

## **CLIMATE JUSTICE AND CLIMATE MIGRANTS: Reflection and Analysis.**

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### **Abstract**

Climate justice and Climate migrants are terms that are still abstract and misunderstood for “Monsieur Tout-le-Monde”. However, these notions have become more and more topical in the face of the environmental disruptions, constantly growing over the last few decades: general increase in temperature, melting of ice, increase in sea level, more natural disasters, tsunamis, cyclones ... Despite the inverse discourse of climate-skeptics, we can no longer deny the causes of these climatic changes, of which the principal cause is the human activity, as we cannot ignore the consequences linked to these climatic changes including displacement and environmental migration. According to the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published in 2013, a 95% certainty rate was asserted that "*human activity is the main cause of observed warming*" (Alexander Pouchard, 2014a). According to experts' predictions, in the most pessimistic scenario, if greenhouse gas emissions continue at their current rate, there would be an increase of 4.8 ° C for the average temperature and the level of the oceans would increase by 98cm by 2100. Despite the fact that Rwanda has not experienced climate justice related to environmental/climate migration, it has experienced environmental displacements in recent decades and has long been vulnerable to natural disasters as a result of climate change . The intensity and frequency of climatic hazards and their adverse effects are accentuated by the topographical structure of the Rwandan territory, characterized by a very rugged landforms and consequently very sensitive to erosion and landslides.

To face these climate challenges, it would imply a radical change in the way of life of the countries. Therefore several questions can then arise and the purpose of this article is rather to draw attention to a set of questions about a subject that remains relevant as climate change by giving an objection and a critical reflection on paradoxes and enigmas of Climate justice and

climate refugees mentioned in the recent literature. To this end, the methodology used is centered on systematic review and analysis of the existing scientific literature on Climate change by, mostly, using electronic bibliographic databases. The results from this work reveal that climate refugee has no legal existence and is therefore not recognized at all. For this legal status as a climate refugee to be recognized, it may be necessary to initiate a revision of the Geneva Convention by adding an additional protocol or extending the article defining refugee status to include the climate and environmental character. Rwanda integrated disaster risk reduction into its development planning to ensure better disaster prevention. Rwanda needs to associate itself with neighboring and remote countries and international organizations to better manage environmental issues, particularly those related to climate change.

**Key words:** Climate Justice, Climate Migrants/Refugees, Environmental migrants, Climate change

## **1. Introduction**

Climate justice is a term that is still abstract and misunderstood for “Monsieur Tout-le-Monde”. However, this notion has become more and more topical in the face of the environmental disruptions, constantly growing over the last few decades: general increase in temperature, melting of ice, increase in sea level, more natural disasters, tsunamis, cyclones ... Despite the inverse discourse of climate-skeptics, we can no longer deny the causes of these climatic changes, of which the principal cause is the human activity of the rich countries since the Industrial Revolution.

According to the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published in 2013, a 95% certainty rate was asserted that *"human activity is the main cause of observed warming"* (Alexander Pouchard, 2014a). This degree of certainty has been described as *"extremely probable"*. This report also assesses and measures the increase in average temperature at the surface of the planet and the rise of the ocean level for the horizon 2100. According to experts' predictions, in the most pessimistic scenario, if greenhouse gas emissions continue at their current rate, there would be an increase of 4.8 ° C for the average temperature and the level of the oceans would increase by 98cm by 2100. Finally, to maintain an average increase in temperatures below 2 ° C,

greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 should be reduced by 70% compared to their 2010 level (Alexander Pouchard, 2014b). This would imply a radical change in the way of life of the industrialized countries.

Another alarming fact is that of the traditional "Earth overshoot day", the theoretical and symbolic date calculated by the NGO Global Footprint Network. As every year, this organization compares the ecological footprint by measuring the exploitation of natural resources by man, with the biocapacity of the planet, its ability to regenerate its resources and to absorb waste such as greenhouse gases (The World, 2015; Fechner Benoist, 2014). Each year, this famous "Earth overshoot day" arrives earlier and earlier. Since 2000, this date has been advancing on average three days per year. In 50 years, it has advanced by 4 months. For the year 2016, the "Earth overshoot day" took place on August 8 and we would need the equivalent of the capacity of a planet and a half to meet the demand for natural resources and ecological services. We therefore live on credit and far above our means, in relation to the resources available (Global Footprint Network, 2013).

