



EU CHAPTER CoR-EU
Honorary President Herman Van Rompuy
President European Council emeritus



Achieving the SDGs within Europe: No Poverty Eradication without Environmental Action

*A public debate organised by the Club of Rome EU-Chapter
jointly with the EP Intergroup on "Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development"*

Tuesday 19 February 2019,

11:00-13:00

Room JAN 6Q1, European Parliament, Brussels

Co-chaired by:

Isabelle Thomas MEP and Maurice Ponga MEP

Attention for the strong and multiple links between the environmental and economic condition is as old as environmental policy itself. In the same vein, links between economics and the social issues are obvious since the inception of social policy. The link between environmental conditions and social conditions at the contrary are much less looked into. However, the Sustainable Development Goals call upon us to see such connections too, and to try to abandon sector- or silo-thinking.

The United Nations [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the SDGs that are part of that text, aims at "transforming our world". Adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit, this Agenda recognize that "eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development." Furthermore, all signatories commit "to end poverty and hunger and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment."

Poverty in the developing world has been the object of uncountable initiatives, programs and conferences. However, in the European Union too, 120 million people (one in four) live in, or are at risk, of poverty or social exclusion. At the same time, climate change, biodiversity loss, and the decreasing availability of some resources, has devastating impacts on communities around the world, affecting the poor in particular, and this is also true in some parts of the EU. Extreme social inequalities on the one hand and environmental and climate change on the other, are closely linked and we cannot afford to tackle any one of these threats in isolation – they both deserve the highest policy priority and must be addressed together.

Do we proceed with business as usual? How can Europe balance the needs of nature and people and maintain a healthy environment, while fostering sustainable economic growth and eradicate social inequalities? The Agenda 2030 is the only way forward and its universality is the key to success. Only by working together and involving all people concerned, we can "transform our world". The SDGs can only be achieved by policy coherence within and outside the EU, addressing all goals as one package. This, however, will force the world to fundamentally get out of their silo-approach and make strong inter-sectoral connections. This conference will look into the interface of environmental and social issues. It will do so by including testimonies, concrete examples of bad practices versus best practices and lessons learned.

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AGENDA

11:00-11:15

Welcome by:

Isabelle Thomas MEP

Mark Dubrulle, President Club of Rome-EU Chapter

Perrine Orosco-Le Fournis on behalf of Maurice Ponga MEP

Introduction by:

Arne Lietz MEP

11:15-12:30

Panel discussion: Expert views on the poverty-environment nexus

moderated by Isabelle Thomas MEP

The panel will have special attention for testimonies, concrete examples from the field, bad practices and best practices.

- **Isabell Kempf, Co-Director, UN Environment / UNDP Poverty and Environment Initiative**
- **Astrid Schomaker, Director Global Sustainable Development, DG ENV, European Commission**
- **Vic Van Vuuren, Director Enterprises Department, International Labour Organisation on Green Jobs**
- **Céline Charveriat, Executive Director, Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)**
- **Philippe Pochet, General Director, European Trade Union**

12:30-12:50

Discussion with the audience

12:50-13:00

Closing remarks

Kindly supported by the Foundation Labour and Environment