



Ten Steps to a Fossil Free Europe



IN THIS BOOKLET

We face a planetary emergency. Communities are already feeling the impacts of climate change. We in Europe must do our fair share to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees. For Europe, this means a **fair and urgent transformation to a fossil-free energy system by 2030**.

This booklet outlines what we need to do to bring about a safe and clean Europe, free from fossil fuels. The movement towards a fossil-free Europe cannot be stopped.

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Friends of the Earth Europe campaigns for environmentally sustainable and socially just societies, unites more than 30 national organisations with thousands of local groups, and is part of the world's largest grassroots environmental network, Friends of the Earth International.



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INTRODUCTION

We are facing a planetary emergency. In 50 years, the number of extreme weather events has quadrupled. Hurricanes, droughts, floods, ocean acidification, sea-level rise - the impacts of climate change are happening faster and are already hitting communities harder than anticipated.

Climate change is the result of an unsustainable, unjust economic system powered by a high and unequal consumption of fossil fuels. 7% of the world population emits 50% of CO2. Meanwhile, more than one billion people still don't have access to energy. A minority is putting the survival of the majority at risk. Cooling the planet requires building a more equal world, where everyone's needs can be met.

The window of opportunity to prevent the most devastating effects of climate change is closing fast. We need adequate action today, in line with what science and justice require.

This means going 100% #FossilFree, taking on the damaging power of the fossil fuel industry, and putting energy in the hands of people.

The bad news is, our politicians have not been up to the task. Governments, under the influence of the fossil fuel industry, are still investing in new fossil fuel projects and emissions continue to rise year after year.

The good news is, the energy transformation is under way: people and communities are making it happen and are already building the solutions. The movement towards a fossil-free Europe is unstoppable. **This booklet lays out what a fossil-free Europe will look like, and how we can make it happen.**



PART 1: GIVING FOSSILS THE BOOT

More than two-thirds of man-made greenhouse gas emissions come from energy derived from fossil fuels. This means we need to radically reinvent the way we use energy if we want to avoid catastrophic climate change. And to have a chance of limiting global warming within 1.5°C, the phase-out must happen by 2030 in Europe.

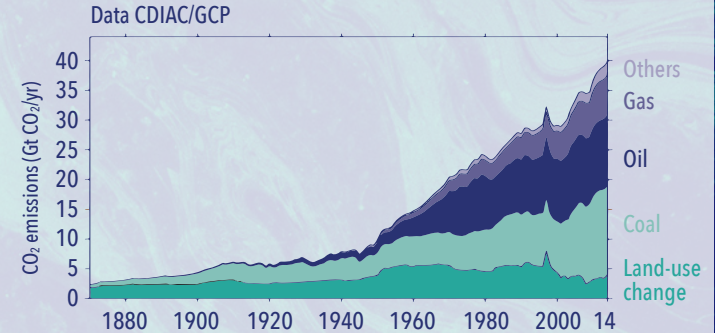
This challenge - which has been made much more difficult by more than 20 years of delay and political inaction - needs to start with an immediate halt to any new fossil fuel projects. This includes halting exploration for new fossil fuel drilling, and the building of new infrastructure, such as LNG terminals, to import fossil fuels. This goes for all coal, oil and gas. New gas infrastructure is particularly at the forefront of fossil fuel expansion, with European banks and EU institutions investing massively in new pipelines and gas terminals.

This halt to new projects needs to be followed by a phase-out of existing fossil fuel infrastructure and imports.

So how do we make this happen?

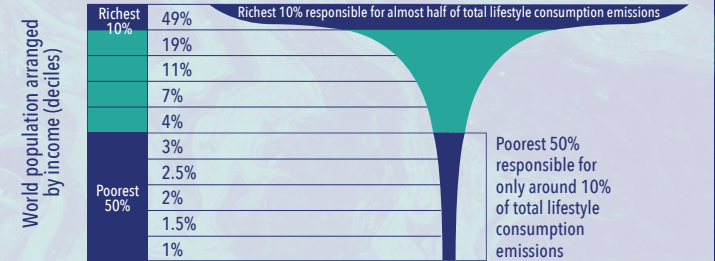
WHAT'S CAUSING CARBON POLLUTION?