Several questions can then arise: Do the industrialized countries have a climate debt compared to poor countries? What are the

visible impacts of climate change and what will be the consequences in the future? What are vulnerable populations doing in the face of environmental degradation? What actions and solutions can be put in place? Can climate refugee status be recognized? Is there a legal perspective on the laws protecting climate refugees? Will we reach a new international agreement that is truly adequate to the situation, putting into effect concrete and binding measures for the northern states that are the main drivers of greenhouse gas emissions?

## **2. Concept of Environmental /Climate migration**

Environmental refugees do not really fit into any of the legal definitions of a refugee. Not all environmental refugees migrate from their home country, on occasion they are just displaced within their country of origin. Moreover, the refugees aren't leaving their homes because of fear they will be persecuted, or because of "generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order" (<http://www.unhcr.org>). Even though the definition of who is a refugee was expanded since its first international and legally binding definition in 1951 people who are forced to flee due to environmental

change are still not offered the same legal protection as refugees (Hartley Lindsey, 2012). The term "environmental refugee" was first proposed by Lester Brown in 1976 (Brown, L.et al., 1976).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) proposes the following definition for environmental migrants: "Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad" (Brown, O, 2008).

Climate refugees or climate migrants are a subset of environmental migrants who were forced to flee "due to sudden or gradual alterations in the natural environment related to at least one of three impacts of climate change: sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and drought and water scarcity" (Global Governance Project, 2012).

### **3. Concept of climate justice**

Climate justice is a term used for framing global warming as an ethical and political issue, rather than one that is purely

environmental or physical in nature. This is done by relating the effects of climate change to concepts of justice, particularly environmental justice and social justice and by examining issues such as equality, human rights, collective rights, and the historical responsibilities for climate change. A fundamental proposition of climate justice is that those who are least responsible for climate change suffer its gravest consequences (Global Humanitarian Forum, 2009; Wendy Koch, 2013). Occasionally, the term is also used to mean actual legal action on climate change issues (Wangari Maathai, 2009).

At first glance, associating the notions of justice and climate has nothing evident and certain vagueness surrounds this notion of climate justice. Nevertheless, it can be very easy to explain. To make it simple, let's imagine a cake to be shared equally among several people during a one-hour meal. However, after a half hour, all the shares have already been eaten by the strongest, while the weaker ones have had to content themselves with crumbs. One can easily guess the frustration of the weakest...

More concretely, climate justice refers to the fact that the number of countries emitting carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases,

responsible for the majority of environmental degradation factors and climate change, are geographically based in the North, while the majority of the victims of these degradations are mainly located in the South. The inhabitants of the South are therefore not responsible for these degradations suffered but are nevertheless the direct victims, suffering heavily the consequences. The people of the South are thus victims of an environmental injustice by suffering the "uncontrolled" side effects of the economic activity of the industrialized countries. This finding, fair evidence appears: the responsible must assume their actions, carry out repairs to the damage suffered and provide genuine assistance to the countries of the South. But what is the reality?

#### **4. Human and environmental consequences of climate change**

The consequences of climate change are already being felt in certain regions of the world and the natural imbalances engendered will only increase in the years to come. There is still some uncertainty about the seriousness of these consequences. Nevertheless, all those interested in climate issues are unanimous on one point: The

natural equilibriums will be considerably modified. The list is long: threatened biodiversity, the disappearance of animal and plant species, changes in temperature, wind and rain regimes, the water cycle, increased acidity in the ocean, extreme climatic events More frequent, ...

