

# LIBERAL POLICY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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# NO DEMOCRACY WITHOUT DEMOCRATS

SILC is a liberal foundation that promotes democracy. Our main goal is to strengthen organizations and individuals in their struggle for democracy and human rights.

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# INTRODUCTION

Any serious political party aspiring to win seats in decision making bodies and to govern responsibly needs a plan, a policy, a programme of reform. Liberal parties, believing in reason as the foundation of political action, are likely to have elaborate views on a broad spectrum of political issues. A liberal party needs a plan for the economy, for taxation and for allowing free entrepreneurship. A liberal party will have a plan for elevating the mind and levelling the playing field through education. Any serious political party aspiring to win seats in decision making bodies and to govern responsibly needs a plan, a policy, a programme of reform. Liberal parties, believing in reason as the foundation of political action, are likely to have elaborate views on a broad spectrum of political issues. A liberal party needs a plan for the economy, for taxation and for allowing free entrepreneurship. A liberal party will have a plan for elevating the mind and levelling the playing field through education and culture, by making sure basic as well as higher education is accessible, and the cultural sector is left free to express itself. A liberal party concerns itself with ensuring a broad provision of social services and health care. A serious liberal party also concerns itself with the question of sustainability in order to ensure equal opportunities also for future generations.

The ice caps of the Arctic are melting, our forests are being destroyed and our oceans are filled with waste. Extreme weather is becoming more common, the rising sea levels are threatening coastal and island nations and endangered species are disappearing from the face of the earth. This is our only planet – if we destroy it, there will be nowhere to run. Earth gives us the freedom to live our lives as we want. But with freedom comes the responsibility to protect that same

freedom from deterioration. Earth must be protected so that we can give the same opportunities – or even better ones – to the generation after us.

This booklet is an attempt to collect some comparative insights on how liberal parties address environmental issues and climate change. Depending on where you are, the contended policy areas for environment policy differ.

Many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are related to the environment. Access to clean water (goal 6), clean energy (goal 7), sustainable cities and consumption (goal 11, 12), biodiversity (goal 14, 15) and climate action (goal 13) are all directly related to taking care of the planet. To reach these goals, there is a need for global reforms in environmental politics. A liberal solution to climate change must acknowledge that this is a global problem. Some ideologies prefer to become increasingly nationalistic in times of crisis – liberals do the opposite. We open up. We want more international cooperation and more ideas from across the globe.

Herein, we gather ideas from liberal parties within very different contexts. The liberal party *Vente Venezuela* operates in a context of state collapse and severe repression, mustering thousands of freedom lovers for political change. *Afek Tounes* was part of the unity government after Tunisia's transition to democracy and now holds seats on all levels as an opposition party and a force for good governance. The Ukrainian liberal party *Syla Lyudey* is sprung out of civil society movements and governs and holds seats in many municipalities in Ukraine, also away from the larger cities where liberalism tends to be more en vogue. Lastly, the *Liberallerna* party of Sweden has been in and out of coalition governments in Sweden since the country's inception of democracy in the 1920s.

To the best of our ability, we have both tried to provide a comparative policy overview and to include interesting case studies from each country.

We believe in innovation, we believe that we have the capacity to develop a greener society, and we believe that development is faster and better if we work together. Everyone has the right to live in a clean society. Together we will make this possible!

# AFEK TOUNES

Tunisia's economic choices adopted over the past decades have had a negative impact on the environment, where the cost of environmental degradation amounted to around 2.7% of GDP. There are many causes such as high energy consumption in the industry sector, the current consumption culture and excessive urban expansion. In addition, the lack of land use planning has led to the termination of several public projects. It also inhibits balanced distribution for the population, economic activities and public facilities which takes environmental concerns into account.

Furthermore, many regions complain about pollution, ineffective waste management and unorganized natural resource exploitation, proving that much needs to be done for sustainability. Indeed, the spread of all kinds of waste, destruction of forests and soil by erosion, desertification and water depletion is an immense problem in some areas.

With an estimated volume of available water per capita of 470 m<sup>3</sup>, compared to the world average of 1 000 m<sup>3</sup>, Tunisia is considered one of the most water scarce countries in the southern Mediterranean basin. The combined effect of population growth and overconsumption as well as shrinking water reserves will additionally worsen the deficit.

