

MANIFEST

A satellite-style image of the Earth, showing the Atlantic Ocean in the center, with the western coasts of Africa and South America visible. The image is in shades of blue, green, and brown, with a bright yellowish glow over the ocean.

**The Stable Climate
Common Heritage of Humankind**

Manifest
Brazil-EU

“A standing tree is worth more than tons of wood illegally extracted by those who only seek easy profit at the expense of the deterioration of life on Earth.” - Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

The Stable Climate - Common Heritage of Humankind

Lula da Silva's victory and Brazil's return to its indispensable place in international politics create favourable conditions for developing an effective solution regarding the environmental/ climate crises with cascading effects in various fields, grounded on an effective multilateralism. This conviction derives from the victory speech of Brazil's recently elected President, in which Lula da Silva emphatically affirmed his commitment to the ecological agenda - "Brazil and the planet need a living Amazon" - while stating his willingness to resume relations with "the European Union on new bases".

These statements converge with the vision of the European Union (EU), which has stated that Ecology is a strategic field, and that climate change is an existential threat.

The increased deforestation of the Amazon during the past few years was a decisive argument used by European governments to stop the ratification of the EU-Mercosur agreement, concluded in June 2019.

It is our conviction that with the inauguration of Lula da Silva as Brazil's new President on January 1st, 2023, the discussions between the EU and Brazil should resume with the objective of establishing a strategic partnership for a sustainable environment, which could potentially reinstate the negotiation of the EU-Mercosur agreement, based on the concerns which have been expressed in both sides of the Atlantic.

These negotiations are even more in the new context of the absence of satisfactory results from COP27, which demonstrated the extent to which "business as usual" is no longer sufficient to prevent environmental and biodiversity threats, which endanger the Earth's life support systems, either in terms of reducing emissions or discontinuing the use of fossil fuels. Nevertheless, the "Loss and Damage" agreement that resulted from COP27, and which has been expected by the developing countries for more than 30 years, turned out to be relevant for building climate justice, which can be a starting point for a new framework for the relations between the EU and the countries of the Southern Hemisphere.

The strategic partnership between the EU and Brazil, with the wider Mercosur area as a horizon, offers the prospect of a renewed multilateralism, which favours inter-regional relations, in the current scenario in which the international framework is characterized by a weakened multilateralism, aggravated by the serious crises that have followed. In a world where not only States (large, small or medium-sized) but also spaces of cooperation and regional integration are called upon to play an important role, a new effective and inclusive multilateralism that takes into account the polycentric character of the international system is absolutely essential. Civil society organizations and young climate activists must be fully recognized as important actors in this inclusive multilateralism, and the concerns resulting from the impact of the climate and environmental crises on socially discriminated communities must be taken into account.

The EU-Brazil/Mercosur Strategic Partnership for the Stable Climate as a Common Heritage of Humankind should be developed around four priorities:

1. Defining the protection of the environment and biodiversity as the strategic orientation of their relations

The 2019 EU-Mercosur agreement does not provide enough guarantees for the compliance of environmental and health standards and targets, as has been stressed. The EU and Brazil should make the goal of meeting the Paris Agreement's framework a conditionality of their bilateral agreements and inter-regional relations.

This new strategic orientation should be the subject of an annex to the EU-Mercosur agreement, transforming it from an essentially commercial partnership into a partnership that places the objective of maintaining and restoring a Stable Climate at the core of the bi-regional relations. The EU-Mercosur agreement would thus be ratified together with the annex, which would make its environmental component binding, setting parameters and targets in all the areas that it covers. This would be more credible in the eyes of the public opinion, since it would clarify the environmental clauses. At the same time, it should be ensured that these clauses do not become means of imposing arbitrary or unjustified discrimination in trade between the two regions.

Under these conditions, the objections raised to the ratification of the agreement between the EU and Mercosur, despite pressure from sectoral interest groups, would no longer make political sense.

2. A new strategy to meet the Paris Agreement's goals

For the Paris Agreement's goals to be met, it is necessary to recognize the current strategies are limited to avoiding/mitigating/neutralizing emissions, which contributes to maintaining the current economic model in which the creation of wealth in society is only recognized through the destruction and extraction of resources, and which today creates more problems than it can solve.

