CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

DID YOU KNOW ...?

- ✓ **Climate change is currently a global undeniable and politically urgent reality, pointed as the main cause of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions as a result of human action. They not only constitute an environmental problem, but also a humanitarian and development emergency with global heights, impacting disproportionately the least-developed countries and the sectors of the poorer and more vulnerable population. These countries are the ones that have lower historical responsibilities on climate change and are also the ones that have the least capacity to respond and to adapt.**
- ✓ **It is not possible to promote a sustainable development without assertive action and innovation in the fight against climate change, nor can we respond to climate change without considering the multidimensional challenges to the development, in the global, national and local plan. The interconnection between the development strategies and the strategies of mitigation and adaptation to climate change allows us to generate mutual benefits.**
- ✓ **The global policies to fight climate change and development have evolved during a long time, in parallel paths. Currently, the goals of the Agreement in Paris on Climate and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development support each other, and that their pursuit should be carried out in an integrated, coordinated and coherent way. Almost all Goals for Sustainable Development are interconnected with climate change.**
- ✓ **Persist several inconsistencies in the policies on climate change, including (i) the fact that the Paris Agreement is necessary, but not sufficient to achieve the assumed goals, (ii) several shortcomings in the funding climate, including the level of lack of coordination and duplication of instruments; and (iii) a number of practices inconsistent with fighting climate change, such as subsidies to fossil fuels, or funding public infrastructure with large carbon intensity.**
- ✓ **The European Union has assumed leadership in climate action, both internationally (in the negotiations of the world and in financial support to developing countries), or through the goals established in the plan of procedure. However, the level of ambition does not correspond to the concrete implementation, because if the current trajectory is kept the targets for 2050 will be far from achieved.**
- ✓ **Portugal has established ambitious internal goals, that will require structural change in several sectors. In the context of development cooperation, it is fundamental that the cooperation becomes more and more present in the climate action and climate change is to be included more systematically in the programmes and projects of cooperation in several sectors. The same is valid for the civil society, in the interaction between the ENGO and the DNGO.**

#ParceirosNoDesenvolvimento

Cofinanciamento

DID YOU KNOW ...?

- ✓ **Climate change is currently a global undeniable and politically urgent reality, pointed as the main cause of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions as a result of human action. Not only do they constitute an environmental problem, but also a humanitarian and development emergency with global proportions, impacting disproportionately the least-developed countries and the sectors of the poorer and more vulnerable population. These countries have lower historical responsibilities on climate change and also the least capacity to respond and to adapt.**
- ✓ **It is not possible to promote a sustainable development without assertive action and innovation in the fight against climate change, nor can we respond to climate change without considering the multidimensional challenges to development in the global, national and local levels. The interconnection between development strategies and strategies of mitigation and adaptation to climate change allows us to generate mutual benefits.**
- ✓ **Global policies to fight climate change and development have evolved during a long time in parallel paths. Currently, the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development support each other, and their pursuit should be carried out in an integrated, coordinated and coherent way. Almost all Sustainable Development Goals are connected with climate change.**
- ✓ **Several inconsistencies persist in the policies on climate change, including (i) the fact that the Paris Agreement is necessary, but not sufficient to achieve the set goals, (ii) several shortcomings in climate funding, including lack of coordination and duplication of instruments; and (iii) a number of practices inconsistent with fighting climate change, such as subsidies for fossil fuels, or public funding for infrastructure with high carbon intensity.**
- ✓ **The European Union has assumed a leadership in climate action, both internationally (in world negotiations and in financial support to developing countries), or through the goals established in the plan of procedure. However, the level of ambition does not correspond to the concrete implementation, because if the current trajectory is kept the targets for 2050 will be far from achieved.**
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Introduction

To ensure a fairer, more decent and sustainable world is more than ever a requirement of the international community and national levels. In this framework, Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) stands as a concept, an approach and a tool for ensuring that the several sectoral policies do not collide with the efforts on eradicating poverty and promoting development at global, European, national and local level.

In a globalised society and interdependent world where challenges of development are complex and multidimensional, it is necessary that public policies on migration, climate change, trade, security or food sovereignty contribute to an effective transformation and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The European Union (EU) and its Member States have ensured PCD as a political commitment and obligation legislation in the framework of the Lisbon Treaty, but will European institutions and countries continue to pursue sectoral policies that contribute effectively to sustainable development?

