

PREFACE

This is the fourth party programme of the Green Party of Sweden, adopted at the congress in May 2005. The first party programme was adopted in November 1993.

At the first congress of the party in 1982, a statement of general policies was adopted, as well as a number of action programmes on different issues. These were revised and developed over the years and in 1993 compiled into a party programme.

The current party programme is supplemented by a number of reports and memos developing topical or particularly complicated issues. You can find these (in Swedish) at www.mp.se.

The party programme is trying to illustrate how the green ideology can be used in our society to achieve decreased ecological burden with the aim to obtain balance in the ecological system. At the same time, it wants to show how a functioning and fair economy is formed together with social safety and global solidarity.

It is high time to change course.

GREEN IDEOLOGY – A CALL FOR ACTION

In this first chapter, we present our basic ideological views, our fundamental ideas, how we perceive the world and the history of our party.

The Green Party is part of a worldwide green political movement. Together, we are fighting for long-term sustainable, democratic societies where people assume responsibility, locally as well as globally. Our vision is societies that live in peaceful coexistence, participate in equal collaboration and where humans, animals and nature are being respected.

Everyone has the same value and equal, basic rights. People must be given the freedom to develop as individuals on the basis of their qualifications and opportunities. Cultural diversity and different life choices should be encouraged. People's right of self-determination should only be restricted out of consideration for other people's freedom and safety, for the right of future generations to a good living environment and for other sentient beings.

Humans are active and creative beings who want and can take on responsibility. Human creativity and our constant ability to find new solutions are a prerequisite for us to achieve a long-term sustainable society. Active, responsible citizens are the key to developing and reinforcing the democratic work. We believe that individuals and groups have a responsibility that extends beyond themselves. The value of solidarity rests on our conviction that people are able to see themselves in others, to feel compassion and to assume responsibility for everything alive. Our ideology rests on a solidarity that can be expressed in three parts:

- solidarity with animals, nature and the ecological system;
- solidarity with future generations;
- solidarity with all the people of the world.

On the basis of our solidarity, we have formulated a policy that can be expressed in a number of fundamental ideas.

Participatory Democracy

By decentralising power, we want to strengthen people's opportunities to participate. We want a society where power proceeds from the people and where more people are directly involved in the decisions being made. When people are given influence and responsibility over their own lives and the society in which they are active, they want to get involved. The basis for a participatory democracy is people's commitment and the rule of law. In order to create commitment and participation, society needs to encourage critical thinking and a questioning attitude. People's ability to think outside the box and exchange ideas with each other in free and equal interaction is a central element in a participatory democracy.

Ecological Insight

Humans are a vulnerable part of a sensitive ecological system where everything is linked and connected. The precautionary principle means that we must handle nature with great care and be humble in the face of our own incomplete knowledge of all its connections. We humans must

assume responsibility for managing Earth's resources in balance with nature to preserve biological diversity. We believe that all life has an intrinsic value, regardless of its use to humans. When people keep within nature's framework, there will be a basis for good living conditions and sustainable welfare.

Social Justice

Everyone has the same right to basic social and material security, a security that should provide good conditions to create a meaningful life. Beneficial social progress presupposes confident people with the courage to invest and create. Society must bridge economic gaps and provide education that offers everyone the chance to participate in democracy and obtain meaningful work. Care and welfare should be based on the individual's wishes and needs. Equality should be a fundamental principle in the work life.

The Rights of the Child

The rights of the child must be considered on the child's own premises and given a prominent position in all decision-making. A child-friendly world provides for children's fundamental needs for love, food, sleep, security, development, culture and health. Children and adolescents should increasingly be able to have an influence on society. All social planning should be based on the best interests of the child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All children and adolescents should have the right to a safe childhood, their guardians' time and responsibility and a good education. In matters concerning right of access and custody issues, the child's best interest must always be taken looked after, and not primarily the rights of the parents or guardians.

Ecocycle Economy

We want to build a society where the economy is based on social and ecological considerations, a society where resources are fairly distributed and where consideration is given to animal welfare and the limitations of nature. This means that we place the ecological balance and the well-being of people and animals before short-term economic gain. Economic development must take place within nature's framework, without people being worn out. Therefore, we believe that economic growth in its conventional meaning is neither possible nor desirable. We advocate an economic system in which we live on the yield from the natural resources, instead of constantly draining them. We have to learn to live in a way that is possible for everyone, now and in the future. The confidence in people's creativity is fundamental to our view on economics. A business life with participation and personal responsibility makes it possible to create more than merely economic value.