The climate of Tunisia is semi-arid with great disparities between the North and the South. In addition to only receiving on average 600 mm of rainfall per year, the country experiences cyclical drought every 3 or 4 years. With climate change, the occurrence of violent rainfall where opportunities to capture water are limited is increasing, which could worsen the situation even more. This calls for a vast programme to rationalize water usage.

Afek Tounes wants to review a new form of state governance where environmental impact is systematically considered in decision-making and where the public is informed in a transparent way. We will work for equitable spatial planning, integrating different regions and respecting ecological balance, which is imperative to reduce regional disparities.

Afek Tounes will follow a city policy based on strengthening infrastructure to make cities capable of meeting the needs of various urban activities. It is vital to fight against anarchic construction, to improve living conditions and control exaggerated urban expansion which comes at the expense of agricultural land. To do this, it will be required to provide the real estate savings necessary for urban development and to examine development plans thoroughly. Another level of this is to improve the aesthetics and attractiveness of certain cities and areas to make people settle there and relieve the large urban centers.

Afek Tounes will work for stringent management. We will increase awareness among the populace about the fragility of the precious water and about the urgent need for rational and sustainable water use to not jeopardize the rights of future generations. Water is a scarce resource in our country. Water policy is part of a dynamic long-term growth in all socio-economic sectors. Our vision of water management considers several factors, of which the most important are:

- The state of current water resources, their quality and quantity, and the natural potential in mobilizable resources.
- The needs of all users over a certain period of time, considering social and societal changes.
- The negative impacts already experienced and the intensified link to climate change.
- Technological innovation available in the production of unconventional water resources.

# SYLA LYUDEY

There are hundreds of different problems with the environment in Ukraine: absence of effective monitoring of the environment, landfills and lack of waste sorting, lack of public participation procedures and informing of people, problems with water resources etc. But the biggest problem for the moment is waste management. At least one unauthorized landfill has been established near each of Ukraine's 60 000 settlements. Official landfills are mostly overcrowded or out of date, and unauthorized landfills are emerging en masse.

Inefficient waste management policy contributes to the rapid accumulation of solid waste, making it impossible to introduce separate collection and recycling of waste. The uncontrolled structure of consumption provokes the population to buy a large amount of goods with disposable packaging. In addition, waste that cannot be recycled accumulates. This makes accidents at treatment facilities and accidental discharges of waste into the environment more frequent.

*We want to change the attitude of Kryvyi Rih's residents and city leaders to the problems of household waste management.*

We should ensure the introduction of a 5-level hierarchy of waste management: 1) prevention of waste generation; 2) preparation of waste for reuse; 3) processing; 4) other disposal operations, such as energy disposal; 5) removal to landfills that need to be adapted to environmental safety standards. We should create pilot projects on waste sorting for entrepreneurs and condominiums. We should create mechanisms to encourage residents to sort garbage. We should ensure the creation of a comfortable infrastructure for citizens to sort garbage. We should create favorable conditions for investors

for the construction of waste sorting and recycling plants. We should monitor the activities of garbage trucks by installing GPS beacons and scales to minimize corruption risks when paying for relevant services from the city budget.

In addition, there is a lack of effective monitoring of the environment in Ukraine.

Government control over the state of the environment remains ineffective. There is also no effective monitoring of the quality of the environment (especially air) in residential areas and no mechanism for responding to environmental violations. All this creates additional risks for the life and health of citizens.

*We want the people of Kryvyi Rih to breathe safe air. To ensure effective control over the quality of air, water, and soil.*

We should ensure the creation and development of automated systems for monitoring the quality of soils, surface and groundwater. We should also ensure the creation of an analytical center in the city, for processing information on the state of the environment in order to develop appropriate recommendations and inform citizens.

# VENTE VENEZUELA

For a long time, Venezuela has depended on oil, and this dynamic has replaced any capacity to diversify not only the economy as a whole, but also energy sources. Today, the country is experiencing the consequences with a destroyed state oil company and unimaginable proportions of environmental damage. The development model as well as the energy model of Venezuela that have been in place for decades are in need of urgent change and of leaving behind the generation of traditional, highly polluting energy sources.

This is the case of electrical energy. Venezuela has to become an energy-producing country rather than an oil-producing country. This will be possible through the creation of a national energy agency and privatization of the energy sector. Historically, Venezuela has produced a lot of its electrical power from hydroelectric power plants like the Simon Bolívar Hydroelectric Power Plant located in Bolívar Province. Venezuela is a country with plenty of natural resources – such as powerful rivers – that can be utilized for energy production not only for itself but also for energy exports in the future.