For human too, climate change will have significant consequences, both from the point of view of his health and that of his environment, his habitat and his means of subsistence. For example, some tropical diseases may emerge in new areas. The rise of the water is gradually engulfing inhabited territories. Drought or soil salinization threaten agriculture, there are risks of water shortages in some regions, ... There is therefore a need to adapt and adjust the way of life of the population concerned, the climate victims who are undergoing these changes. Where this is still possible, some are introducing new techniques, while others are forced to flee from their hostile habitat and become climatic migrants. The Population in the North, not directly affected by the effects of climate change, but nevertheless responsible for it by their way of life and consumption, must also adapt in order to "limit the damage" by trying to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases

as much as possible. It has become essential to combat climate change effects in order to minimize them.

### **5. Need for adaptation and implementation of survival solutions**

When the environment becomes more and more hostile, the population concerned put in place survival solutions and try to adapt to the arid and harder conditions of their habitat. For example, in order to guard against rising water, coastal countries set up protective embankments. But there is also a glaring inequality between rich and poor countries. The means used to construct such dikes are indeed very different in the Netherlands compared to Bangladesh, an extremely flat country where the inhabitants do with the means of the board without external aid (Schehl, Michael, 2007a).

The ecological disaster is underway in several regions of the world and threatens the food security of vulnerable population, which can lead to famines. In Bangladesh once again, facing to the increasing water in the area, the salinization of the soil no longer allows agriculture to develop, and the inhabitants try to adapt, for example, to aquaculture in salt water (Schehl Michael, 2007b). The population sensitive to climate change can also be very ingenious in

introducing new farming techniques such as drip irrigation in areas where rainfall is no longer sufficient (De Belder Geert, 2011a). However, these adaptation techniques require a considerable amount of time in order to develop and completely change the way of life of the population concerned.

In the same spirit, access to drinking water is a major problem caused by climate change. The causes of a drinking water shortage can be diverse: drought, disappearance or contamination of groundwater, depletion of natural reserves, and salinization of water. In some areas, drinking water is scarce and people have to go to draw it farther and farther away, under increasingly difficult conditions. Its access is nevertheless fundamental for the development of human life (De Belder Geert, 2011b).

Faced with the consequences of climate change, migration can be seen as an adaptation tool for vulnerable population from a region where living conditions have become unbearable. Migrate is then the ultimate solution for the latter, forced to leave to survive and thus be able to support themselves. Leave but where to go? In the majority of cases, people move internally or in neighboring countries. The populations concerned migrate to the cities in order to

diversify their income, to find a substitute income. Depending on the case, these migrations may be seasonal or temporary. Some populations may migrate for several months, during the dry season or during the flood period, and return to their original environment once conditions permit. These seasonal migrations can become permanent and definitive in the case of a complete degradation of their initial place of life. There are major problems when the entire population is forced to migrate definitively, and when it has no place to go. These climate migrants have no choice but to go to places not providing them with good living conditions and safe infrastructure. They therefore inflate the outskirts of cities and pile up in makeshift camps or in slums (Vanderstappen Cécile, 2014a).

It is useful to point out that this need for adaptation is generally attributed to the inhabitants of the countries of the South, those who are not responsible for environmental damage and who are nevertheless fully affected. They generally have little means to react, compared to the countries of the North. They must therefore adapt individually and collectively, often without external help. Northern countries, on the other hand, are generally not constrained to adapt to more arid climatic

conditions. But they have a responsibility to mitigate global warming, that is, to limit their greenhouse gas emissions to the maximum. To do this, an adaptation of their way of life becomes a necessity.

Moreover, a Climate Change Adaptation Fund functioning as an international insurance mechanism was created at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancun in 2010. This was already a step forward, but it is necessary to relativize and be critical. Indeed, this adaptation fund had paid little attention to the rich countries, not eager to finance it. A call for funds had therefore been launched in 2012-2013 so that it could continue to function. The European countries had responded to this call by financing it at 90%. Nevertheless, other countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Australia and others have preferred to stay away. This fund amounted to \$ 100 million, a sword in the water compared to the initial demand of the countries of the South of \$ 60 billion (Vanderstappen Cécile, 2014b).