Global Justice

A secure world is a place where the fundamental social, economic and political rights of every human being are met. In an equitable world, all resources are distributed equally. We only have one Earth and we all depend on each other. Our lifestyle affects other people's opportunities. We want to work for a fair and environmentally sustainable distribution of Earth's resources. We support free cultural exchange where everyone can work and study wherever they wish. People who need to flee their homeland should have the right to asylum. Our long-term goal is for everyone to be able to live and work wherever they want.

Non-Violence

We believe in non-violence as a method of change, since peace for us is not only the goal but also a means. We believe in non-violence as a method for handling conflicts. We want international cooperation to be given the means to prevent violence, by working against conflict sources of an economic, ecological or cultural nature. We demand national and global disarmament of all military weapons. A world in peace is a prerequisite for justice among people, and for a long-term sustainable society.

Equality and Feminism

Men and women are treated differently on the basis of artificial demands and expectations on themselves and each other, among other things due to stereotyped perceptions about the sexes. This makes it more difficult for people to develop as free individuals. The inequalities in society today, where the man is structurally superior to the woman, is among other things due to artificial gender norms. Feminism means that we have realised society's predominant gender power order, and that we want to change it. We want to work for economic, social and political equality between men and women. Equality is when all people, regardless of gender, are free to make their own choices in life without being limited by gender norms. Radical changes in society and increased tolerance towards people who choose to break norms and conventions are required.

Animal Rights

Humans must respect animals' natural behaviour and create conditions in which they can live according to their own natural patterns. Today, animals are often treated more as commodities than as sentient beings. Humans have a moral responsibility to create a society that values and shows consideration for animals. In a society that respects and shows solidarity with animals, animals have the right to appropriate outlets for their natural behaviour, and not to be made to suffer.

Self-Reliance and Self-Management

Self-reliance means being able to depend on one's fundamental resources and opportunities. Small-scale, local and decentralised production must increase at the expense of centralisation. Countries, regions and people should make use of local opportunities to manage the basic supply of food and energy. The counterweight to a bolting globalised economy lies in a strong local society that produces and consumes its own food. People have a need for participation, insight, responsibility and community spirit and cannot just be reduced to egoistic players in the market. Self-administration and cooperative forms of organisation are important means to treat the whole person as an individual and social being.

Freedom

Through the right to equal opportunities and different ways of life, people develop into independent individuals. Human diversity is a part of society's driving force. We believe that people must be free to develop without being oppressed by prejudice. Therefore, we defend the right to be different. People should be able to live free from stereotypes regarding appearance and roles and have the right to be who they are, live in the way they want and love who they love. We work for a society that is fully accessible for disabled people, where there is gender equality and that is non-discriminatory in respect to ethnic background, outlook on life, sexuality and age. This fundamental freedom gives people the opportunity to enjoy quality of life, which is the objective of our freedom policy.

Long-Term Perspective

Green politics means thinking and acting in a long-term perspective. The freedom and solidarity we want to characterise today's society should also apply for our children, their children and future generations. No one has the right to tear away the conditions of life from those who will come after us. Long-term thinking requires major changes to the current system, and that the individual takes on a personal responsibility for his or her lifestyle.

The World Today

Humans have gifts like no other species. This has given us the opportunity to choose. We can choose to destroy or to edify. We can build a good society and take responsibility, or choose not to.

Today, we are destroying the only planet we have. Biological diversity and the genetic variation are being reduced at an ever faster rate. The prerequisites for future life are being smashed by increased environmental degradation. Against our better judgement, we are using more and more fossil fuels in a way that dramatically alters the climate and the conditions for life on Earth. The fight for our common and shrinking natural resources is getting tougher.

A small global upper class maintains and reinforces injustice through discriminatory trade agreements and superior economic and military leverage. In spite of this, part of Earth's population is raising above poverty and destitution. The rich world in the west is being challenged in a previously impossible way. But there is a great risk that this positive development will be repelled as increasing numbers of people are demanding more and more while at the same time resources are drying up. This is for example the case regarding the decreasing availability of food as a result of over-fishing, poisons and long-term unsustainable agriculture. It also applies to fresh water supply, which is decreasing at a disturbing rate and which is already creating serious conflicts around the world. In order to keep their positions, the most powerful countries in the world do not hesitate to indirectly cause the deaths of millions of people in the poor part of the world. The fight for resources creates wars that devastate, destroy and take human lives.

The present political system impedes people's commitment and creativity. Many people feel that they have few opportunities to participate. Decisions that could previously be influenced are today made in closed board rooms, during secret negotiations in non-transparent organisations.