Source: Global Carbon Project, 2017



WHO'S CAUSING CARBON POLLUTION?

Source: Oxfam



STEP 1

STOP FUNDING FOSSIL FUELS



Public support for fossil fuels comes in the form of public subsidies, public loans, regulated prices and tax benefits. Governments also support fossil fuels in other ways, by backing specific exploration and extraction projects, organising official visits to countries to secure energy imports, and through trade and investment agreements.

Public financial support for the fossil fuel industry ranges in the trillions. Between 2014 and 2016 alone, 11 European countries and the EU provided at least €112 billion in subsidies towards the production and consumption of fossil fuels in Europe.

Support and financing from the private sector is also funding climate chaos -- banks, insurance companies, pension funds and hedge funds provide billions of euros in project loans, bonds, and other financial services every year to fossil fuel companies, which allows them to continue expanding in Europe and across the world.

We urgently need to stop financing climate destruction. Forcing our leaders to stop fossil fuel subsidies, putting pressure on our public and private banks and investors to divest from climate-killing projects and sectors, and legally challenging these polluting companies for the climate and environmental damages they make, will **shift finance from climate pollution to climate solutions.**



STEP 2

BAN FOSSIL FUEL LOBBYING & ADVERTISING



The fossil fuel industry – the most lucrative sector of all time – works hard to protect its interests. **Fossil fuel companies spend millions of euros influencing our politicians and greenwashing their own image.** To enable an energy transformation, the power of this industry needs to be reigned in.

THE PROBLEM WITH LOBBYING

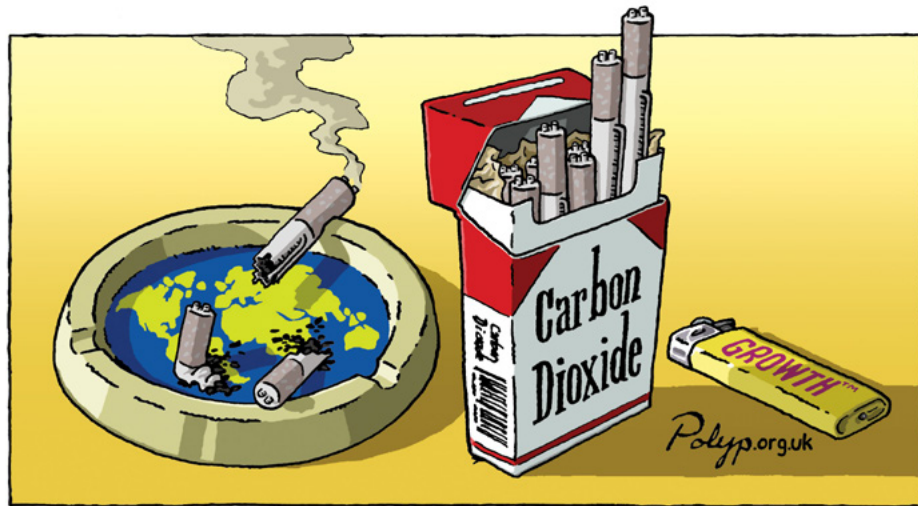
The fossil fuel industry is doing everything it can to slow down the energy transition. It aggressively lobbies against ambitious climate laws, using a range of tactics; from organising events and dinners with decision-makers to threatening to move jobs elsewhere if the transition is “too abrupt”. ‘Revolving doors’ between political decision-makers and fossil fuel corporations also make for a corrupt system: dozens of high-level politicians have ended up lured to work for fossil fuel companies – or have come from the fossil fuel industry.

The fossil fuel industry’s pollution of our politics through lobbying must end. The revolving door between governments and fossil fuel companies must be closed. Fossil fuel companies should be excluded from official advisory groups and bodies.

THE PROBLEM WITH ADVERTISING

After years of promoting climate change denial, the industry is now resorting to ‘greenwashing’ tactics, depicting a “greener” image as public awareness of climate change is on the rise. Their promotion of false solutions, and supposedly “clean” fossil fuels, blurs lines and slows down the roll-out of real solutions, while advancing a positive image of these climate-killing companies.