Climate change is currently an undeniable and politically urgent global reality, either by the fact that its consequences are felt by all people in the world or because its impacts will remain in the next generations. In reality, climate change has always been recorded on planet Earth over thousands of years, but in the last century these variations have experienced a strong acceleration and aggravation, as a result of mankind's presence and action. The human action's impact generates the challenges of sustainability, where climate change can be included, connected with other problems and challenges.

The main cause of these changes is the so-called **greenhouse gases (GHG) as a result of human action**, whose emissions have experienced a sharp increase over the last decades. CO2 (carbon dioxide) is the main negative gas of the so-called greenhouse effect, being the direct consequence of the use and burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas for energy production.

The worsening of climate change and the environmental risks warn us to the need to promote Development with globally sustainable ecological footprints, protecting the planet, the species that inhabit it and the future of Humanity. This is inevitably connected with issues of energy, production and food consumption, the sustainability of cities, the respect for the Global Common Goods. It is also connected with the ability of the international community to act in a concerted way and support developing countries, in order not only to tackle the effects of climate change, but also to promote the transition to more sustainable energy, economic and growth models. Climate action is therefore closely connected with a kind of development that links the the social, economic and environmental dimensions as coherently as possible. In this framework, *are the climate and environmental policies fully aware of the challenges of Development? Do "green strategies" consider their impacts on a global scale, especially in the legitimate aspirations of the poor to a decent life? In the same way, do Development strategies include in a comprehensive, integrated and consistent manner the environmental concerns and the urgency of acting together on climate change? Lastly, are the developing countries supported to achieve this goal?*

6 Myths about Climate Change and Development

REALITY

It is true that there has always been climate change on the planet, but this is the first time that these changes are caused by a species. The analysis of climate change acceleration, particularly in the second half of the twentieth century, is clear: these changes are derived from a high concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere, caused by burning fossil fuels connected with transport, agriculture, industry, heating - and by human activities, such as urbanisation and deforestation, leading to changes in land use that affect the carbon cycle and also contribute to the greenhouse effect. Since the industrial revolution, the human species has increasingly released CO2 and other GHG to the atmosphere, leading to by 100 times more GHG than natural phenomena such as volcanoes. The anthropogenic interference in the climate system has been a dangerous and destabilizing one, leading to risks, threats and adverse and multidimensional impacts.

This is almost a scientific consensus, which is based on mathematical models and in numerous studies, leading to the conclusion that human action is decisive and is on the basis of current climate change[4]. This action is so deep and broad, that many scientists consider that we are already in a new epoch of geologic time – the Anthropocene[5] – which represents the impact that Humanity has on the transformation of the Earth. If we are all responsible – individuals, companies, governments – we can also be part of the solution.

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[4] See, for example, The 97 Percent Consensus on Global Warming - (https://skepticalscience.com/global-warming-scientific-consensus.htm), Science and Global Warming (http://www.jamespowell.org/index.html), or even the website from NASA about the causes of climate change (https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/)

[5] The expression "the Anthropocene" is assigned to the chemist and Nobel prize winner Paul Crutzen, who proposed during a conference in 2000, at the same time that he announced the end of the Holocene, the geological era in which human beings have lived for about 12 billion years, according to the International Union of Geological Sciences (UICG), the entity that defines the units of geological time.

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MYTH 2

1 or 2 degrees Celsius more won't make any difference.

REALITY

The temperature increase of the earth's land surface is already having severe impacts on social, human, economic and environmental terms. If we consider that a variation of 1ºC can be the difference between ice and water, we can easily understand the impact on natural environment, by the acceleration of glacier melting, the increase of sea level, the extinction of species, the disappearance of coastal zones and other changes.

Global warming has been 1.2 ° c since 1880 (the data relating to 2016) and the consequences are clear. The scientists predict that the planet can warm up 3 to 4ºC by 2100 if current trends continue. Scientists and the current international and regional policy agreements on climate change advocate the need to limit global warming to no more than 2ºC compared to the pre-industrial era, since according to the available data this will be the maximum value that will allow us to do in the face of climate change without more dramatic impacts, for which the adaptation would be difficult, expensive or in some cases even impossible. This means that significant reductions of GHG emissions and global decarbonisation of the planet until the end of the century are mandatory.

On the contrary, a worsening of global warming represents a serious threat to life on Earth as we know it. The scientific data point to a rise of 3 ° C, which could affect 470 to 760 million people only due to sea level rise, with consequences in the highly populated cities located in coastal areas.

MYTH 3

Climate action is harmful to the development of countries

REALITY

There is plenty of evidence and examples of how fighting climate change is not only environmentally responsible, and socially more correct, but it is economically smart. In particular, the economic paradigm has been changing, to the extent that economic growth is increasingly decoupled from energy consumption, with more and more economies growing regardless of the energy consumption decrease.