Capital has become globalised. Multinational companies can be found in practically all areas of our lives. Both the political and the economic power are being moved further away and are now out of reach for the majority. Our elected representatives have surrendered a significant part of the opportunities to find solutions to the problems facing people. The result can be seen in increased frustration and a widespread feeling of powerlessness. In our part of the world, we see how people are being worn down and broken by an ever tougher social climate with ever higher demands for efficiency. Stress and mental illness transform people into cogs in an economic machinery. The economic differences, the gap between rich and poor, are increasing. At the same time, the holes and cracks in the welfare society are growing larger. This feeds racism and xenophobia, and vulnerable groups are pitted against each other.

These problems can be solved. They are the result of a deliberate policy that can be changed. Therefore, powerful counter-forces are emerging. People over the whole world join the demands

for change and find ways to solve the problems that at first sight appear to be unsolvable. People find ways to exert the influence they deserve. People are defeating dictatorships, building local societies and strengthening democracy. New, environmentally-friendly and efficient technology enables a different way of life in harmony with animals and nature, and in justice with all the people of the world. We are living in a time of transition where the Green movement offers an alternative. Although the threat feels great, the hope and opportunities are greater.

Our Party

The Green Party was founded in 1981 and is part of a global Green solidarity movement. We emerged from the environmental, peace, solidarity and feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The voices that were raised, fighting for the environment and coexistence, were a counter-reaction to the one-sided political thinking and decision-making prevalent within the conservative and left-wing parties at the time and still dominating Sweden and the world today.

The Green vision that people and the environment should be put before short-term profit interests emerged. Today, the Green Party and the Green ideology offer an alternative to right-wing and left-wing ideologies. The traditional ideologies are poorly equipped to formulate and solve current problems since they often ignore nature's limitations, the need to share resources between generations, other sentient beings and humans on the other side of the planet.

We chose to form a Green political party to be able to participate in the parliamentary system and implement the necessary changes by means of democratic methods. Politics is a peaceful means which can contribute to major changes on society, but it cannot solve the problems without the support and participation of the citizens.

The Green movement wants to unite freedom for the individual with solidarity. These are values that have been formulated by many before us. But we have an understanding, which is neither right-wing nor left-wing, of how these values can be combined with the decentralisation of power, small-scale, self-reliance and long-term responsibility for the future of our world. Our work is carried out directly in parliaments, as well as by influencing public opinion and direct actions outside the formal decision-making context.

The Green ideology offers hope and the opportunity to build something new together. It requires a readiness to adopt a new solidary and long-term way of life. Green ideology requires more than a vote every four years or tacit support, it requires action.

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY – DEMOCRACY NEEDS COMMITMENT

In this chapter, we develop our vision of direct democracy, analyse why people feel increasingly powerless today, and indicate possible means of achieving greater participation and commitment. We also explain what we mean when we talk about the rule of law.

Direct Democracy

We believe in direct democracy where decisions are made by those affected by them. Decisions in elected assemblies must be supplemented and the citizens must be able to scrutinize them. In a democracy, everyone must have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making. At the same time, elected representatives are mandated by the citizens to make decisions. In a Green society, everyone is able to control their own lives. Everyone has a real influence over the development of society. We are convinced that a participatory democracy both presupposes and gives rise to responsibility and involvement with every citizen.

Far-Reaching Decentralisation

Implementing the principle that decisions should be made by those who are affected the most requires far-reaching decentralisation of power. Many decisions that today are made by central government should be decentralised to regions, municipalities, municipal districts or be left entirely to the individual. Sweden's regions should be given greater autonomy, both in terms of politics and organisation. The municipal autonomy must be strengthened. Municipalities' right to impose taxation must be expanded. Municipalities should have the right of veto in regard to major and radical land exploitation. The importance of municipal issues should be strengthened by introducing separate election years for local and national assemblies. We work for self-governing municipal districts in municipalities where this is suitable, and we safeguard non-commercial meeting places. Legislation restricting municipal autonomy should primarily aim at guaranteeing citizens' rights, democratic as well as social, towards the municipality.

In a Green society, one cannot expect the public sector to solve every problem that arises. Responsibility also rests with the individual and his/her own efforts. Our view is that the individual and individuals together should constitute the foundation on which to build a society. What the individual cannot manage to do alone should be delegated to society, and in that case primarily to the decision-making structures closest to the individual. Our society is always built from the bottom up, never from the top down.