Like the tobacco industry before them, the toxic influence of fossil fuel advertising should be curbed. Fossil fuel advertising and sponsorship should come to a complete end.



STEP 3

REJECT HARMFUL ENERGY “SOLUTIONS” AND TECHNO-FIXES



A whole flurry of unproven and ineffective false “solutions” are being promoted by the fossil fuel industry to hold back the energy transition and keep us hooked on fossil fuels. “Clean coal”, gas as a “transition” fuel, carbon capture and storage (CCS) to bury our carbon emissions, negative emission technologies, nuclear power, unsustainable bioenergy, harmful dams, geoengineering technologies, spraying chemicals into our atmosphere...

At their best, these false solutions are a waste of time and money: plasters on gaping wounds to distract us from the real problem. At their worst, they **create new dangers**.

None will deliver, as none **addresses the root issues of the climate crisis**. They are not climate solutions, they are profit-driven distractions.



STEP 4

DITCH CARBON MARKETS AND OFFSETS



We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that landed us in this mess in the first place. Often, the first solution to climate change proposed by politicians and the fossil fuel industry is a new market, where an invisible hand will magically push all actors to reasoned and balanced decisions.

The world's first carbon market is the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), where pollution permits are bought and traded. This system was supposed to make pollution more expensive, to force industries to gradually move away from fossil fuels. So far, due to a very low price for pollution, fraud, over-allocation of pollution permits, and windfall profits for polluting companies through free permits, **the system has failed**. However, this failure hasn't prompted a shift away from this type of solution – similar schemes are being conceived all over the world.

The faster we recognise the market will not be a magic response to the climate problem, the faster we can move on to the solutions that have proven their merit.



STEP 5

END IMPUNITY FOR CORPORATE EXPLOITATION OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH



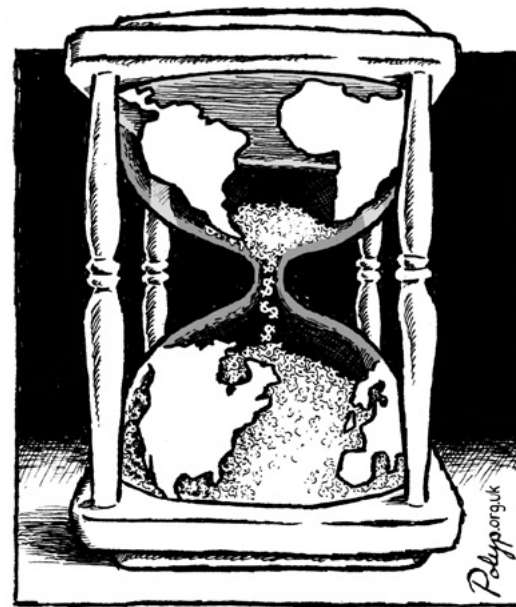
A fossil-free Europe means **a Europe that doesn't explore, extract, or import fossil fuels from the rest of the world.**

Today, fossil fuel exploration has enormous negative impacts in the Global South, harming the environment, people, and the climate. Fossil fuel extraction is very often associated with human rights violations and large-scale corruption. Labeled a "curse" by many, countries that have fossil reserves often rank low on poverty and human development indexes.

The Niger delta is one of the most polluted locations in the world, due to more than 60 years of foreign oil extraction. Massive oil pollution has destroyed ecosystems, rendered the land uninhabitable and deprived farmers and fishers

of their livelihood. Gas flaring and toxic pollution from refineries cause diseases in neighbouring communities.

European fossil fuel companies like Shell, BP, Total, Eni and Repsol are directly harming communities in the Global South - adding to the burden of health problems, collapsing ecosystems, or damaged local economies. Those communities are also more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Impunity is the rule, with affected communities almost never compensated for the damage. **Fossil fuel companies must be brought to account and clean up their mess.**



PART 2: BUILDING A PEOPLE- POWERED FOSSIL FREE FUTURE

Moving away from our dependence on fossil fuels opens up so many exciting and hopeful possibilities for a more livable and just world. The transition is not just about CO2: it's about warmer homes, cleaner air, new local jobs, a stabler, safer and fairer world. Moving away from fossil fuels challenges the structure of our broken economy, and allows us to put people and planet at the centre of political decisions.

