

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE COLLECTIF RIO+20 TO PREPARE THE 2012 RIO SUMMIT

In July 2010, different actors of the French civil society (international solidarity associations, environmental NGOs, citizen movements and unions) took the initiative to meet in the form of a collective that discusses the risks around the next Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro in June 2012: Rio+20. The Collective RIO+20, which nowadays counts about 40 organisations, has two goals: the valorisation of its expertise and mobilisation, which will be working together during 2011 and 2012.

We are all aware of need of a paradigm shift. It is obvious that Governments and International Institutions won't be able to do it without civil mobilisation. Our duty is thus to elaborate a Declaration of citizens. Regarding the United Nations, the only representative of all countries, we intend to promote an effective re-take of multilateralism, which will include all the actors, truly missing nowadays.

Members of the Collectif RIO+20 :

4D, ACFCI, AEEO, Aitec-Ipam, Artisans du Monde, ATTAC, CCFD Terre Solidaire, CFDT, CFSI, CRID, Comité 21, France Nature Environnement, Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le Progrès de l'Homme, Forum pour une nouvelle gouvernance mondiale, HELIO International, IDDRI, Igapura, Institut Veblen, La Ligue de l'enseignement, Les Petits Débrouillards, LittOcean, Orée, Oxfam France, Pactes Locaux, Réseau Ecole et Nature, Réseau Action Climat - France, Réseau féministe « Ruptures », Réseau Environnement Santé, Syndex, Varda Group, VECAM, VivAgora. Others organisations worked with the Collectif RIO+20.

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The Rio Conference that will take place in June 2012 shall consider the matters that human kind is facing today, by focussing on two main issues: the ecological and social conversion of our societies, and thus of our economic system, and the construction of new forms of international cooperation, engaging the responsibility of all actors.

A CIVILISATION SHIFT

The world has deeply changed since the Rio Conference in 1992. On one side, the economic space has been globalised. It is today characterised by the raise of emerging countries and by a systemic crisis, which is affecting the long time industrialised countries, but also the poorest ones. It includes ecological, social, economic and political aspects. On the other side, there is a need of a common management of the planet when it comes to climate change, erosion of biodiversity or even inequalities of access to natural resources, considering they are rarer each day. We simultaneously live in an economic **unification of the world, conflicts and a doubled competition to corner wealth, and the confrontation to the limits of our planet.** Despite the global growth, it is still impossible to apply the engagements defined by the Millennium Development Goals, to fight against the hunger endured by over one thousand million people, to stop the erosion of social protection mechanisms, to shore up the emergence of chronic diseases noticed worldwide, to stop speculation and financial deregulation. These changes have multiple causes and cannot be solved in a situation of economic deregulation. Market economy cannot take environment pressures into account, neither the disparities of resources. Furthermore, the research of financial advantages causes more social and economic differentials, and accelerates ecological instability, contributing even more to **an increasing asymmetry of power.**

Today's limits of multilateralism show the end of a period in which Nation-States dominated industrial, economic, social and political stakes, thus contributing to the increase of inequalities. Nevertheless, the necessary institutions and instruments used to manage the various issues, which must be dealt with worldwide, are very insufficient, if existing. We must build the **means for a real planetary regulation.**

FACING OUTDATED THRESHOLDS OF ACCEPTABILITY AND VIABILITY : PREPARE THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A CIVILISATION SHIFT



Preparing the transition towards a new civilisation means firstly defining the values, which correspond to a general interest raised at the level of all human kind. This notion of general interest must be defined in new terms, inspired on social and cultural diversity. Various experiences in the world, at the initiative of social movements, already draw the different ways of an ecological and social transition in a pragmatic way.

The eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequalities are the first condition to transition

Reducing inequalities and fighting against poverty constitute the first priority. **Without significant progress in these issues, countries' social cohesion and political stability are at stake. Without it there will be no individual adhesion, no collective dynamics, no international agreements.** The reduction of inequalities involves the establishment of the International Labour Bureau rules, on decent work conditions and the construction of an universal social protection; the reinforcement of national politics in order to reduce income inequalities and a better distribution of wealth; build supportive systems so that a great amount of people count benefit from the right to healthcare, the fair relocation of activities and the establishment of a

food and energy sovereignty; the submission of the international economic negotiations to the social and environmental rules; the development of collective consumptions (transportation, housing), connected to efficiency measures and access for all.

