000 scientists from 153 countries warned that human suffering is avoidable only if we make huge shifts in the way we live: "Our goals need to shift from GDP growth... toward sustaining ecosystems and improving human well-being by prioritizing basic needs and reducing inequality".

We cannot afford to ignore this message. A European Green Deal needs to build a socio-economic system that provides for the needs of all people, in Europe and globally, by narrowing inequality, prioritising well-being and respecting the Earth's limits. We should not be deceived that continued growth can be made sustainable by sticking the words 'green' or 'regenerative' in front of it.

The legacy of decisions taken today, and actions implemented in the next five years, will have major impacts for decades to come. From this moment on, every single policy decision needs to put people, and our environment and climate, first if we are to bring our societies within sustainable limits. Policymakers must come forward with genuinely transformational solutions. We need nothing less than system change.

TO ACHIEVE SYSTEM CHANGE...

To achieve system change, vested interests in the status quo – from fossil fuel companies to agribusiness – cannot be allowed to continue shaping the agenda. The European Green Deal proposal has the fingerprints of corporate lobbying all over it: inadequate reduction targets, unrestricted access to raw materials, and an emphasis on techno-fixes and failed market-based solutions, are some of the same-old signs. For a European Green Deal to really succeed, the obstacles that prevent transformational action and prolong business-as-usual – from corporate capture to the trade regime – must be removed. (See below: Obstacles to Europe's Transformation for more details).

Having removed these obstacles, we believe there are important principles that should be followed in Europe's transformation. Friends of the Earth Europe has developed five over-arching principles to guide decision-making around a European Green Deal.

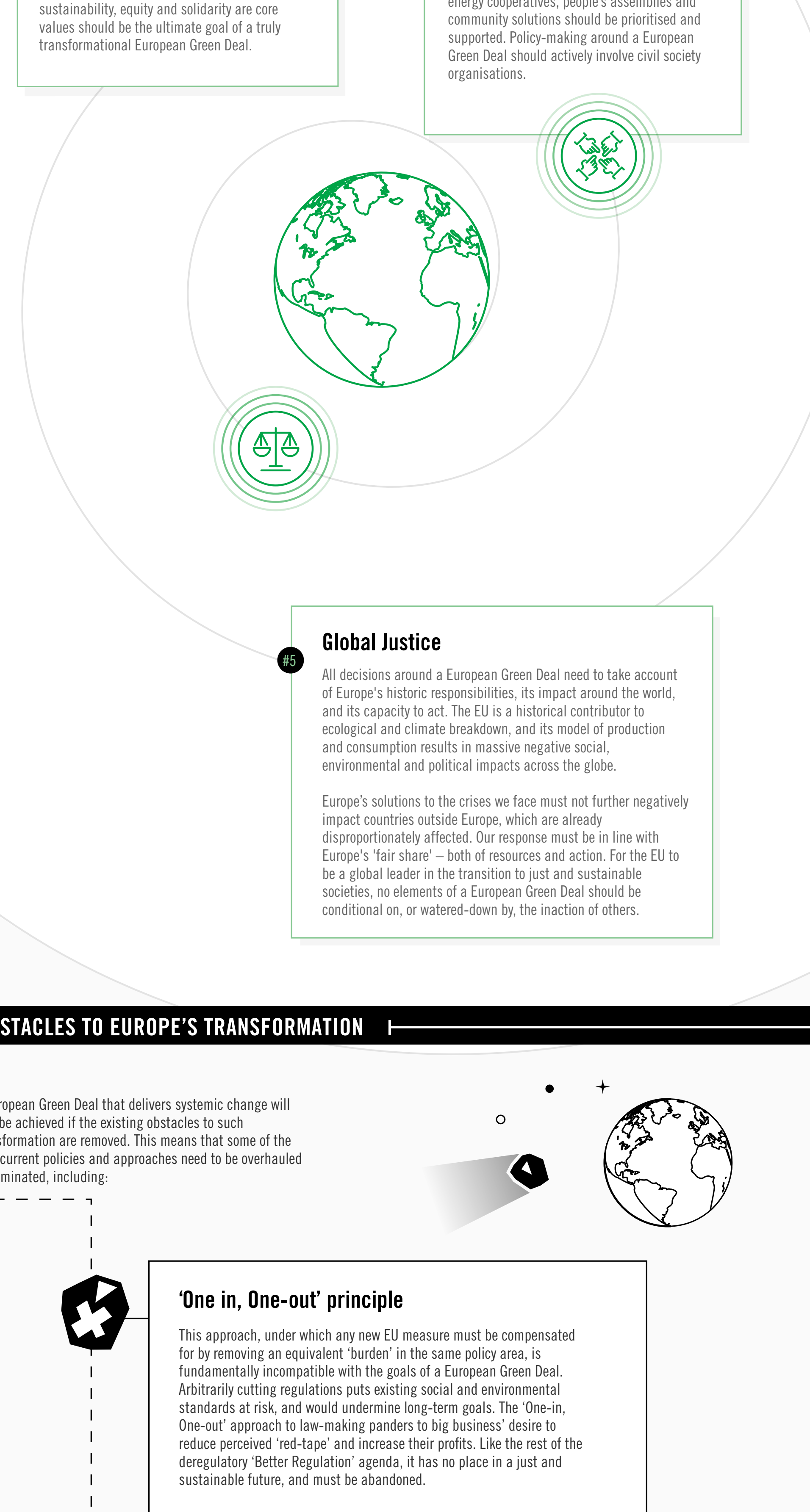
We believe that a European Green Deal capable of delivering systemic change, and putting us on a path to a just and sustainable future, must be based on the following Principles for Transformation:

- Urgency and scale
- An economy within Earth's limits
- Equity
- People's solutions and participation
- Global justice

We will apply these principles to policy areas covered by the European Green Deal – circular economy and resource use, climate and energy, food and agriculture, forests and biodiversity, and just transition – to assess whether they do what is needed for system change.

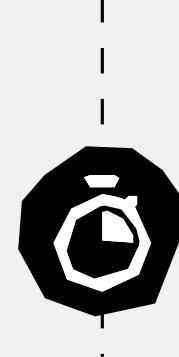
BECAUSE NOTHING LESS WILL DO!

PRINCIPLES FOR TRANSFORMATION



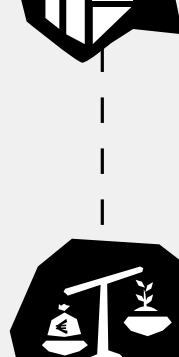
OBSTACLES TO EUROPE'S TRANSFORMATION

A European Green Deal that delivers systemic change will only be achieved if the existing obstacles to such transformation are removed. This means that some of the EU's current policies and approaches need to be overhauled or eliminated, including:



'One in, one-out' principle

This approach, under which any new EU measure must be compensated for by removing an equivalent 'burden' in the same policy area, is fundamentally incompatible with the goals of a European Green Deal. Arbitrarily cutting regulations puts existing social and environmental standards at risk, and would undermine long-term goals. The 'One-in, One-out' approach to law-making panders to big business' desire to reduce perceived 'red-tape' and increase their profits. Like the rest of the deregulatory 'Better Regulation' agenda, it has no place in a just and sustainable future, and must be abandoned.



Innovation principle

Invented by industry lobbyists as a means to block social and environmental protections, this so-called principle is a direct threat to the European Green Deal we need. It would handcuff regulators and limit their ability to enact the transformational legislation needed. Instead, a European Green Deal should be guided by the precautionary principle, which is enshrined in the EU treaty. The 'innovation principle' should be scrapped as the corporate lobbying tool it is.



Voluntary agreements

Too many of the EU's policies are based on voluntary deals when mandatory, enforceable legislation is needed. Such arrangements too often let companies 'off the hook' and leave them unaccountable. Throughout a European Green Deal, voluntary agreements must not be used as substitutes for binding obligations.



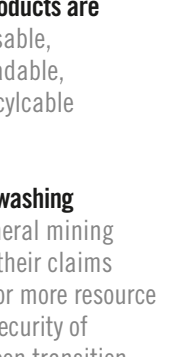
Lack of transparency

Inadequate transparency rules, and implementation of them, have allowed vested interests too much sway over EU decision-making, and impeded greater democratic participation. Equitable and transparent consultation and participation must be guaranteed for all stakeholders at every stage of the process to develop and implement a European Green Deal.



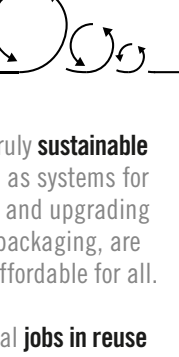
Corporate capture

An effective European Green Deal is dependent on breaking the current stranglehold of corporate interests on decision-making. Industry lobbyists have unacceptable levels of influence, and have delayed, weakened, and sabotaged environmental and social measures that would dent their profits, for decades. A European Green Deal can only deliver transformation if it is free from excessive corporate influence.



Europe's trade regime

Many aspects of the EU trade and investment regime are irreconcilable with efforts to achieve a just and sustainable Europe. Current trade rules stand in the way of governments' ability to implement the changes needed for a successful European Green Deal, including in the areas of biodiversity, food standards, climate and energy, and resource use. For example, the rights given to multinationals, to claim damages through Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms, restrict governments' capacity to enact laws in the interest of the public and the environment. ISDS, and variants like the Investment Court System, are incompatible with the regulatory cooperation needs. Excessive profits for investors – from ISDS to 'regulatory cooperation' that gives big business more influence over rules – must be ended.



FOR THE PEOPLE – FOR THE PLANET – FOR THE FUTURE

Friends of the Earth Europe campaigns for sustainable and just societies and for the protection of the environment. We unite more than 30 national groups with thousands of local groups and are part of the world's largest grassroots environmental network, Friends of the Earth International.