Power is Being Centralised

Instead of the citizens' influence being strengthened, more and more decisions are today being made outside democratic control. When the barriers for markets and economic flows are being dismantled, the opportunities for elected representatives and governments to control this development are being reduced. This results in a feeling of powerlessness among both elected representatives and the citizens. The present representative system has lost its ability to foster people's dreams, desires and wishes. Fewer and fewer people have confidence in politics and their own ability to exercise any political influence. Not everyone has the same opportunities to make themselves heard. That is discrimination that deprives society of important experience and ideas. Men still have better chances than women to realise their political ideas.

In such a climate, with limited ability to exercise influence, people's commitment is broken down, providing a breeding ground for extreme political movements. Non-profit associations, non-governmental organisations, political parties and schools have an important task to safeguard and broaden this commitment.

Europe without a Super State

Part of the centralisation of power is the emergence of a super state in Europe, in the form of the European Union (EU). The hierarchical decision-making system within the EU has given those with the greatest economic resources the ability to control the political agenda and to enforce decisions. At the same time, for most people, the distance between themselves and power has increased. The EU has weakened democracy. The way in which the EU is constructed is permeated by an elitist way of thinking. Popular influence is strongly limited. The EU Commission is far too powerful and it is difficult to demand accountability.

We want Sweden to leave the EU. However, we have always been supporters of pan-European cooperation with free movement for people and intergovernmental decision-making as the main rule. As long as Sweden remains in the EU, we will therefore use the Swedish membership to change and improve it. We believe that each EU member state should have the right of veto when decisions are made in the Council of Ministers. We want power to be brought back from the EU to the member states, not because the member states are the best possible units for decision-making, but because it is one way among many to bring power closer to the citizens.

We want Sweden to work for global solutions to global problems, such as trafficking in human beings and cross-border environmental degradation. But we believe that the EU of today has limited ability to be an effective tool for finding such solutions. We want Sweden to play an active and constructive role in international cooperation by working and collaborating with the surrounding world. Independent and democratic participation, globally as well as locally, is the foundation for the intergovernmental cooperation we are advocating. Free trade and cooperation agreements form a good platform for this, but existing EEA agreements are no good. We are working constantly and in an active manner to find new and better forms for the pan-European collaboration of the future, which is our alternative to the EU.

We could consider supranational decisions concerning measures to protect the environment, such as dealing with cross-border environmental pollution, the protection of threatened species and biotopes, and minimum standards for limit values as regards emissions, nature and food. These decisions should be made by an organisation that deals solely with such issues, for instance at the global level.

As long as Sweden is a member of the EU, we strive to change the EU. We want to limit the power of the EU and return it to the member states. We support the idea to develop the EU into a "Europe à la carte", where each member state itself can choose which parts of the EU work it wants to participate in. The member states' own parliaments should be given the ability to control that the EU does not make any decisions beyond its authorities. The states should also be able to test the legality of existing EU legislation. The democratic influence on the European Central Bank must increase. The principle of public access to official records and the right to inform, based on the Swedish model, should be introduced in the EU.

Global Democracy

Democracy is also being challenged by economic globalisation. It is necessary to build political counterweights to the commercial market. The greater the number of people to decide together, the tougher the demands need to be that decision-making is as democratic as possible. This applies in particular when people with different languages and different cultures are to arrive at common decisions. The road to a functioning world democracy must begin with a broad discussion among people in many countries about how common decisions should be made as democratically as possible.

To achieve freedom and democracy in the world as a whole, we must tackle the unequal distribution of resources and support democratic forces all over the world. This requires collaboration between democratic popular movements and a solidary global policy that builds bridges and reduces the gaps between the rich and poor in the world. An important objective for the international democratic effort is to counteract the illegal trade in humans, weapons and drugs. The fight for democracy is a fight against repression, despotism and corruption. Organised crime must be combated and prevented. Similarly, threats against global security must be prevented. People's needs for safety must not be utilised to curtail their civil and political rights.

Empowered Citizens

The forms of democracy have basically been the same since the introduction of universal suffrage, while at the same time people have obtained greater knowledge, education and insight. The world has shrunk, people travel more and news from the other side of the world reaches us immediately. People are more educated and have deeper ability to understand complicated causalities. Democracy must therefore be developed through citizen empowerment. We are convinced that everyone who is given the opportunity will be able to assume responsibility for what goes on around them.

Time, Knowledge and Access to Information

Time for involvement is required in order for everyone to take part in the development of society. The possibility to take time off from work and education for trade union and political activities should be extended. In addition, everyone needs to know how society is organised and be able to acquaint themselves with topical issues. Schools should provide good basic democracy training. Information about political decisions should be accessible. The opportunities and obligations of citizens and the media to scrutinize those in power must be strengthened. We want to improve transparency at all political levels, in municipal companies, banks and in trade and industry in general. A critical and independent attitude to the media and advertising should be a natural element in all education and media scrutiny.