The pursuit of low carbon economies, the growth of renewable energy, the redevelopment and renewal of economic sectors, the technological innovations that are at the base of the energy revolution and others underway, the management of waste, among other aspects, create a great diversity of opportunities for growth and development. On one hand, they often represent savings; it should be noted as an example that the decarbonisation of the electrical system should save approximately 1.8 billion USD in the next two decades[6]. On the other hand, the falling demand for fossil fuels and the increasing demand for renewable energy and clean technologies generate an increase of available jobs particularly for the middle class, and creates new business opportunities, investment and entrepreneurship in a fast-growing sector. Currently, in the United States, the industries connected to solar energy already employ more people than the economic activities connected to coal. It is estimated that the innovations in the clean energy sector can increase the GDP of the country in more than 155 billion USD per year until 2030. In addition, if the use of renewable energy continues to grow and the cost of production to fall, people will pay less for the energy they consume and also for the negative effects of climate change caused by fossil fuels.

These opportunities are currently perceived and exploited by developing countries, as evidenced by changes of the energy matrices and by strong investments in renewable energy of China and India. The change and diversification of paths may also reflect in a reduction of energy dependence and a greater space for countries to choose and implement their own development strategies, in line with what their options and internal capabilities are.

[6] "Shift to Low-Carbon Economy Could Free Up $1.8 Trillion, Study Says", Inside Climate News, 09.10.2014

MYTH 4

Climate change is a strategy of the most developed countries to prevent the development of the poorest countries

REALITY

As already stated, climate action and the construction of low carbon societies and economies represent not only an environmental urgency but also an economic opportunity through several benefits: new jobs, greater competitiveness, higher growth, lower pollution, and more efficient cities, deployment of new technologies useful in a variety of industries, reliable supplies of energy and more sustainable management of resources, etc. There is, therefore, an opportunity for developing countries not to follow the growth models pursued in the past by more developed economies, while choosing more sustainable directions that are beneficial in the current context of globalisation, whether in environmental or social and economic terms.

Developing countries are, in fact, taking the lead in several aspects of this agenda, in part due to national reasons. China has reduced the use of coal mainly due to concerns with pollution, India has promoted reforestation in the context of its tax system reform, and Brazil has reduced deforestation in an attempt to fight drought (Busch, 2015). Another clear example is renewable energy, with China and India heavily investing in this sector. These countries have also assumed a clear leadership in international negotiations and in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, occupying the position left by U.S. administration that seems not to value these opportunities.

Even in smaller developing countries, they are taking advantage of the opportunities arising from the transition to carbon, and establishing goals in this area: Cape Verde, for instance, set 2025 as the deadline to reach 100% of electricity from renewable sources[7].

[7] See "Cape Verde's goal is 100% renewable energy by 2025. Why it may just do it". The Conversation, 05.11.2017

REALITY

It is true that, even if we completely stopped releasing GHG today, the planet would still continue to warm for some time, and we would still feel the effects of climate change. This happens because the pollution that causes climate change stays in the atmosphere for a long period, and it is difficult to immediately reverse it[8]. However, if we act now, we may be able to limit the temperature increase to 2 °C in comparison to the pre-industrial era (according to the ambition of the Paris Agreement), while if we do nothing there will be undoubtedly a worsening of the situation. Not only is it possible and feasible to achieve the agreed targets, as the required actions are studied and identified.

Either through mitigation (reduction of GHG emission that cause climate change) or through adaptation (actions to reduce impact and improve capacity to respond to climate change and its consequences), human action is crucial to prevent the worsening of climate change and fight it. There are already concrete examples: after the alarm triggered by the deterioration of the ozone layer in the 1980s, between 1992 and 2017, there was a decrease of substances that destroy the ozone layer, due to legislative changes and to concerted action, with an objective impact-positive effects at the global level.

[8] For more details about these processes, see, for example, "Earth's Big Heat Bucket", Earth Observatory, NASA, 2006.

MYTH 6

It is not possible to mobilise the necessary financial resources to fight climate change

REALITY

The costs of climate change are much larger than the costs required to implement adequate and effective responses. In 2012, a study conducted by the European NGO DARA and the *Climate Vulnerable Forum* concluded that the economic losses due to climate change had amounted to 700 billion USD in 2010 alone, being certain that this amount has increased in recent years, in particular due to the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as droughts or hurricanes. This is in addition to the existence of hundreds of thousands of deaths related to the weather, all year. It is estimated that the lack of action on climate change may reduce the income *per capita* in the world in about 23% by 2100, increasing also the global inequalities (given that, in 40% of the world's poorest countries, this loss of income due to climate change may reach 75%)[9]. Only due to climate change, most countries should be poorer in 2100 than today, which means that climate action is not a cost but a necessity in the present and an investment in the future.

