CLIMATE CAMPAIGNERS

Statement from CAMPAIGNers to the Conference of the Parties

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101003815.

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1. Introduction

Until now, the majority of climate change mitigation policies have primarily focused on reducing emissions on the production side, with comparatively fewer measures addressed to the demand side. According to the IPCC 'having the right policies, infrastructure and technology in place to enable changes to our lifestyles and behaviour can result in a 40-70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050'[i]. Despite their key role in addressing climate change, the importance of sustainable lifestyles and behavioural change is not yet sufficiently recognised in UNFCCC priorities and processes.

The Paris Agreement noted the importance of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production with an emphasis on the responsibility of the 'developed country Parties'[ii]. Nevertheless, the most recent Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) delivered on behalf of the EU and Member States, although containing a series of measures and actions to bring European countries on track to achieve net-zero emissions by mid-century, compatible with limiting global warming to 1.5°C increase, have not adequately incorporated lifestyle-related mitigation pathways[iii].

Backed by the carried out scientific investigations, our key recommendations resolve around the following four priority areas of lifestyle changes with the highest recognised potential for reducing climate impacts:

1. Cities and public authorities
2. Energy
3. Transport
4. Resources and planetary health

2. Why sustainable lifestyles?

Lifestyle changes are acknowledged as a crucial component in endeavours aimed at tackling the growing environmental issues that pose a significant threat to the well-being of humanity. Such a threat is most especially visible in relation

to the climate crisis, which already threatens livelihoods both in the present and in the near to distant future.

The role of citizens as active agents of change cannot be underestimated. From the IPCC to the UNEP International Resource Panel, alleviating the climate change challenge needs channelling of local efforts in addressing consumption including through lifestyle changes with the aim to address greenhouse gas emissions at the same time as the use of natural resources[iv][v]. In 2023, the IPCC identified that global GHG emissions could be reduced by 40-70% through "demand-side management" efforts including changes in infrastructure and the uptake of socio-cultural and behavioural change. Currently, individuals and households account for more than two-thirds of global GHG emissions[vi] and industrialised countries have the largest efforts to make - for example the average yearly greenhouse gas emissions must decrease *per person* from 7.5t CO_2 to 2.5t CO_2 by 2030 to comply with the Paris Agreement goals.[vii]

Yet, most of these emissions are not *intentionally* caused by citizens. Rather all consumption decisions are taken within the context of a 'system' that influences the availability and affordability of sustainable options. This is the case for all consumption areas, from mobility, housing and food to all consumer products. System change and behavioural change need to be intentionally designed so that sustainable lifestyles become the easiest, most accessible, and most affordable option.

Strengthening existing and further developing policies to make sustainable lifestyles the norm and to take a more intentional and systemic approach to formulate such policies means understanding what influences behaviour. Key factors in this respect include socio-demographics, socio-economic status, infrastructure and access to public services, regulatory framework, availability, affordability and accessibility of sustainable choices on markets, green public procurement, and individual values and preferences[viii][ix].

Sufficiency[x]-based lifestyle interventions have been demonstrated to have a higher climate mitigation potential, particularly in transport, services and clothing. Moreover, sufficiency measures are also associated with higher co-

benefits such as reducing consumer spending, better health and wellbeing, and less pollution[xi]. For enhancing sufficiency-based lifestyle changes, we must therefore make system changes that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and resource use at the same time, largely by creating favourable conditions and support for low-impact services and products. It is crucial to align policy development with participative processes that engage citizens actively in policy implementation and future design, to allow for more solutions to be identified and implemented that will then become the new positive cultural and social 'norm'[xii].

3. Sustainable lifestyles in NDCs

At the core of the Paris Agreement and its long-term objectives lie the NDCs, as the official UNFCCC implementation mechanism at the national levels. However, in their current form, NDCs are not equipped with the information, incentives and systems facilitating the transition to sustainable lifestyles. The implementation of lifestyle-based measures in the NDCs needs to consider aspects of global and intra-national equity, and transparency and comparability to ensure the transition is fulfilled in a just and fair way.

