

We must act **responsibly** when we consume, of course. We must be **united faced with the consequences of climate change and the degradation of the global environment**, because we are all responsible, on our level, for greenhouse gas emissions and for pollution, but **we must also recognize that a certain type of responsibility is out of our control** : the historic responsibility of the richest countries who put in place an industry of extraction, devouring earth and subsoils, barely respecting human rights.

Who controls this industry ? Our governments ? This is no longer so certain since political campaigns are financed by the private sector. **Did you know that eighty people in the world share the same amount of wealth as 3.5 billion other people, that is half of the global population ?** And these eighty people are at the head of multinational companies supported by states in the energy, oil, gas, carbon, petrochemical, fertiliser, cosmetic, agri-food, and large retail sectors amongst others. These sectors are dependent on each other and are at the base of the massive destruction of ecosystems and climate change. **You should know that actually, ninety bodies, multinationals, states, are at the base of two thirds of the greenhouse gas emissions in the world.**

What constraints are these economic and political leaders subject to ? Right now, the mechanisms of free exchange are favourable to multinationals, who are currently campaigning at the UN to maintain the voluntary nature of directives based on the social responsibility of businesses.

On the other hand, these leaders are not bothered when they make decisions with criminal consequences. **Have we been able to prosecute a single CEO in human and environmental catastrophes** such as MV Erika, or Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico, or Fukushima, despite the clearly stated negligence ?

And what about decisions or financing which encourage industrial activities, which mortgage the future of the next generations? If we burned all the known fossil fuel reserves on Earth, the global temperature rise would reach eleven degrees, and the sea level would rise over sixty metres. **The Earth would no longer be inhabitable for the human specie nor for the majority of living species on Earth. Therefore it's necessary that international law evolves so that the excesses of our industrialised world are taken into account. We must assert that man and nature are intrinsically linked as well as making sure that the interest of future generations is taken into consideration.**

This implies that we make life into a legal subject, which is really a philosophical revolution underway. **So that these principles are respected, it's necessary to adapt the international penal framework established by the International Criminal Court based in the Netherlands.** The International Criminal Court, the ICC, was created to help to put an end to the impunity of those who commit the most serious crimes affecting the whole international community.

In fact it is necessary that the decisions and actions which lead to threatening the ecosystem services that human populations depend on, as well as partially or totally destroying planetary goods such as the poles, the atmosphere, outer space, cross-border rivers and streams, international

waters, migratory species, genetic heritage and biogeochemical cycles, which are necessary for the balance of the Earth's ecosystem, **can be punished.**

The ICC statute now considers it a war crime to cause extended serious and sustainable damage to the natural environment, but nothing is planned to protect this environment in peace time. That's why a citizen movement, End Ecocide on Earth, supported by a group of experts, **has worked on a proposal of seventeen amendments to the International Criminal Court statute, so as to incorporate the crime of ecocide on the list of the most serious international crimes such as genocide or crimes against humanity.**

Eco comes from the Ancient Greek, *oïkos*, which means home. *Caedere* comes from Latin and means to destroy. **So ecocide is the action of destroying our home, the only one that we have, the Earth.** This proposal on recognising the crime of ecocide is being examined by various states. If it is accepted, it will then be possible to prosecute the responsible parties, moral entities, or physical people, who are at the root of decisions or financing which encourage practices recognized as dangerous, dangerous for the safety of the planet and for the humanity security.