Gender, a major transversal issue for transition

The issue of the evolution of social relationships between men and women (Gender) is still the most discharged matter in the systemic crisis, although it is at the heart of both crisis and solutions to solve it. Change the relationships should be a pivot to a strategic discussion on the means to transition towards a sustainable development, which is based on an equal allocation of resources, within the ecological limits of the biosphere. Moreover, women are specific actors and important alternatives to open new paths of social innovation and prefigure a more human and inclusive development.

A global citizenship: from local to global, individual and collective responsibility

The willingness of solidarity and justice will nurture the construction of a collective capacity of action. From this notion of global citizenship, and thus from a common destiny, arises the notion of individual and collective responsibility. It is important to specify the essential components of the new social contract, which will enable the opening of differentiated paths to make transition possible towards fair and sustainable societies... towards a new civilization.

Using resources: optimization, sharing and sobriety

The adaptation of our societies to the limits of the planet will go by the optimisation, but mainly by the sobriety and sharing in the use of resources. **Waste is antisocial and anti ecological.** This optimisation of the management of resources needs the support to knowledge, to local pilot projects, and an international regulation, which over surpasses today's blind liberalism to integrate superior planet obligations. The notion of ecological space, which articulates sobriety – for the preservation of ecosystems – and equity – in order to satisfy the basic needs of all – promotes a fair and sustainable use of resources.

Recognizing a definition of « global public goods » and « common goods »



From the compelling need to build a vision of general interest on basic goals, it is necessary to agree on the definitions of common goods and also on global goods, making sure that their management obeys to principles that are higher than the rules of competition. Common goods request citizens' commitment and the definition of usage rules. This approach based of cooperation – and not on competition and privatization – is more likely to enable an ecological and social sustainability of societies. Moreover, the preservation of global goods (atmosphere, oceans, health...) can only be possible with intergovernmental agreements, which are applicable to users' communities. That is the reason why the United Nations is the place to define the goods and to promote the experiences of collective reappropriation of these goods.

A SUSTAINABLE END OF CRISIS REQUIRES CRITERIA OF GENERAL INTEREST, TAX INSTRUMENTS FOR TRANSITION, SCALES TO ESTABLISH SOLIDARITIES... THE NECESSARY PRE-REQUESTS OF OUR VISION OF TRANSITION

It is a new vision of development that the Rio+20 Conference shall transmit for societies in ecological and social transition, for a systemic shift. The strength of issues requests major social transformations, which commit all levels of society and can only be possible on a democratic basis.

Ecological and social transition as a way out of crisis



The answer to financial, economic, social and environmental crises is to be found in new paths of development, which will rely on the sobriety of wealthy people's life style; the improvement of living conditions in developing countries by ensuring the access to essential services and to fundamental rights; the distribution of wealth through tax; new production, exchange and consuming processes; the cheap management of non renewable resources; prioritize short circuits of production and distribution; new society and environmental responsibilities for the firms.

This path should be created in the perspective of an economic regulation based on principles of general interest, which are imposed on economic and financial logics, and lead not only to economic changes, but also on a regulated economy and an inflexion of individual and collective behaviours. Therefore, new goals, concepts, actors or institutions must integrate ecological sustainability and social justice, and shall not consider green economy as the only approach as it does not include a social dimension, which not only nurtures progress but also technological illusion. It is important that the concept of « green economy » is based on the fundamental principle of « durability », which is contrary to today's characteristics of our societies, based on over-consumption, individualism and priority to short term.

Green economy, as it should be understood, must correspond to new economic and technological social principles, towards the optimisation of the use of resources and the global reduction of material pressure on non-renewable resources.

At the bottom of the economic system stands the construction of sustainable societies, which associate both the well-being of all and the preservation of the planet's integrity; the general improvement of life and health conditions and a just remuneration of Labour; an economy based on functionality which favours the access to consumption goods at the expense of personal property; the coherence of the downstream of technological and professional sectors and technologies which enable the creation of qualified and decent jobs, accompanied by life-lasting trainings; the input of local knowledge; natural or semi-natural spaces and habitats by making the entities at the origin of the damages pay for its restoring; the reduction of waste at source and a circular economy with recycling, the development of short circuits specially in the food sector, and long circuits when they are guarantors of a fair remuneration and a low impact on natural resources and environment; the knowledge of resources for a better perception of limits, an ecological management and a better inter- and intra- generational distribution.