Finally, in some cases, adaptation can be managed and coordinated by the state of the country whose climate situation is at risk. The case of the island nations, small islands in the Pacific, can be seen as emblematic and revealing of the concept of climate

justice. In order to find a survival solution to the rising oceans, the government of the islander nations (which include Kiribati, Maldives, Tuvalu and Tokelau) has already bought in Fiji, 2000 hectares of land, which will be used for agriculture if the saline water infiltrations make any culture impossible on the archipelago. Ultimately, their population could become "landless" because of global warming and rising water levels (Paul Allen, 2015).

## **6. The case of Ioane Teitiota**

Ioane Teitiota, a resident of the Kiribati archipelago, has been featured in the media in an attempt to become the first recognized climate refugee (Shabnam Dastgheib, 2015a). The Kiribati, an archipelago of thirty-three small islands in the middle of the Pacific, are part of the island nations. Most of these barely exceed the water level and are regularly invaded by the ocean. As a result, freshwater supplies are threatened, leading to reduced harvests and a shortage of drinking water. If the rise of the oceans continues to increase, the territory of this state could entirely disappear under the waters.

Since 2007, Ioane Teitiota lives in New Zealand and in 2010 he applied for asylum for his entire family in order to be recognized as refugees because of global warming, which was a world first according to his lawyer (Anne Claire Baratault, 2013a). Initially, this request was not considered admissible by the New Zealand authorities and therefore decided to appeal. On July 20, 2015 The Supreme Court of New Zealand ruled that the applicant did not meet the criteria for granting refugee status because he was not threatened with persecution in his native land. Although the Kiribati are "*Unquestionably faced with climate challenges*", the Supreme Court held that the asylum seeker "*was not in grave danger in his native land*". Indeed, "*there is no material evidence that the Kiribati government is failing in its duty to protect its population from the effects of environmental degradation, within the limits of its means*" (Anne Claire Baratault, 2013b). New Zealand is unlikely to "get too wet" and thus open the door to a possible exodus of the 100,000 inhabitants of Kiribati, who are already flocking to the country and to Australia (Shabnam Dastgheib, 2015b). Will the case of Ioane Teitiota inspire others in the same situation in order to put pressure



to obtain the recognition of this new refugee status?

### **7. Towards a legal existence as a climate refugee?**

The concept of a climate refugee appeared formally in a report for the United Nations Environment Program in 1985. Many other terms can be used to refer to these climate refugees: environmental refugees, ecological refugees, environmental migrants, eco-refugees, Displaced persons due to natural disasters,... According to the author of this report, Essam El-Hinnawi, climate refugees are defined as *"those who are forced to leave their place of life temporarily or permanently because of an environmental breakdown (of natural or human origin ) Which has put in danger their existence or seriously affected their living conditions "* (Anne Claire Baratault, 2013c). This concept is becoming more and more relevant/topical and is being used more and more in view of the increasing environmental degradation involving extreme climate change.

But this notion of climate refugee has no legal existence and is therefore not recognized at all. The Geneva Convention

which defines refugee status does not take into account the ecological character as a factor of migration. According to Article 1 (A) of the Convention, a refugee is a person who *"has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of which he is a national and who is unable or, because of that fear, does not wish to avail himself of the protection of that country "* (United Nations, 1951).

For this legal status as a climate refugee to be recognized, it may be necessary to initiate a revision of the Geneva Convention by adding an additional protocol or extending the article defining refugee status to include the climate and environmental character. But according to UNHCR, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, such a review could prove dangerous. Indeed, there may be strong resistance from some northern countries, who are unwilling to welcome a new type of refugee. Faced with these reservations, there is even a risk that this revision will lead to a lowering of current international protection standards, the desired opposite effect (Vanderstappen Cécile, 2014c). A likely solution might be the creation of regional or

bilateral agreements not far from the countries concerned, facilitating migration rather than its restriction (Anne Claire Baratault, 2013d). For example, this 2007 proposal by Australian environmental senator Kerry Nettle, to grant a new type of visa (Climate Refugee Visa) that would accommodate 300 people a year from Tuvalu, Kiribati or other small islands of the Pacific. Unfortunately, this proposal was rejected (Anne Claire Baratault, 2013e). Finally, it should also be noted that Sweden and Finland are the only countries to grant subsidiary protection on the grounds of natural disasters (Vanderstappen Cécile, 2014d).

