

POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

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The Policy on Environment and Climate forms the basis of the Olof Palme International Center's (the Palme Center) work on environment, climate change and sustainable development and aims to clarify how it relates to our objectives and activities. Furthermore, the policy sets out the priorities for the environmental work and how these are integrated in our operations. The policy applies to all operations – domestic and international – and the implementation of the policy is concretised in the Environment and Climate Change Action Plan.

Sustainable development includes a range of variables, not only the environmental aspect, but also social and economic aspects. However, this policy primarily focuses on the environment and climate.

BACKGROUND

The ongoing environmental and climate change is a crucial issue for us all. Our current development model that delivers an ever-increasing standard of living in our part of the world, do it at the expense of environmental degradation and unsustainable exploitation of our natural resources. We now face the challenge of converting to a fossil-free society, sustainable consumption and production patterns, and to brake the link between economic growth and degradation of natural resources. At the same time, we need to eradicate poverty and create an equal society with good living conditions for all people. These are all global challenges which requires global solutions.

For the Palme Center sustainable development means development within the planetary boundaries and not at the expense of the environment, neither locally or globally. This include climate change and other related problems caused by global warming. Also covered are other environmental issues such as biodiversity and environmental depletion.

The consequences of global warming cause great hardship, especially for the poor people of the world. For them the margins are smaller and they have scant resources to mitigate the impact of environmental degradation. Often they are directly dependant on local natural resources for their livelihood. This while richer countries accounts for roughly 75% of the historical carbon emissions. Sustainable development is therefore also a matter of justice. Environmental and climate change may also become an obstruction in achieving a more just and equal world. Consequently, the inequality gap between people is widening and the risk of war and conflict increases.

To meet the challenges, the world leaders adopted 17 global goals for sustainable development in Agenda 2030. The goals of Agenda 2030 are integrated and indivisible, and reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Among others, the goals include ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, tackling climate change and its impacts, sustainable utilisation and conservation of oceans and lakes and

mitigating the depletion of biodiversity. Important to mention is also the Paris Agreement, in which the world's countries have agreed to keep global warming below two degrees.

Many partners of the Palme Center already experience the impact of environmental and climate change. Their living conditions are affected by droughts, floods and deteriorating conditions to sustain themselves on agriculture and fishing. This makes the environmental and climate change a high priority for them, and therefore to us all.

PALME CENTER'S ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE WORK

The Palme Center's vision is a world of peaceful societies based on the ideals of democracy and equal value of all people. Therefore, our work is to promote: democracy, human rights and peace. Furthermore, our theory of change is based on the belief that fundamental social change is best achieved through organised communities. That means organisations, that it is driven from below where people organise and claim their rights together.

The quest for democracy, human rights and peace is closely interlinked with sustainable development in many of the countries we operate. Therefore, the work for sustainable development, within the planetary boundaries, is a key component for the Palme Center. This perspective should be integrated in all supported activities.

Marginalised groups are most affected by environmental degradation. This underlines the importance of giving them equal representation at the negotiation table. The equal representation can also bring on other positive possibilities. Environmental and climate change is a problem that requires new and innovative approaches and partnerships. This means that established power structures need to be challenged and developed further. Involving marginalised groups in the decision-making processes on environmental and climate change policies, actions and transition could result into the development and strengthening of democracy.

The labour movement has an important role to play in sustainable development. Organising, mobilising and advocating at grassroots level highlights the devastating effects of environmental degradation and carbon emissions to those in power. The issue of environmental and climate change is both local and global, and solutions must be harnessed at all levels. This makes the member and partner organisations of the Palme Center well positioned to participate and contribute to the decision-making processes.

PRIORITIES FOR THE COOPERATION PERIOD

Through our member and partner organisations' broad popular support, the Palme Center wants to create a platform for collective work regarding environment, climate change and sustainable development. The aim is to jointly draft a clear role for the labour movement in the transition towards sustainable development. Furthermore, within the scope of our communication work in Sweden and internationally, we want to contribute in increasing the visibility of environmental and climate change, in line with the goals of Agenda 2030.

The Palme Center intend to increase our ambitions regarding gender equality in the transition process towards a fossil free society, and we aim to develop the Palme Center into a focal point for the Swedish labour movement regarding environment and climate change.

To further develop and strengthen our work in this area the Palme Center will, during the cooperation period 2015-2019, give priority to:

- Develop effective and coherent steering documents and tools for our work regarding environment, climate change and sustainable development.
- Strengthen the integration of environmental perspective within both partnerships and the overall cooperation work.
- Increase awareness and knowledge about the causes and effects of environmental and climate change, within the Palme Center and our member and partner organisations, and collectively analyse how it relates to our work.
- Develop lobbying and advocacy strategies on environment, climate change and sustainable development (similar to Agenda 2030), in relation to the Palme Center and the role of the labour movement nationally and internationally.
- Strive to improve the efficiency of resources in the Secretariat and in our activities.

WORKING METHODS FOR THE COOPERATION PERIOD

To implement the above priorities, the Palme Center will:

- Appoint a person responsible for coordinating and monitoring the Palme Center's environmental and climate work. This should be done in close collaboration and in dialogue with all parties involved.
- Utilise relevant steering documents in the cooperation with member and partner organisations to furthermore integrate these in the day-to-day work.
- Train relevant staff, both existing and new, on our current methodological material on environment, climate change and sustainable development. This ensures both relevant in-house competence as well as provides the Palme Center with relevant feedback on existing methods, for further development and improvement.
- Include components regarding environment, climate change and sustainable development in the Palme Center's regular training activities for member and partner organisations.
- Promote experience-sharing between the Palme Center and our member and partner organisations on issues related to environment, climate change and sustainable development during our network meetings. Furthermore, the Palme Center should also collaborate and exchange experiences with other relevant stakeholders.
- Strengthen our information and advocacy work on environment and climate change by integrating these perspectives in relevant action plans for information and advocacy.

OWNERSHIP AND MONITORING

The Secretary General is responsible for the compliance of the Policy on Environment and Climate and ensuring it is updated and relevant. The policy is reviewed annually by the board of the Palme Center.