The estimates of the amount needed to fight climate change point to a need for additional funding of around 700 billion USD per year, viz. to finance the transition to low carbon economy by 2030 (World Bank, 2017). Investment in certain sectors crucial in this area, such as renewable energy, pays for itself, in addition to its ever lower costs and increasing demand.

[9] "Study finds climate change will reshape global economy", Kathleen Maclay, Berkeley News, 21.10.2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General and global recommendations

1. It is necessary **to strengthen the climate change-development nexus**, whether including climate concerns in a systematic way in development strategies and programmes or knowing the impacts that climate change is having on the poorest and which are the objective needs of the countries and most vulnerable communities.
2. The **Paris Agreement must be complied with in full, and each country must be more ambitious in its contributions determined at national level** (NDC).
3. The **global architecture of climate funding must be simplified**, by focusing the major part of the funds in the Green Climate Fund and ensuring a **balance between the financing of mitigation and adaptation**. It should be established an objective **road** map to ensure the achievement of the commitment to the allocation of 100 billion dollars per year to climate action. **The financial support, capacity-building, transfer of knowledge and technology for developing countries must be more predictable, more coordinated and more transparent,** while also ensuring that the funding does not contribute to the worsening of the poorest countries' debt. The National Adaptation Plans defined by the Least developed Countries should be funded.
4. All stakeholders – governments, multilateral institutions, international organisations, the private sector – must **align their funding and investments** according to the goal of implementing low carbon economy, promoting energy transition and supporting models of sustainable development for the planet and for the people.
5. It is necessary to take stronger and braver measures in the **elimination of practices clearly inconsistent with climate change and sustainable development** (such as subsidies to fossil fuels, the financing of public infrastructure with large carbon intensity, etc.) **and to promote this coherence through incentives and agreement on other measures** (carbon pricing, and the creation of carbon taxes, taxing financial transactions, the payment of compensation for the profit of the fossil fuels, etc.).
6. It is urgent to take specific steps to **reach global agreements in significant sectors** to climate change, such as international aviation and maritime transport, with set guidelines and targets, as well as to apply existing mechanisms in a more comprehensive and integrated way, for example in the context of the protection of forests (REDD+).

Recommendations for the European Union

7. **To review the goals at European** level: that these match the ambition of the Paris Agreement, in particular, by assuming the commitment of 100% renewable energy in 2050, raising the bar of the goals set for energy efficiency, adopting a calendar for the phasing out of coal and oil use and setting a **specific plan to reach the goals proposed for 2030 and 2050** in several sectors.
8. **To eliminate practices inconsistent** with climate action and to promote sustainable development, eliminating fossil fuel subsidies and closing down thermal power plants.

9. **To restructure the emission trading scheme** by correcting the surplus licensing, ensuring that the incentives for modernisation are not used to finance fossil fuel industries and including other sectors not covered.
10. **To provide support to the communities and regions most affected** by climate change in the transition to clean energy and to more sustainable economies as well as in adaptation to the impacts already underway by reinforcing the principle of European solidarity.
11. To ensure that climate finance coming from public development aid is **generated through new and additional funds**, not putting at risk development aid budgets to social sectors in the poorest countries.
12. To include more and more of these issues **in dialogue with partner countries and to increase its importance on the development cooperation agenda.**
13. To ensure **more predictable** support and **better match the identified needs** of the poorest and most vulnerable countries.
14. To ensure **that European investments abroad are not made at the expense of the rights** of the poor and the vulnerable, but rather respect human rights and contribute to extend the benefits of green growth to all people.
15. To include the external dimension in several EU policies sector involved in climate action (energy, agriculture, trade, etc.), analysing not only the impact that changes in global climate have in Europe, but **the impact that European policies have abroad.**

If we want to protect forests and life on land, safeguard our oceans, create massive economic opportunities, prevent even more massive losses and improve the health and well-being of people and the planet, we have one simple option staring us in the face: Climate action. (...) All of us – governments, businesses, consumers – will have to make changes. More than that, we will have to "be" the change. This may not be easy at times. But for the sake of today's and future generations, it is the path we must pursue.

António Guterres

Secretary-General of the United Nations

"*Climate Action: Mobilizing the World*", New York, 30 may 2017