Every modern society requires electricity in order to improve its quality of life and to achieve full economic development, to support both personal well-being and to become productive. To fulfill that vision, we propose that the Venezuelan electrical system should be designed, operated, and maintained according to the best world practices. Practices which privilege, promote and strengthen national engineering and that have sufficient flexibility to adapt to changes and technological advances in the world. This should be accompanied by a system of incentives that promotes sustainability by the conservation of river basins, favours performance and maximizes efficiency.

In the long term, this system would enable export of electricity to neighbouring countries.

The Venezuelan infrastructure for generation of hydroelectric power has enough equipment to supply the country with electricity in the short or medium term if it works appropriately. Thus, we would like to recover the current infrastructure. We can take advantage of using water, which is an effective, clean, cheap energy source, making it very competitive both in efficiency and sustainability.

A new Venezuelan energy sector will be open for participation of national and international private investors under parameters such as high performance, focus on the client, a clear cost structure and certified and transparent accounting practices. However, it will be important to have an autonomous regulatory agency that can plan the sector, ensure its healthy development, supervise regulatory affairs and promote investments and competition. Likewise, a responsible and independent operator will be implemented to manage the infrastructure safely and with quality and administer the electricity market where its agents and non-regulated customers concur.

We are convinced that institutional and cultural change, rule of law and economic freedom will facilitate the transformation from being a backward and destroyed country to one that is connected with the current clean energy development in the world.

# AFEK TOUNES

## **Climate Change**

Tunisia's climate is semi-arid with great geographical disparities. Tunisian territory receives on average only 600 mm of water per year. We also experience drought every 3-4 years. Climate change increases the strength and unpredictability of heavy rainfall periods and hampers the possibility to plan precipitation capture, making water even scarcer during drought. This requires sustainable water usage.

## **Transport and Fuel**

The state should intensify energy efficiency programs by establishing consistent development plans for energy heavy sectors such as industry, transport, construction and spatial planning. Public transport must be more developed and more energy efficient.

## **Energy**

Tunisia's energy policy should be focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy. With ideas from the UN Climate Convention, we should strengthen the financing mechanisms and the institutional framework for alternative energy. The pricing policy for energy should be transparent and focus on efficiency and development of alternative energy. Renewable energy should be a prominent industry sector.

## **Consumption**

We must raise awareness of the environmental problems with plastic waste. Plastic bags should be banned in stores and supermarkets. Awareness should also be raised regarding the use of clean energy sources with low environmental impact.

## **Agriculture**

Environmental certification procedures for farms and agricultural products should be implemented to promote sustainable agricultural practices. Labelling of products and services based on organic and environmentally friendly certification. Water resources should be protected, and water use should be rationalized.

## **Biodiversity**

Strengthen the status of nature protection areas for large forest areas and launch reforestation programs. Clean up rural areas and provide support for smaller municipalities. More green areas, recreational forests and natural spaces should be created in cities and urban centres – these spaces should then be legally protected from exploitation.

# SYLA LYUDEY

## **Climate Change**

Effective implementation control of environment legislation. Create a system for monitoring soil, air and water quality. Make legal entities legally accountable for environmental violations. Support organizations improving the environment. Spread information and awareness and add more content regarding the environment to education. Climate and environment information should be easily accessible.

## **Transport and Fuel**

Prioritize more environmentally friendly transportation such as walking, cycling and public transport. Create more bicycle parkings and have common audits before planning new routes for any transportation. The infrastructure for electrical vehicles must be improved greatly. Smart traffic lights and modern car interchanges will be promoted to create effective traffic.

## **Energy**

Monitor compliance with the Paris Agreement. Implement EU regulations on gas emission allowance trading. Reduce energy intensity of Ukraine's economy. Better conditions for development of renewable energy sources. Make Ukraine a center for nuclear energy research and modernize the existing nuclear infrastructure. Use energy efficient and resource efficient products and help people to choose.

## **Consumption**

Effective waste management. Combat unauthorized landfills and waste accumulation. Create a 5-level hierarchy for waste management: prevention, preparation for reuse, processing, energy recovery and landfill disposal. Create favourable investment conditions for waste sorting entrepreneurs. Encourage residents to sort garbage by creating a comfortable infrastructure for sorting and recycling.