Global equity

When designing and implementing the NDCs, it is crucial to consider balancing of rights that parties should abide by, taking into consideration the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) enshrined in the Paris Agreement[xiii]. This principle provides the foundation to ask for differentiated goals and measures concerning behavioural changes by parties in a balanced way according to diverse national contexts. However, this is not to be understood in a simple binary approach, that one group of countries would have to do everything, and another group of countries nothing. Climate change is a global equity issue, since a minority of comparably wealthy countries and population segments is disproportionately contributing to growing emissions

and resource consumption. Top 10% of individual emitters are contributing to nearly 50% of all emissions, while the bottom 50% account for 12% of the total[xiv].

When incorporating lifestyle-related measures into NDCs, all countries should identify their possibilities and potential for emission reduction (or limitations in emissions growth in countries with low levels) as they may be able to make contributions. Nevertheless, so-called industrialised countries and increasingly other countries with significant historically higher emissions contributing to climate change and higher capacities to deliver emission reductions need to take action in particular. In addition, climate finance provisions which developed countries are obliged to provide should assist countries with less capacities in financing the development of infrastructure and other measures which make climate-friendly lifestyle changes easier and cheaper.

Transparency and comparability

This statement is also an opportunity to point out an issue encountered in the submitted NDCs concerning the guidelines on the content they should contain and on how these contributions are formulated. These guidelines have been unclear about the required level of detail, transparency and comparability: It is important to ensure that similar kinds of documents can be formulated differently but in a comparable way. This is to enable comparability of the contributions and make sure that parties are transparently committing to engage in their NDCs with a certain level of accountability.

The following policy measures target the priority areas of lifestyle change intervention, namely cities and public authorities, transport, energy, and resources and planetary health, recognising that only joint measures addressing the importance of lifestyle and system interventions can fully address the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution we are facing. They can be considered a priority list setting out key impact areas that can achieve systemic change, recognising that they may not fully fit each national context. Many of these measures will also bring about synergies with adaptation needs and priorities for building resilience, beyond emissions reductions.

3.1 Cities and public authorities

More than half the world's population lives in or near cities[xv]. By 2050, the share of global population living in urban areas is expected to reach 68%[xvi]. Local governments therefore play a crucial role in advancing measures promoting sustainable lifestyles. Public authorities, on the other hand, have a clear role to play in shaping choices available to citizens. They have the responsibility to address equity issues and support communities and societies to be resilient based on solidarity, shared values and collective action. Moreover, public authorities have a unique position to ensure accessibility to sustainable products and services, including through green public procurement[xvii].

Key recommendations for UNFCCC parties:

- Facilitate the transition to sustainable food systems by:
    - Encouraging plant-based diets of local and seasonal organic products especially where consumption of animal products (meat, dairy) is already more prominent or growing considerably
    - Reducing consumption of animal products (meat, dairy)
    - Supporting sourcing from local and national producers to feed their residents and citizens
- Facilitate renovation of buildings by:
    - prioritising renovations that reduce overall environmental impacts and improve indoor air quality - including insulation, changes in mode of use from commercial to residential, and reclaiming of empty buildings
    - boosting improvements in housing insulation, with particular support for lower income households to reduce energy poverty,
    - reinforcing measures to assist households during all stages of renovation, including information provision,
    - mobilising additional resources and introducing stronger renovation obligations for renting and selling buildings.

- Replace carbon-intensive heating, cooling and cooking technologies (such as gas, oil, gas boilers or firewood) with low-carbon ones (such as electric, solar, and electric heat pumps), and avoid the installation of new carbon-intensive technologies where alternatives are available.

3.2 Energy

Lifestyle-based measures play an important role in ensuring a rapid, just and equitable transition to a 100% renewables-based energy system and reduction of energy consumption. If implemented, they can result in 40-70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050[xviii]. To meet the objectives set forth in the Paris Agreement, it is imperative to implement unprecedented measures and substantially decrease energy demand during the upcoming two decades. Energy efficiency measures cannot be introduced in isolation, but rather coupled with energy sufficiency policies.