In 2013, 22 million people had to leave their homes after a natural disaster. This is three times more than the number of people displaced by conflict (Nicolas Hulot Foundation, 2015). It therefore seems essential to be able to recognize this new refugee status for the future if the environmental situation does not improve and if global warming continues on its way.

## **8. Towards a new international climate agreement**

Climate issues have all too often been overlooked in political discourse and international issues. At the present time and

in general, the measures decided on in this area have not yet been able to respond to the gravity of the situation, the reactions being very meager. Although the political world is very concerned about the situation and wants to act, it does not really commit itself to this environmental struggle, by not taking adequate, binding and concrete measures. *"Our house burns and we look elsewhere ..."* (Guerrier Sophie, 2014).

This speech by former French President Jacques Chirac as an introduction to his speech at the World Summit on Sustainable Development organized by the United Nations in Johannesburg on September 2, 2002, illustrates perfectly the indifference with regard to the climatic stakes. It is sad to note that since 2002, little has changed. The Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which was ratified in 1997 and entered into force in 2005, could be greatly improved and thus implement a new international agreement imposing stronger measures on signatory States with a view to considerably reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. In order to be fully effective, it should also include the main countries responsible for such pollution in order to implement new concrete and binding measures. It should be noted that the United States was the world's No. 1

champion of pollution at the global level and refused to ratify the agreement because the administration of President Bush at the time considered it to be a brake on the development of its economy.

China, which dethroned the United States in 2005 by becoming the largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub>, did ratify the treaty but did not have to set binding targets (Wiels, Jason, 2013). Since then, how can we try to reduce greenhouse gas emissions when the two biggest officials do not get involved in this global struggle? That sums up the absurdity of the situation. Note that China and the United States accounted for 42% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2013 (Lenore Taylor, 2014). Their mutual commitments in this climate fight therefore weigh very heavily in the balance.

Let us therefore hope that the COP24 (The Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change) which will take place in December 2018 in Katowice (Poland) during which the Marrakech and Bonn dynamic will be continued to guide the Cops towards the action and the concrete implementation of the Paris agreement, will be an ultimate appointment concerning the environmental issues. Let us also hope that all States will assume their responsibilities and act in an effective and urgent manner in

a spirit of unity and solidarity on a global scale. In the Paris Agreement (COP 21), the international community has set itself the main objective of keeping global warming below 2 ° C by 2050 compared with the pre-industrial era. Another major objective was to mobilize US \$ 100 billion annually by governments, international organizations and the private sector from 2020. This Climate Change Adaptation Fund will provide financial assistance, a kind of climate insurance for developing countries. These two objectives seem rather ambitious given the lack of involvement on the part of the countries responsible for the majority of greenhouse gases against this growing deterioration of the climate and the lack of success of a similar appeal of funds 5 years ago.

*“We do not act fast enough. The climate is changing faster than our efforts to meet it”* (The white house, 2015). These statements by former US President Barack Obama are encouraging. It remains to be hoped that those responsible will fully assume their actions.

## **9. Context of Rwanda: Human and environmental consequences of climate change**

Despite the fact that Rwanda has not experienced climate justice related to environmental/climate migration, it has experienced, if one may call it so, short-term environmental displacements in recent decades caused by climate change. As elsewhere, Rwanda has long been vulnerable to natural disasters as a result of climate change. The intensity and frequency of climatic hazards and their adverse effects are accentuated by the topographical structure of the Rwandan territory, particularly characterized by a very rugged landforms and consequently very sensitive to erosion and landslides. The floods and landslides of the 1990s baptized “*kugendasha*” in the north of the country are illustrative examples (Minitere 2002a).