The clock is ticking, and decision-makers are failing dramatically to take on the task -- but across the world, people are taking on the polluting industry and organising to make a fossil-free world reality.



STEP 6

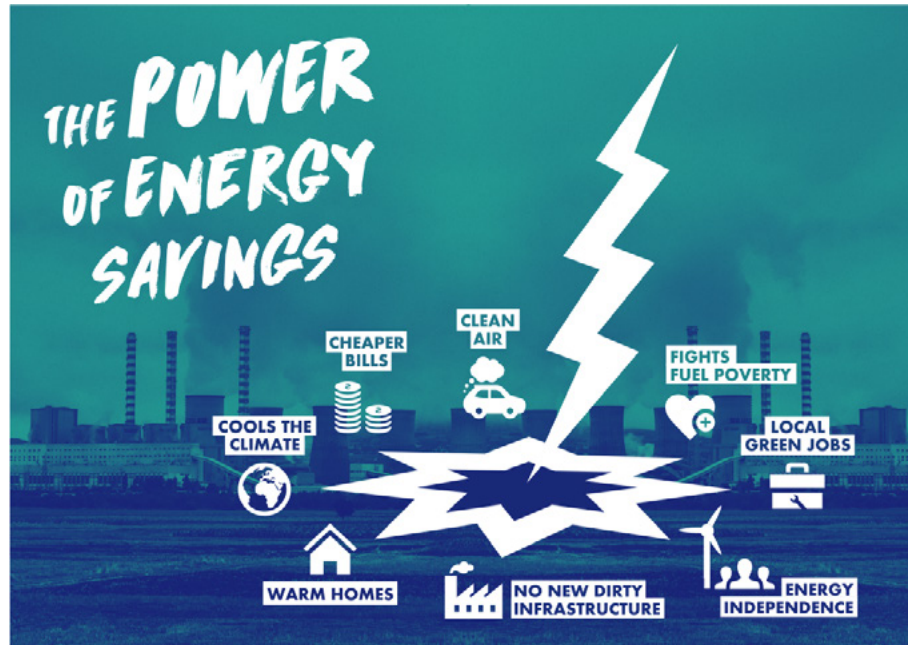
LESS IS MORE: SAVE ENERGY



As our current energy system is deeply wasteful, we cannot transition without first reducing our demand for energy. For this reason, if we are to move away from fossil fuels, **the first solution is to reduce our energy consumption.**

Saving energy offers more comfort and wellbeing for people and communities: through renovation programmes targeting inefficient homes, through better household products, through improved transport models, and cutting superfluous energy use. **It lowers energy bills, alleviates energy poverty in housing and transport, and creates green local jobs.**

The problem is, within the current energy system, there is little or no incentive to cut back our consumption. Stopping energy waste is a direct threat to the fossil fuel industry's profits and business model, which is why those companies lobby aggressively against ambitious energy savings.



STEP 7

SWITCH TO 100% RENEWABLES



Once we have reduced our energy needs, **we must also switch our energy sources to a 100% renewable-powered system.** Solutions differ with locations – in some places, this will mean harnessing the power of wind, the sun, waves...

Renewable generation, smart demand management and energy storage technology is there, and getting cheaper and cheaper.

Switching also offers the chance to reduce our energy imports and create millions of local jobs across Europe – thus balancing out job destruction from fossil fuel phase-out.

Renewable energy is growing, but at the moment, it is additional to fossil fuel sources when they should be replacing them: we need to drastically increase the scale and pace of renewable installations.



STEP 8

PEOPLE POWER: PUT RENEWABLES IN OUR HANDS



Climate change is also an issue of **who's in control of our energy system**. Today, our energy system is in the hands of big energy monopolies. They are keeping us hooked on a high-consumption, fossil-fueled economy, and taking decisions in their financial interest -- not in the interest of people and planet - and standing in the way of the energy transition we need.