## **Agriculture**

Conserve degraded land. Effective state control of environmentally harmful products such as fertilizers and herbicides. Ensure compliance with environmental legislation and protect people's interests during resource extraction. Restore nature after extraction. Rationalize fossil fuel subsidies. Promote sustainable forest use. Have transparent data on forest resources and protect them from privatization.

## **Biodiversity**

Restrict chemicals causing over-fertilization. Promote restoration and preservation of rivers. Stimulate circular water usage. Modernize sewage systems and water treatment. Create sanitary legislation for recreation areas near reservoirs. Stop the reduction of boundaries of water protection areas. Increase the number of protected areas. Introduce ecosystem service assessment into decision-making.

# VENTE VENEZUELA

## **Climate Change**

The national oil company is among the 10 largest greenhouse gas emitters in the world. Venezuela has very limited environmental regulations and no systematic measurements of environmental degradation. We must create guidelines to conduct environmental surveys, register the results and then act based on science. We must use modern, green technology and adapt public policy to counter climate change.

## **Transport and Fuel**

The state oil company (PDVSA) is not operating effectively. Only the private sector has the incentives to develop greener technologies for fuel and transport. PDVSA should be liquidated, and the fuel sector should be fully privatized. The privatization process should gradually transfer state responsibilities to the Venezuelan citizens.

## **Energy**

Instead of oil-producing, we should be energy-producing. This can be realized through a national energy agency and privatization of the energy sector. Venezuela has the capacity to produce hydropower in large quantities and this should be a priority to develop as a green alternative. Investments in the energy sector should be encouraged and a regulatory agency should ensure a healthy development.

## **Consumption**

Individual citizen responsibility is the key for effective resource management. Promote eco-friendly businesses that improve the environment and are sustainable in parameters such as land use, technology, resource consumption, emission of pollutants and citizen participation. Label products to specify origin and other indicators that can increase the value of the product based on sustainability.

## **Agriculture**

Return expropriated land to the landowners. Promote competition and foreign investment and respect the rule of law. The state should propose incentives for development, new technology and environmental care in agriculture. There should be a strong relationship between the agriculture sector and universities in order to research and develop cutting-edge technologies and systems for the sector.

## **Biodiversity**

Venezuela is incredibly biodiverse, but we have no measurements to determine the deterioration rate despite overexploitation having serious impact on our nature. Each area must be evaluated by systematic research. Inventories of endangered species should be constantly updated by professionals who can design preservation measures if needed. Especially important are coral reefs and river basins.

# LIBERALERNA

## **Climate Change**

The Paris agreement should be our foundation when setting our environmental policies. By 2050, the EU should have achieved a situation where we have no net emissions of greenhouse gases. It should be the polluters who pay the price of climate change, we want a joint CO2 tax and need to broaden the EU Emission Trading System (ETS). Support technical development and research.

## **Transport and Fuel**

Stop subsidizing fossil fuels. Create one booking system for all train traffic in the EU and invest in train infrastructure. Introduce an EU-wide air traffic tax. Electric airplanes can be used for short travel. Improved electric car infrastructure. Higher taxes for new cars that pollute more. Less tax cuts for car commuting in regions with good public transportation. Invest in bicycle commuting.

## **Energy**

Less dependency on Russian gas. Stop building Nord Stream 2. Develop the network and transmission capacity infrastructure to be able to export electricity both within Sweden and abroad. Keep nuclear power as an energy source to reach 100% fossil free energy. Invest in fossil free energy. Simplify rules for small-scale energy production. Develop hydropower to lower negative impact on rivers.

## **Consumption**

Joint food labelling within the EU and stricter controls. Sweden's high-quality animal welfare, environment concerns and low antibiotic usage should be followed throughout the EU. Decrease the amount of food waste. Produced food waste must be used effectively – e.g. for energy production. Increase recycling. Ban non-recyclable plastic by 2030. Invest in cleaning of plastic in waterways and oceans.