In 1997, severe flooding related to the 1997/98 El-Nino episode destroyed a large number of agricultural plantations and ecosystems occupying the bottoms and marshes of the watersheds of the Nyabarongo and Akanyaru rivers (Minitere 2002b). From 1999 to 2000, a prolonged drought seriously affected the Bugesera, Umutara and Mayaga regions. Like the famed Ruzagayura famine spread over the period 1943-1945, such disasters are most often caused by climate change. The heavy rains caused extreme damage in 2001/2002,

particularly in the north (Gakenke, Cyeru, Rulindo, Butaro, Kinihira) and in the west (Nyamasheke, Karongi, Ngororero) of the country (WFP/FEWS-NET 2003).

Recently "During the night of May 7 to 8, 2016, torrential rains resulted in unprecedented floods and landslides, killed 67 people and destroyed more than 1,400 settlements and 2,222 hectares of land. The most affected district is in Gakenke, in the north of the country, where 34 people were killed, and 12 deaths in peripheral areas of the capital Kigali. The other districts concerned are Muhanga, Rubavu and Ngororero in the west (VOA news may, 2016).

Many times the extent of the damage is usually attributed to the responsibility of the El Niño climate phenomenon, but one cannot ignore at all the part of land use and overpopulation, which are serious development challenges for Rwanda.

## **9.1 Potential adaptation options for solution.**

Adaptation options for climate change solution (that one could, for the case of Rwanda, integrate in the context of climate justice) and achieving sustainable disaster risk reduction involves taking into account a wider range of opportunities which are aimed at several sectors of activity and involving all actors in the socio-political and economic life of the country and requiring the establishment of an appropriate institutional and legal framework according to the principle of participatory and decentralized approach.

### **9.1.1 Legal and Institutional framework**

To remedy this situation and ensure the successful implementation of environmental policy, Rwanda has put in place an environmental law for sustainable development through the sustainable use of environmental resources that meet the needs of present and future generations.

Although there is an institutional framework for environmental protection and management, the implementation of the policy has required the establishment of an Implementing Entity (Rwanda Environmental Management Authority) to Support the Ministry in charge of Natural

Disaster Management and Refugees, as its design and coordination body. The Rwandan government set up various national funds. For example: FONERWA, the fund for the environment and climate change, which aims to "mobilize and channel domestic and international funds, finance environmental and climate change projects, public and private, and work with projects Which help the strong and prosperous engagement of the country's green economy " (Olga Ishimwe, 2016).

### **9.1.2 The role of civil society and the private sector in the implementation of environmental policy**

Non-governmental organizations play a key role in mobilizing and sensitizing the population on environmental issues. To complement the efforts made by the public authority, UNDP helps Rwanda to integrate disaster risk reduction into its development planning, rebuild itself better by creating opportunities for more resilient development, to strengthen laws, institutions and governance to ensure better disaster prevention,... (Auke Lootsma, 2012).

Researchers at the Regional Resource Mapping Center for Development (RCMRD), based in Nairobi, Kenya, have set up a first electronic platform in Rwanda

to prevent and manage disasters. This platform makes it possible to identify regions subject to disasters, proves to be very useful, especially at the level of the decision-making bodies to reduce expenditure and/or displaced from climate change, seen that Rwanda is spending \$ 1.4 million a year on disaster management. (<http://www.scidev.net>).

The National Meteorological Agency has developed an SMS alert system to prevent natural disasters and warned Rwandans to minimize the human and material consequences. The system is aimed at institutional and local officials and should be extended to populations likely to be affected by disasters. According to John Ntaganda Semafara (2015), this system alert was first launched in the districts of Kigali most affected by weather problems and in the areas of Nyabihu, Ngororero, Rutsiro and Rubavu and it will be extended to others to alert on time and to minimize the climatic consequences, including the displacement of the population due to climate change.

### **9.1.3 Regional and international cooperation**

Climate and environmental issues have no borders. They are very complex and involve the whole world. The framework of their

solution goes beyond a country. It is in this context that Rwanda needs to associate itself with neighboring and remote countries and international organizations to better manage environmental issues, particularly those related to climate change.