Key recommendations for UNFCCC parties:

- Implement measures to drastically reduce energy consumption in all sectors, including doubling of energy intensity improvements by 2030
- Set intentional paths to an energy transition that prioritise reduced energy demand (by companies and citizens), and make the desired renewable alternatives accessible and affordable to all, especially poorer households
- Phase out of fossil fuels in all sectors and binding commitments to ensure that each country does its part, with historically and presently large and rich polluters moving earlier
- Rapidly and significantly scale-up sustainable renewable energy solutions to increasingly substitute fossil fuel use, for which COP28 adopted targets for global increases can provide a useful impetus
- Halt the development of new oil and gas exploitation projects, pipelines, coal mines and infrastructure that perpetuates our dependence on fossil fuels

3.3 Transport

Transport is a major contributor to carbon emissions in most countries around the world and one of the sectors with the greatest potential for reducing emissions. Lifestyle changes related to mobility and transport demonstrate significant potential for emissions reduction and transport-related emissions are strongly linked with income levels. For example, the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions among the leading emitters in the European Union is related to transportation, with air travel being a prominent contributor. Air travel accounts for approximately 40% of the overall carbon footprint among the top 1% of EU households, knowing that their carbon footprint is more than 7 times higher than that of average European households.[xix]

Key recommendations for UNFCCC parties:

- Prioritise investment in public transport (buses and trains) and active mobility (cycling, walking), including to spur viable alternatives to short-distance flights and premium class travel which should be banned where reasonable alternatives exist
- Incentivise the transition from private cars to public transport and active mobility
- Lower speed limits in towns and cities for car mobility to 30km/h or lower, and promote car-free inner cities
- Support the development of ride-sharing schemes especially in cities
- Initiate a sustainable urban mobility plan and, for the cities that have already adopted one, accelerate its implementation in an adaptive and inclusive way

3.4 Resources and planetary health

The International Resource Panel highlights that unsustainable use of natural resources, particularly by high-income countries, is at the source of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Natural

resource use is responsible for one-half of total global greenhouse gas emissions, more than 90% of land-related biodiversity loss and water stress and one-third of health-related pollution impacts. Therefore, it is crucial that resource efficiency measures, particularly in high-income countries, are complemented with sufficiency-based policies[xx].

Key recommendations for UNFCCC parties:

- Introduce an integrated approach to climate change and resource consumption in UNFCCC processes and implementing measures
- Integrate resource reduction measures into UNFCCC processes and implementing measures, notably through development of sustainable product policies and green public procurement
- Develop net zero implementing measures that also reduce resource use and avoid increased use of critical raw materials

4. Annex

About CAMPAIGNers

This statement is submitted on behalf of the European Union-funded research project Citizens Acting on Mitigation Pathways through Active Implementation of a Goal-setting Network (CAMPAIGNers) in the context of the Paris Agreement Global Stocktake as part of the project's efforts to:

- highlight the necessity of systemically including behavioural change in NDCs and other actions to meet the Paris Agreement target,
- explain the shortcomings of NDCs in setting out a supportive framework on behaviour change that provides citizens with opportunities for adopting and further developing climate-friendly lifestyles,
- describe how lifestyle elements can be included in NDCs to accelerate mitigation efforts and achieve progress.

CAMPAIGNers project aims to provide and build scientific support to designing mitigation pathways and policies concerning climate-friendly lifestyles. The

project aims to make low- carbon lifestyles a major part of the solution by identifying lifestyle transformation potential, and associated barriers and enablers across 5 continents and 16 major cities with over 20 million residents.

This project sees the collaboration of different partners from academia, research institutions, NGOs and adherent cities in Europe and beyond. The CAMPAIGNers project allows partners to learn about behavioural change and translate this knowledge into policies for local and national policy makers so that they can incorporate more lifestyle policies in their NDCs.