## **Agriculture**

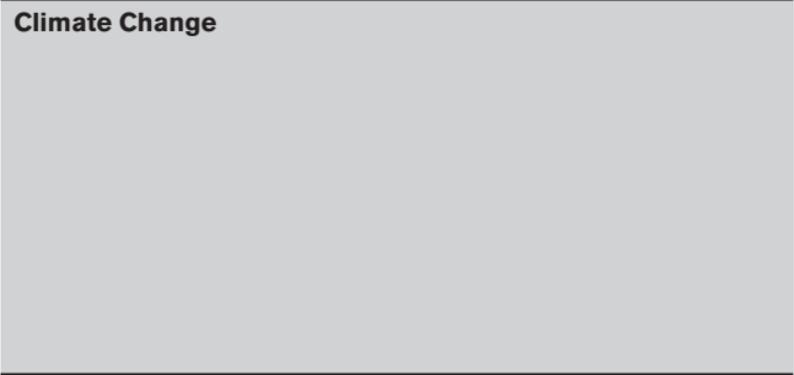
Abolish direct subsidies to agriculture and compensate for biodiversity improvement and nature conservation. Strengthen controls of antibiotic use and animal protection. Science-based agriculture – GMO can improve gains. Higher quotas for sustainable fisheries. Utilize forests for renewable materials and energy production. Protect biotopes and old forests.

## **Biodiversity**

Endangered animals and plants must be protected by law and restoration efforts of habitats. Valuable forests and key biotopes must be protected by creating nature reserves and national parks. Create marine reserves to protect our waterways. Emissions and overfertilization must stop. Introduce penalties on fertilizer leakage. Regularly clean beaches from trash.

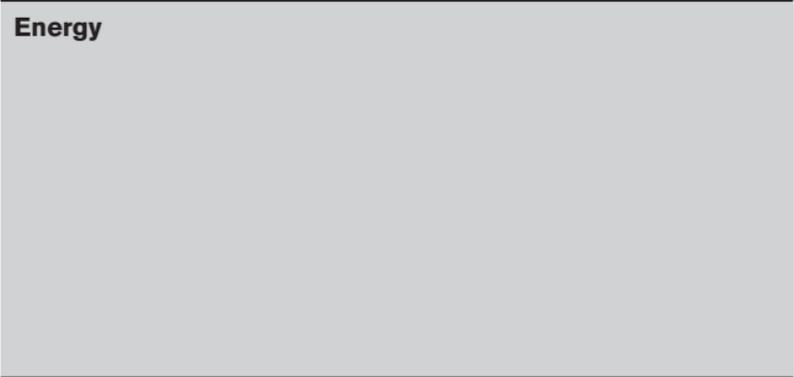
# YOUR OWN IDEAS

**Climate Change**

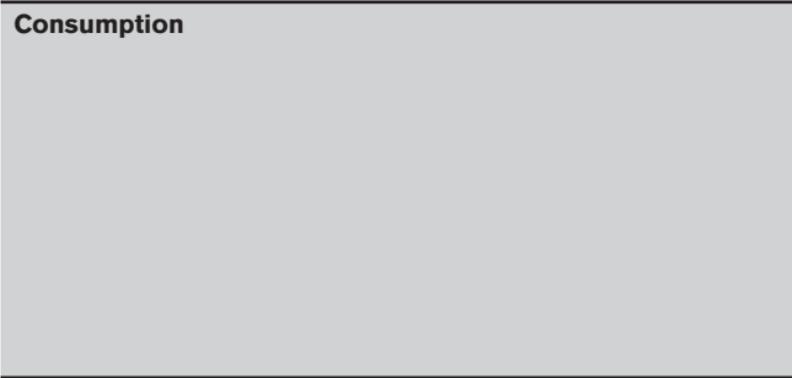


**Transport and Fuel**

**Energy**

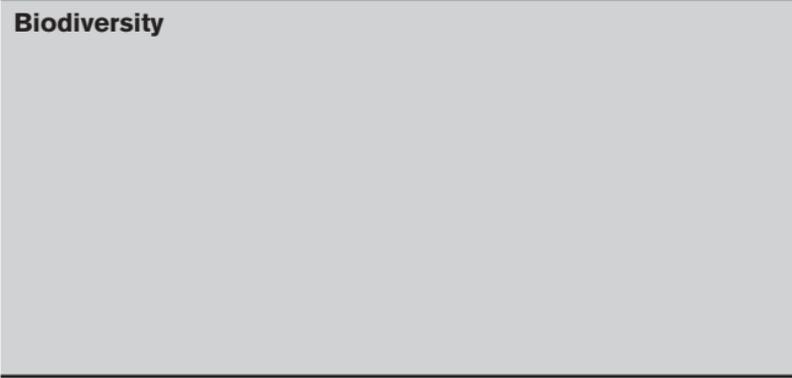


**Consumption**



**Agriculture**

**Biodiversity**



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