

R5 Climate Adaptation Is Justice: Caring for Europe's Inland Territories

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Agenda item: 8. Resolutions

Motion text

1 Hope is green – but hope alone will not hold back floodwaters, stop megafires,
2 or prevent hillsides from collapsing.

3 Across **Europe**, especially in the Mediterranean basin, the climate crisis is no
4 longer a warning but a lived reality. The 1.5°C objective is slipping out of
5 reach. Emissions continue to rise, fossil fuel expansion persists, and political
6 courage remains insufficient.

7 From **floods** in Valencia to **landslides** in Sicily and **megafires** across Southern
8 and Central Europe, the pattern is clear. Climate impacts are intensifying and
9 unevenly distributed. Inland, mountainous, and rural territories – often
10 politically invisible – are on the frontline.

11 These regions are already strained by austerity, depopulation, and extractivist
12 land use. Small farmers, forest workers, and elderly populations are paying the
13 highest price for a crisis they did not create. Where infrastructure is fragile
14 and public services weakened, climate breakdown becomes a multiplier of
15 injustice.

16 **Climate adaptation** is therefore not a technical adjustment, but a matter of
17 **justice**. Mitigation remains essential, but it will not protect communities
18 already facing irreversible impacts. Adaptation must become a central political
19 priority, rooted in care, solidarity, and structural transformation. This crisis
20 is not only environmental but systemic. It is rooted in capitalism, which is
21 inherently structured around extractivism, where ecosystems are treated as
22 infinite resources to be exploited in the pursuit of continuous growth. Such a
23 model reinforces territorial and class inequalities, and undermines the
24 resilience of the very systems on which it relies on.

25 Addressing this crisis requires a **systemic transformation** and a shift towards
26 approaches that overcome this perpetual growth, such as the doughnut economy,
27 which understands and prioritises ecological limits, redistribution and
28 collective well-being over accumulation and profit

29 Europe's inland territories are not spaces to abandon or exploit – they are
30 essential socio-ecological infrastructures that require **Care**.

31 Inland areas sustain **biodiversity** and provide vital **ecosystem services**: water
32 regulation, soil regeneration, pollination, climate regulation, and protection
33 against extreme events. Their resilience is directly linked to that of the
34 entire continent.

35 Yet these systems are under growing pressure. Rising temperatures, prolonged
36 droughts, and extreme events interact with habitat fragmentation and resource
37 overexploitation. Ecosystems are weakening as socio-economic vulnerabilities
38 deepen.

39 Fragile systems also mean rising tensions, including conflicts between human
40 activities and **wildlife**. These conflicts reflect policy failures – lack of
41 coordination, scientific grounding, and community participation – not ecological
42 imbalance.

43 Inland territories must be recognised as both vulnerable spaces and strategic
44 laboratories for ecocentric adaptation. Healthy ecosystems, ecological
45 connectivity, and resilient agroecological systems are among the most effective
46 defenses against climate impacts.

47 Adaptation cannot be reduced to technological fixes or urban-centric policies.
48 It must be grounded in the care of socio-ecological systems and the
49 **interdependence** between communities and their environments.

50 **Agriculture** is central to this vision as a foundational socio-ecological
51 infrastructure. Caring for agricultural systems means recognising soil as a
52 common good. Soil degradation, erosion, and loss of organic matter are reducing
53 the capacity of land to retain water and withstand shocks, while monocultures
54 increase vulnerability.

55 A transition toward **agroecological practices** is essential: crop diversification,
56 soil restoration, improved water retention, and reduced dependence on
57 unsustainable irrigation. Farmers must be supported in adapting to climate
58 change, including through resilient crop varieties.

59 Rural landscapes are also protective infrastructures. Hedges, terraces,

60 woodlands, and small water networks are essential defenses against
61 hydrogeological instability, desertification, and biodiversity loss.

62 Without a public strategy centered on care, inland territories risk losing not
63 only economic viability, but also identity, cohesion, and future prospects. A
64 different path exists: one of Care, where these areas become laboratories of
65 **socio-ecological adaptation** and collective well-being.

66 We call on European institutions to recognise the central role of inland
67 territories in the climate transition and adopt a justice-driven approach to
68 adaptation based on care, resilience, and participation.

69 We therefore demand:

- 70 • Recognition of inland, rural, and mountainous areas as pillars of European
71 climate resilience within EU adaptation and cohesion policies;
- 72 • Large-scale programmes for ecosystem restoration and ecological
73 connectivity in inland territories;
- 74 • Structural investment in environmental monitoring, ecological restoration,
75 and qualified green jobs;
- 76 • Coexistence programmes between human activities and wildlife based on
77 prevention, science, and community participation;
- 78 • Recognition of agriculture as a core socio-ecological infrastructure for
79 climate resilience and food sovereignty;
- 80 • A European framework for soil protection as a common good, including
81 targets on organic matter, erosion prevention, and water retention;
- 82 • Support for agroecological transitions based on diversification, soil
83 regeneration, and reduced vulnerability to climate shocks;
- 84 • Investment in water resilience in agriculture, including soil moisture
85 retention and less water-intensive production models;
- 86 • Support for farmers through access to resilient crops, technical
87 assistance, and locally adapted knowledge;
- 88 • Recognition and restoration of rural landscapes as protective
89 infrastructures against desertification, floods, and biodiversity loss;

- 90 • Programmes strengthening farmers as custodians of socio-ecological
91 systems, including training and green jobs;
- 92 • Integration of agricultural adaptation into EU climate and cohesion
93 policies;
- 94 • Alignment of agricultural, environmental, and rural policies toward
95 resilient, non-extractive systems;
- 96 • Meaningful involvement of farmers and rural communities in adaptation
97 strategies.

98 Adaptation is not optional. It is the ground on which climate justice will
99 either stand or fail. To care for inland territories is to care for Europe's
100 future – without this shift, we will remain trapped in permanent emergency,
101 reacting to crises instead of preventing them.

Reason

The international situation is crazy but let's not forget the climate crisis, which is hitting hard. Mitigation remains essential, but it will not protect communities already facing irreversible impacts. Adaptation must become a central political priority, rooted in care, solidarity, and structural transformation.