The path to prosperity without growth will be long. That is the reason why it is necessary to start it as fast as possible, taking into account the considerable differences between societies in order to enable the access to elementary goods and to decent life and labour conditions, for the whole planet population.

The research for new paths of development needs to establish ecological and social transition as a way out of crisis.

An instrument of transition: the revalorisation of the tax role

Financing public goods, the transition towards societies with less carbon and the preservation of biodiversity, request public resources and the **establishment of global taxes, such as the tax on financial transactions.**

The need to surpass the use of the GDP growth in favour of more representative indicators of a sustainable development

New indicators, representative of the non-evaluated dimensions by the GDP such as **the qua-**

lity of life or the ecological and social sustainability, must be created. It is not viable to pilot change with indicators, which ignore the reality of the planet's limits.

The crucial role of local authorities in regulation

In a globalised economy, local authorities become the level of creation of solidarities. From a subsidiary point of view, a partnership with local and regional governments is essential to the establishment of viable and balanced responses, which include the organized civil society as a stakeholder when conducting actions. Territories are essential in multi-level governance.

The need to leave a society of consumption which is unjust and predatory regarding the planet and replace it by a relational society

There is no such thing as an optimisation path of the use of resources and of respect of environmental stability with the generalisation of the excessive consumption society model, and thus with a slow progress in education and culture. Today's challenges open a path towards cultural progression, and request a democratic step forward: **there are infinite possibilities in this finite world.** The infinite is open by the technologies of information and communication, but also by the development of arts, which support human capacities to invent life styles based on solidarity, develop new knowledge and competences, without substituting human and social relations. Relationship with others, social link, access to knowledge, cultural creativity and access to other cultures constitute infinite assets, which are multiplied when shared. Today's consumption society cannot be accessible to the entire human kind as its extension in new emerging counties is incompatible with the respect of the planet's limits (energetic and environmental). Publicity has a key role in today's mechanisms. It distils a promise towards consumers, which consists in promising the improvement of living conditions by the increase of individual consumption. It is thus necessary to open new paths of satisfaction, which are compatible with the constraints of this century, rely on common values, rooted in different cultures and philosophies.

Build a promise to people, put human kind at the centre

Sustainable development must open a successful life perspective, in this century's context. The Rio+20 Conference must send a message of hope for each and every person, in order to enable the change from a civilization of disparities and excess to a cooperative and relational one, representing transition.

DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS, THE CONDITION TO A REINFORCED GOVERNANCE BASED ON GENERAL INTEREST

A real change in civilisation necessarily requires a democratic progress. The actual change in our civilisation shall answer to this requirement. It is the democratic strengthening that enables to follow the deep upheavals, which destabilise earlier representations regarding economy, technologies, life styles and attitudes. These political progresses must be operated at four levels: at a citizen level, at a grassroots democracy level, at a national level and at a supranational level.

It is thus essential that public politics become a phase of an elaboration largely open to structures of civil society and citizens, but also economic actors, and this specifically because of power asymmetry. Such a construction will assess the orientations to take and will build a strong mandate for the elected, which will facilitate both the decision taking and its application.

RETHINK INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF GOVERNANCE IN THE UNITED NATIONS FOR MORE REGULATION AND NEW ENGAGEMENTS

The construction process of a new world governance requires a reform to be conducted within the United Nations, in order to adapt its architecture and efficiency to all the social and environmental issues. Only an Assembly of States can decide to create new international institutions that are necessary to human kind.

Beyond the Treaty of Westphalia, which founded the international system based on national sovereignty, the transformation of today's civilisation requires the constitution of an **international framework above countries which is legally binding**. In fact, the engagements taken by a country in an international negotiation will only be obtained if it has the conviction that the others are also in the obligation to respect their engagement. Betrayal can only be possible with the creation of concepts, institutions and a management culture from local to global, intrinsic to multi-level governance.

The present increase of institutions of governance: the United Nations, G8, G20,... increases confusion and leads to inaction

Keeping economic institutions (International Trade Organisation, World Bank, International Monetary Fund) separate from the United Nations leads to, on one side, a political institution without economic and legal power, and on the other side, to an organised economic power based on the financial contribution of countries. The need to re-regulate the world economy requires a more direct link between politics and economy, a balance between people, societies and the biosphere. Firms cannot create this balance. We need to conceive sustainable sectors, which involve traceability on the whole sector of production and exchange.