The current strategies have been clearly insufficient, if we acknowledge that the planet's temperature has already increased by 1.2°C in relation to the pre-industrial period, and that with the policies currently in place we could reach 2.8°C by the end of the century. If the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are met, we could reach 2.6°C, way above the 1.5°C-2.0°C range goal of the Paris Agreement. The latest IPCC reports indicate that only by removing CO₂ from the atmosphere on a large scale will it be possible to achieve the Paris Agreement's goals and avoid catastrophic consequences.

It is, therefore, urgent to create a system that compensates those who contribute to CO₂ removal, based on an economy capable of actively caring for/restoring/regenerating/maintaining a Stable Climate.

For this, it is necessary to create a legal framework, based on a system of environmental accounting, which allows for rapid progress towards the goal of cleaning the atmosphere, encouraging and compensating the achievement of negative emissions. This is achieved by removing CO₂ from the atmosphere for the benefit of all humankind. Such evolution would also create incentives for reducing emissions down to the levels urgently recommended in all relevant reports.

3. Create an EU-Mercosur forest fund

Recovering and maintaining a Stable Climate requires maintaining the existent preserved ecosystems and a large-scale investment for the restoration and regeneration of already degraded ecosystems. The goal is to start the process of cleaning the atmosphere (negative emissions) and providing other ecosystem services of utmost relevance for maintaining a Stable Climate, as is the case of tropical forests, where the role of the Amazon is central.

The creation of an EU/Brazil-Mercosur fund would aim to remunerate ecosystem services and contribute to the preservation, recovery and expansion of the forest. This fund should contribute to the revitalization of OTCA (Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization). It would also aim to support scientific research projects in the fields related to the forest.

4. Stable Climate as a Common Heritage of Humankind

A priority goal should be the recognition of the Stable Climate as a Common Heritage of Humankind, through an international treaty involving all members of the United Nations and the relevant regional and inter-regional cooperation organizations.

The first step would be to define the Common Good - Stable Climate - based on the already available scientific tools, such as the so-called “Planetary Boundaries”, which comprises a combination of variables (far beyond just CO₂ levels), relations and parameters that together describe the functioning of the Earth System and the limits to the degradation of these variables – **the Safe Operating Space for Humanity**. Based on this instrument, it would be possible to define the Stable Climate as a Common Heritage and internalize not only the costs but also the benefits, thus allowing to build an economy of restoration and maintenance of the Common Good Stable Climate.

With this, climate negotiations would no longer be a negative-sum game between polluting countries, where each country tries to make fewer emissions while maintaining the same concepts of wealth creation. Instead, we would develop a positive cooperation, providing compensations for those who contribute to climate sustainability, ensuring the proper functioning of the Earth System.

Confirmed Signatories of the Brazil/EU Climate Heritage Manifest

Alexandre Quintanilha – Professor Universidade do Porto e Portugal Deputy

Álvaro Vasconcelos – Former Director of the Institute of Safety from European Union and Founder of Forum Demos

André dos Santos Oliveira – Youth4Climatejustice - 14 year, Author of a process to the European Court of Human Rights

Andreia Galvão – Students Climate Strike, Portugal

Carlos Nobre – Professor, senior investigator IEA at University of São Paulo and Royal Society member.

Carlos Pimenta – Former State Secretary (Portugal) and Eurodeputy

Celso Lafer – Professor Emeritus from USP and Former Minister of Foreign Relations of Brazil (1992; 2001-2002)

Érica Liberato – Zero Waste Youth Portugal, Brazil

Fátima Vieira – Professor, Vice Rector of University of Porto, Portugal

Felipe Augusto de Oliveira – Vice-President Youth Climate Leaders, Brazil

Francisco Ferreira – Professor at Nova University from Lisbon and e President of NGO ZERO

Francisco Seixas Da Costa – Former State Secretary and Ambassador

Filipe Duarte Santos – Professor at University of Lisbon and President of the National Council of Environment and Sustainable Development (CNADS)

Guilherme de Oliveira Martins – Former Minister of Education in Portugal and Executive Administrator of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Helena Freitas – Professor at University of Coimbra and Former Deputy

Isabel Valente – Professor at University of Coimbra

Izabella Teixeira – Former Environment Minister of Brazil, Co-Chair of the International Resource Panel UNEP

João Alberto Alves Amorim – Professor at Universidade Federal of São Paulo (UNIFESP)

Joana Vasconcelos – Plastic Artist (Portugal)

José Luís da Cruz Vilaça – Former Judge at the European Union Justice Court

Lídia Jorge – Writer, Portugal

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