

## Open letter to the Environment Ministers of the G20 Countries

*From July 22nd to 23rd, the Environment Ministers of the G20 countries will meet in Naples for the Climate, Environment and Energy Summit. The signatories – civil society organisations from throughout Europe dedicated to advancing climate justice ('the signatories') – urge the Ministers to seize this opportunity to commit to prompt and decisive climate action, consistent with their national and international obligations. In the absence of this, the signatories will continue to take all possible means within the democratic system, including through the courts, to prevent dangerous climate change and protect human rights.*

All of the members of the G20 are signatories to the Paris Agreement. They have therefore committed to containing global temperature increase to "well below 2°C" above pre-industrial levels, and making every effort not to exceed global warming of 1.5°C. However, almost six years after the signing of the Agreement, the Nationally Determined Contributions set by individual countries are still highly insufficient, and current policies worldwide continue to project dangerous levels of global warming of almost 3°C by the end of the century.

G20 members are no exception. The G20 represents the most industrialized economies of the world, which together account for more than 80% of the world's GDP, 60% of the planet's population and about 75% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is absolutely critical therefore that G20 members take the lead in implementing ambitious and adequate emission reduction targets. Nevertheless, they continue to delay meaningful climate action.

In the face of this dangerous climate inaction, civil society organisations – including the signatories – have sought to hold their governments accountable before the courts. Sixteen of the G20 members have faced, or are currently facing, climate lawsuits as a result of their inadequate climate action. This includes Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union.

Moreover, a number of courts – including those in G20 members such as [Germany](#), [France](#) and other countries of the European Union (the [Netherlands](#), [Belgium](#), [Ireland](#)) – have recognized that governments have a legal duty to take climate action and to do their part to address the climate crisis. Such rulings are made in light of the alarming scientific evidence on the magnitude of the climate emergency and the risk this poses to human rights. The upcoming Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC, expected between August 2021 and September 2022, will add to this body of evidence and will likely spur further climate litigation.

Now more than ever, a strengthened and coordinated plan to address climate change is required. As G20 members come together to forge a sustainable and inclusive path forward, the signatories urge leaders to adopt a post-pandemic package that tackles the climate crisis head-on. This means working together to develop national plans which are consistent with keeping global warming below the 1.5°C safety threshold, as supported by scientific consensus. In the absence of coordinated and ambitious action, the signatories will continue to use all possible means within the democratic system to prevent dangerous climate change and protect human rights.

This meeting cannot be another wasted opportunity. It must mark a decisive and concrete commitment of G20 Governments towards the achievement of real climate justice.

The list of signatories includes:

**Association A Sud** - active for years in the field of environmental justice and human rights, A Sud is the first plaintiff of the lawsuit launched in June 2021 against the Italian State over its climate inaction.

**Giudizio Universale Campaign** - an Italian climate awareness campaign supported by over one hundred promoters of the first Italian climate litigation against the State.

**Fridays For Future Italia** - the Italian branch of the global climate justice movement Fridays for Future.

**Peacelink** - an Italian eco-pacifist association which, since 1991, has been fighting for the culture of solidarity and human rights, peace education, international cooperation, the repudiation of racism and the mafia, and the defence of the environment.

**Urgenda Foundation** - a Dutch Foundation that aims for a fast transition towards a sustainable society, with a focus on the transition towards a circular economy using only renewable energy. In December 2019, Urgenda won a landmark climate case against the Dutch State. It was the first time in the world in which citizens established that their government has a legal duty to prevent dangerous climate change.

**Réseau Action Climat** - a French network that includes global, European and national NGOs involved in the fight against climate change and advocating for a solidarity-based and fair ecological transition.

**Notre Affaire à Tous** - a climate justice association founded in France in 2015. It has launched and won the first collective lawsuit against the French State for its climate inaction.

**ClientEarth** - uses the power of law to bring about systemic change that protects the earth for – and with – its inhabitants. ClientEarth is supporting five Polish citizens to bring legal action against their national government based on the impacts of climate change on their lives and livelihoods.

**Global Legal Action Network** - a non-profit organisation that pursues innovative legal actions across borders to challenge powerful actors involved in human rights violations and systemic injustice. They are supporting six young people from Portugal who have filed a case before the European Court of Human Rights against 33 countries for failing to do their part to avert climate catastrophe.

**Climate Case Ireland** - the collective initiative behind the first successful climate litigation against the Irish State. It is the second case in the world in which the highest national court of law has required a Government to revise its national climate policy in light of its legal obligations.

**Klimatická žaloba ČR (Climate Litigation Czech Republic)** - an NGO involved in climate justice that launched the first climate litigation against Czech Republic in April 2021.

**Europäische Klimaklage (European Climate Lawsuit)** - the first human rights-based climate litigation against the Austrian State for climate inaction.