[i] IPCC (2022). *Press release: The evidence is clear: the time for action is now. We can halve emissions by 2030.* https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/resources/press/press-release/

[ii] Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Dec. 12, 2015, T.I.A.S. No. 16-1104, preamble.

[iii] Cavalli, L. and Boeri, C. (2023) *Carbon Neutral Lifestyles and NDCs: Advice and Policy Perspectives.* FEEM Working Paper No. 07. https://ssrn.com/abstract=4429863

[iv] International Resource Panel (2022). *Making Climate Targets Achievable: Improving Wellbeing through Reduced Absolute Resource Use*. Potočnik, J., Teixeira, I. A think piece of the International Resource Panel Co-Chairs.

[v] IPCC (2022) *Climate Change 2022 - Mitigation of Climate Change*. Working Group III contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, WHO, UNEP.

[vi] Ivanova D. and Wood R. (2020). The Unequal Distribution of Household Carbon Footprints in Europe and its Link to Sustainability. *Global Sustainability*, 3, (18), p. 1–12. This is a global estimation that does not look into disparities across regions and socio-economic groups.

[vii] Capstick, S., Khosla R. (2020). Chapter 6: Bridging the Gap. The Role of Equitable Low-Carbon Lifestyles, in *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP). Emissions Gap Report 2020.

[viii] Dhakal, S., J.C. Minx, F.L. Toth, A. Abdel-Aziz, M.J. Figueroa Meza, K. Hubacek, I.G.C. Jonckheere, Yong-Gun Kim, G.F.Nemet, S. Pachauri, X.C. Tan, T. Wiedmann, (2022). *Emissions Trends and Drivers*. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_Chapter02.pdf In IPCC, 2022. *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Contribution of Working Group III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA. doi: 10.1017/9781009157926.004

[ix] OECD (2020). *Improving resource efficiency for a greener world.* https://www.oecd.org/environment/improving-resource-efficiency-and-the-circularity-of-economies-for-a-greener-world-1b38a38f-en.htm

[x] According to IPCC sufficiency is 'a set of measures and daily practices that avoid demand for energy, materials, land, and water while delivering human well-being for all within planetary boundaries' IPCC (2023) *AR6 Climate Change 2023 Synthesis report*. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/

[xi] Vita, G. et al. (2019). *The Environmental Impact of Green Consumption and Sufficiency Lifestyles Scenarios in Europe: Connecting Local Sustainability Visions to Global Consequences*. Ecological Economics, 164 (106322) https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.05.002

[xii] Climate Outreach, 2023. *Something to talk about – success stories of public engagement to tackle climate change.* https://climateoutreach.org/reports/success-stories-public-engagement/

[xiii] Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Dec. 12, 2015, T.I.A.S. No. 16-1104, preamble.

[xiv] https://wir2022.wid.world/

[xv] UN Habitat, *Cities and climate change.* https://unhabitat.org/cities-and-climate-change

[xvi] United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2018). *2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects*. https://population.un.org/wup/?_gl=1*137yb8i*_ga*ODkxNjYxMTAxLjE2OTgyNDIxNjQ.*_ga_TK9BQL5X7Z*MTY5ODI0MjE2NC4xLjAuMTY5ODI0MjE2NC4wLjAuMA..*_ga_S5EKZKSB78*MTY5ODI0MjE2NC4xLjAuMTY5ODI0MjE2Ny41Ny4wLjA.

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[xviii] IPCC (2022). *Press release: The evidence is clear: the time for action is now. We can halve emissions by 2030.* https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/resources/press/press-release/

[xix] Philippe COPINSCHI et al. (2022). Report on Target lifestyles. Deliverable 1.3 of the CAMPAIGNers project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme GA No: 101003815. https://project.climate-campaigners.com/newspost/content-news/report/2022/0330/Report-on-Target-Lifestyles

[xx] International Resource Panel (2022). *Making Climate Targets Achievable: Improving Wellbeing through Reduced Absolute Resource Use*. Potočnik, J., Teixeira, I. A think piece of the International Resource Panel Co-Chairs.