Rwanda has already ratified several environmental conventions, protocols and agreements and has begun to implement them. For example, Rwanda adopted, during the meeting for the 28th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Kigali, Rwanda, on 14 October 2016, an agreement to eliminate a family of HFCs gases that are extremely harmful to the climate (AFP, 2016). Rwanda participates in the various international negotiations on climate change; it is part of the Conference of the Parties (COP), established at the time of the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992

During the implementation of the policy, Rwanda will need diverse and varied assistance from international and regional cooperation agencies and development partners. In order to know and evaluate the impact of the actions carried out in the framework of the implementation of the policy, progressive monitoring and evaluation actions will be necessary. But the question that can arise is to know:

whether large countries continue to be not unanimous on climate issues whereas they are the ones who fund the programs of the small countries of which Rwanda, this one will be able to fulfill its commitments?

#### **10. “Let's change the system, not the climate!”**

This COP24 will give rise to an important mobilization in order to demonstrate and challenge the political leaders towards the implementation of national commitments. The AECPE (Alliance for Planetary Citizenship Education), the youth movement of the Northern and Southern countries, born in 2014 some months before the occasion of the COP21 in Paris engaged to disseminate the message of the Manifesto and the role of education at the heart of COP, hopes to bring together the large number of young people for a walk on the streets of Katowice, 4 days in December 2018, in order to inaugurate this International summit. *“We are convinced that, neither political agreements, financial incentives no technological solutions alone will be sufficient to meet the challenges facing us. Education has a key role to play in the transition”* (<http://www.aecpe.org>). The fine words of the heads of state and the vain promises are no longer enough, the situation must change. Other citizen movements, as

well as numerous associations and NGOs, are taking part in this fight for the climate by taking up this slogan: “Change the system, not the climate!” It would be, indeed, a whole system that should be called into question in order to improve the environmental situation, with a view to putting the ecological impact on the weight of economic stakes.

The capitalist system aimed at infinite growth in a finite world, aspiring to absolute profitability, where the interests of the multinationals are kings confronted with the contempt of the population, would it be false? The world does not turn round for a long time and the absurdities of the modern world are numerous. For example, due to the disappearance of bees in some regions of the world as in China, it has become common for humans to have to pollinate by hand.

Little by little, civil society is awakening, conscious of the stakes by wanting to assert his rights. But how can we deal with the Transatlantic Treaty, over-exploited fossil energies, deforestation, and so on..., where everything is negotiated at a much higher level? Being aware of these realities and mobilizing can already be a good step, because the collective holds full power over the individual. Is that not the basic principle of democracy? A relocated world and

simpler, a kind of return to the roots may be possible. To do this, one should refuse the pre-made provided by the mass consumption system, where the ease and the programmed obsolescence take precedence and rhyme with profitability of the very large companies, those to whom benefit the environmental crime. These multinationals generally have little scruples about the rules to respect.

### **Conclusion**

What solutions should be considered for the future? At a higher level, the utopia of overexploitation of fossil fuels needs to be reviewed in order to promote the development of green and renewable energies. The questioning of industrial and intensive livestock farming is also necessary. Among the causes of environmental degradation, the latter is too often absent from mentalities, not seeing the direct relationship between intensive meat production and ecological damage. Industrial farming, which is very voracious in resource, is responsible for more than half of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Hypercarnism tends to become widespread at the global level and could endanger food security.

At a lower level, in parallel with the changes to be instituted by States, every citizen must also do his part by fully assuming his role as a consumer, saving resources as much as possible. Being conscious and critical of the world around us, and thus trying to participate in the awakening of consciousness by mobilizing oneself, also seems imperative in order not to act like sheep, doomed to running a system that exploits us. Inequalities are widening and becoming increasingly extreme in our modern society, where nearly half of the world's wealth is in the hands of wealthy elite, which accounts for only 1% of the world's population (Deborah, Hardoon, 2015).

A fundamental change in the system should therefore be initiated if we want to make this world more just, simpler, more supportive and respectful of the environment not be utopian. Will COP 24 in Katowice be a first step?



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