To avert dangerous climate change, we need to break the power of the fossil fuel industry by putting energy in the hands of communities and people. Communities, cities, and 'energy citizens' who produce their own energy are at the **vanguard of Europe's energy transition – which is seeing Europe's energy shift to greater democratisation and decentralisation**. A fossil-free future will be people-owned.

All over Europe, this revolution has started. People and communities are building their own renewable projects, installing energy storage, and investing in energy savings to reduce their needs. Not only are they cutting carbon but often these projects have solidarity as a central value, involving disadvantaged groups and tackling energy poverty to protect vulnerable members of the community: they are showing us the way forward.



STEP 9

ENSURE A JUST TRANSITION



As the fossil fuel sector is challenged by climate action, so are the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of workers all over Europe.

The energy transition must be just for workers.

This means acknowledging that the phase out of fossil fuels will affect workers employed in the industry, and giving workers leadership and resources to plan for the future, to ensure no one is left behind. This should include plans for reskilling people, to allow them to make the shift to new areas of work, but also guaranteed decent and quality jobs in the economy of the future.

We know there are more jobs in a fossil-free system than in the current system -- in energy savings, installing and managing renewable energy etc. We need to ensure these green jobs are **decent, with benefits, protection and organisation for workers.** We also need to ensure that costs and benefits of energy transition are distributed fairly.



STEP 10

ACT ON EUROPE'S HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE



In terms of climate change, the past matters. Greenhouse gases emitted in the past continue to warm the atmosphere and will do so for up to thousands of years, and their impacts are felt longer still.

Taking into account historical emissions, **we see that Europe holds the highest responsibility for climate change.** Including Russia, our continent has caused a third of the world's historical emissions. Beyond these numbers, Europe has historically promoted and enforced an extractivist economic model fuelling climate change.

This is why, when tackling climate change, all countries must do their **fair share**, according to how much they have contributed to causing the crisis. This is where *justice* comes in. **European countries must fully recognise their role in causing climate change**, initiate the transformation by sharply reducing emissions here, and transfer finance and technology to the Global South to support their own efforts to deal with the impacts of climate change and move to renewable energy. This also means paying financial compensation to countries which suffer irreparable harm from climate change.

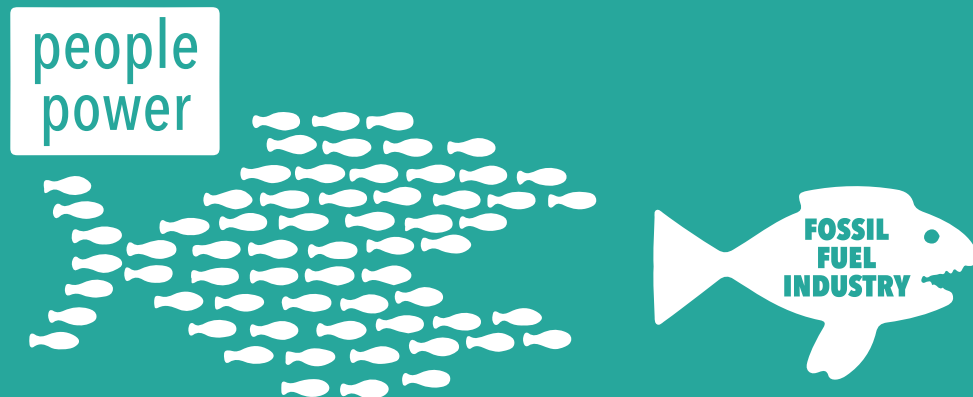


JOIN THE FIGHT FOR A FOSSIL FREE EUROPE!

Across Europe, people are at the forefront of an energy transformation. Together, we can make a **#FossilFree** Europe happen.

- Resist fossil fuel and other dirty energy projects, locally, in your country, or abroad
- Get involved in your local renewable energy cooperative or start one yourself
- Get involved in your local Friends of the Earth group: foeeurope.org/network

Join the **#FossilFree** movement to make it happen!



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