Environmental Policy



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Environmental policy not only serves to protect nature, but is also increasingly understood as a central component of *social security policy*.

» Peace and security depend on a sound climate and environmental policy. Without this, there can be no peace.

Quote from: Josep Borrell. In: European Commission Press Release 28/06/2023. Addressing the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace, security and defence.

» The only security concept that can be successful in the long term is an integrated one that encompasses not only direct protection against war and violence but also the worldwide protection of natural resources – such as the climate and biodiversity – as well as global justice, social cohesion and peace.

***Security: What we need to talk about**. German Advisory Concil on Global Change. Discussion Paper No. 3 (June 2025). PDF*

» The great fallacy of the environmental debate in recent decades has been the hope that an ecological turnaround can essentially be implemented with some technological innovation programme within the existing economic order.

However, the continuing impressive growth in prosperity in the wealthy industrialised nations has failed to curb either the impact on the climate, resource consumption or the loss of biodiversity – on the contrary, all these pressures have worsened dramatically.

Translated from: Uwe Schneidewind. Book: Die Grosse Transformation - Eine Einführung in die Kunst gesellschaftlichen Wandels. 2018

» That the transition to sustainability can be achieved through innovation and technology *alone* is a hypothesis for which there is insufficient evidence - on the contrary, there are many arguments against it.

***Sufficiency as a «Strategy of the Enough»**. German Advisory Council on the Environment. 2024. PDF*

» Technological innovation is absolutely important. It is vital, in fact. We're going to need all the innovations and efficiency improvements we can get to drastically reduce the resource and carbon intensity of our economy.

But the problem we face doesn't have to do with technology. The problem has to do with *growth*. Over and over again, we see that the *growth imperative* wipes out all the gains our best technology delivers.

Jason Hickel. Book: Less is more. How degrowth will save the world. 2020



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» Today, Europe continues to consume more resources and contribute more to environmental degradation than many other world regions. We do not only have to do more; we also have to do things differently.

We now need completely different answers to environmental and climate issues than those of the past 40 years.

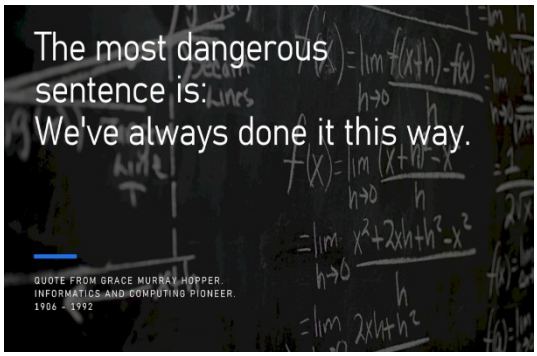
The European Environment - State and Outlook 2020. European Environment Agency. 2019

» Because problems can never be solved with the same way of thinking that created them.

Quote from: Albert Einstein. 1946 - in light of the new threat of atomic weapons.

» The longer one tries to apply the solution strategies that fit yesterday's problems to today's problems, the bigger they become, the problems.

Translated from: Harald Welzer. Book: Zeiten Ende – Politik ohne Leitbild, Gesellschaft in Gefahr. 2023



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» It is quite simply a fact that the current ways of life and economic activity have a comprehensive and deep impact on various ecosystems. Future generations therefore face drastic and irreversible disadvantages.

To date, climate, environmental and sustainability policy has far from succeeded in achieving a *sufficiently* strong reduction in ecological burdens.

Translated from: Institut für ökologische Wirtschaftsforschung (IÖW): Gesellschaftliches Wohlergehen innerhalb planetaren Grenzen,Texte 89/2018

» The climate crisis is actually a *climate policy crisis*, as we are sliding - insignificantly slowed down - towards a climate catastrophe as a result of inadequate action.

Translated from: Prof. Andreas Fischlin. Farewell lecture from 2 December 2024. Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich.



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» The experience of decades of climate warming shows that political intervention in the market has never been sufficient, and indeed was never even genuinely intended to stop climate change.

This is why we also speak of the climate crisis as the greatest *state* failure of all time, one which has calmly and quietly run its course notwithstanding all the provisions of

environmental law.

Beckert Jens. Book: How We Sold Our Future. The Failure to Fight Climate Change. 2025

» We need a *policy shift* that does not treat sustainability as a possible by-product of an economic growth agenda, but aims directly at sustainable consumption, production and investment.

Translated from: Maja Göpel. Book: Unsere Welt neu denken - Eine Einladung 2020