Rio+20 must be the starting point of a cycle of international negotiations, lead on new bases, which will enable to relaunch multilateralism, establish a negotiation mandate and a global calendar, the constitution of an international commission of management, the establishment of an annual cycle of international negotiations.

Decisions to be taken in the final document of the Rio-2012 Conference

In order to reform the United Nations it is necessary to organise a Conference of highest-level. This reform would consist in enlarging the Security Council; in reforming the Ecosoc in order to guarantee a process of representativeness and participation of local public powers and civil society organisations; in creating an executive organ inside the United Nations, which coordinates the agencies and programs in application of a sustainable development strategy.

A binding legal framework and the establishment of control and sanction bodies

The United Nations must have two types of supranational bodies. On one side, knowledge and control bodies – at a planet level and at a “big regions” level able to establish a recognised report of scientific knowledge, to establish rules for sharing, to observe the respect of global rules and to investigate the responsibilities which originated pollutions and other infringements to rules. On the other side, international jurisdictions that are capable of establishing sanctions against States and multinational firms, whose guilt would be thus established and they would be forced to apply according to an instruments’ palette according to an incremental penalty scheme. Finally, we cannot expect to increase the abilities of International Criminal Court regarding the distortions made to environmental heritage if an international environmental jurisdiction is not created.

Establish an Intergovernmental Group of Experts about sustainability

In order to define the conditions for sustainability by integrating its social dimension, and to measure them with indicators dedicated to the finiteness of natural resources and environmental limits, it is essential to establish the equivalent to the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Climate Changes concerning sustainability and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for durability.

The reinforcement induced of environment in the framework of an International Environment Organisation

The establishment of an IEO should be operated in three steps.

▶▶ Firstly, a reinforcement of the UNEP, of its missions and of its means, enabling it to cover all international conventions on environment; this will enable to coordinate and adapt the various international conventions on environment;

▶▶ Secondly, acquire new abilities in terms of sanctions to the firms and States, which suggests the constitution of an international dispute settlement body.

▶▶ Finally, the adoption of a treaty for the creation of the IEO, which mentions that the new agency has the power to subsume the activities, the functions and the resources of the UNEP.

The preparation of new international conventions

Especially on the management of international waters and the seabed; the rights of indigenous people; the rights of climate refugees; and the adoption to existing rules regarding the principles of sustainable development.

Towards a new Breton-Wood in order to establish an international financial regulation to support development

It is necessary to establish an international economic regulation, an initiative that urgently requires a redesign of the actual world governance. This implies the integration of the ITO in the United Nations, including its dispute settlement body; the harmonisation of tax at an international level – in order to curb the crisis, this harmonisation must be done through a treaty that collects the agreement of all countries so it is not circumvented by tax havens -; the adoption of international financing rules for development; the effective application of the developed countries' engagement to allocate 0,7% of their gross national income to development aid; the establishment of a tax on international financial transactions, to guarantee the necessary North-South transfer to move towards a new path for development – its product must be affected according to three purposes: the ADP, the funding of a transaction to economies that are sober in carbon (adaptation and attenuation) and a “fair” transition for industrialised countries; the adoption of the following principles: transparency of developed countries' contributions, the principle of direct access for developing countries, decentralisation of the attribution of funding and the quality control of passed investments.



Collectif
RIO+20

OUR ROLE OF BONN IN RIO is to contribute to what could be a citizen's declaration. Only one strong speech expressed in front of the whole world, backed up by media, will be able to give the initial push, essential to the change of paradigm in our societies.

OUR PROPOSITIONS

- ▶▶ A CIVILISATION SHIFT
- ▶▶ FACING OUTDATED THRESHOLDS OF ACCEPTABILITY AND VIABILITY :
PREPARE THE TRANSITION
- ▶▶ A SUSTAINABLE END OF CRISIS REQUIRES CRITERIA OF GENERAL INTEREST, TAX INSTRUMENTS FOR TRANSITION, SCALES TO ESTABLISH SOLIDARITIES...
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- ▶▶ DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS, THE CONDITION TO A REINFORCED GOVERNANCE BASED ON GENERAL INTEREST
- ▶▶ RETHINK INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF GOVERNANCE IN THE UNITED NATIONS FOR MORE REGULATION AND NEW ENGAGEMENTS

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