Renewal of Elected Assemblies

The representative democracy must be renewed in order for decision-makers to really represent their constituents. Therefore, we want to lower the threshold in national and local elections. It is important that the popularly elected assemblies are directly and proportionally elected. The opportunity for personalised votes should be expanded, for example by restoring the right to delete names from the ballots. A system where each representative votes with the number of votes that he/she has received in the election would provide a direct link between the individual voter's vote and the influence of the elected representative. Everyone should, at some point in their lives, have the opportunity to work politically and take on a political assignment. To

facilitate this, we want to make it impossible to stand for re-election after having held the same elected office for more than ten consecutive years. The possibility to simultaneously hold several seats should also be restricted.

Representativity presupposes that decision-making assemblies reflect society. A person should be able to exert political influence on society where he/she works and lives. We therefore believe that the place where a person is officially registered should constitute the basis for the right to vote. All foreign citizens should have a right to vote when they have officially been registered in Sweden. They should also have the right to become Swedish citizens after having been officially registered in Sweden for three years. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be a guiding principle in social planning, since political decisions that are good for children and adolescents are good for society as a whole. Child impact assessments should be carried out prior to all political decisions. Adolescents should be offered greater participation, by among other things reducing the voting age to 16 years. In our view, everyone has the same value and equal rights, and no one can be born into office. For us, it is therefore difficult to see a place for monarchy in a modern democratic society.

Ethical Rules for Elected Representatives

An important element of the renewal of representative democracy is to establish certain fundamental ethical rules for all elected representatives. Some of these rules that we ourselves strive to follow are that:

- A politician should work for the benefit of society and not seek to gain benefits for himself/herself, his/her relatives or party.
 - A politician should have high morals, stick to the truth and not distort facts.
 - A politician should set a good example and, as far as possible, live in accordance with the ideas he/she advocates. Ahead of being nominated for election, he/she should declare any divergence from his/her party's programme and election promises.
 - A politician should be prepared to, upon request, provide information in respect to any economic or other links to various social interests, including shareholdings.
 - In debates, a politician should argue his/her case without resorting to personal attacks.

Direct-Democratic Instruments

As a reaction to the increasing centralisation of power, variations of direct democratic decision-making have emerged all over the world. Examples of this include joint planning of the local budget, civic initiatives and cooperative ownership.

Everyone should be able to participate when major and important decisions are being made. A well-tried method for this is by means of referenda. Five per cent of those entitled to vote should be able to enforce referendums at all levels of decision-making. Changes to the constitution must always be subject to referendum. A constitutional court would strengthen the status of the constitution. To strengthen citizens' rights in relation to public authorities, we want to increase the users' direct influence over the public sector.

What makes democratic countries more successful than other countries is that the ideas and creativity of their citizens is made use of. The most important thing is therefore not always the decisions, but the way in which they are being made. It is not enough for the actual decision-

making itself to be democratised, the citizens must also, to a larger extent, be able to influence the process leading to the decisions. This can be done by giving citizens the opportunity to participate in the work to produce basic data for the decision-making process and decision alternatives. The right to put motions before the municipal council, and open committee meetings for all local residents, are steps in the right direction. The parliamentary committee meetings should also be open to the general public.

IT in Democracy

Information technology creates the preconditions for more participatory and direct democracy. In recent years, democratic reforms have been forced through by movements that have been able to mobilise quickly by exchanging information across the world. In the same way as dictatorships will be harder to maintain when the Internet enables the opposition to spread its message, IT will bring about demands for more widespread democracy also in Sweden. The Internet can strengthen communication between voters and candidates, facilitate direct participation in decision-making and be used to spread background information.

Civil Disobedience and Personal Responsibility

Involvement and activism constitute the basis for all democratic change. On this basis, we regard civil disobedience as a natural element of democracy. Civil disobedience means illegal action that adheres to the principles of non-violence, openness, striving for dialogue and readiness to take the consequences of one's actions. In history, many examples show that civil disobedience has strengthened democracy and given women the right to vote and nations independence. The regulations on self-defence should be supplemented in order for attempts to ward off an ongoing or imminent attack, for example on sensitive natural environments or cruel treatment of animals, to be deemed as acts of self-defence. This principle can never legitimise violence against people, animals or damage to the property of others. We believe that legislation should clearly state that every person has the right to, without risking any sanctions, refuse to carry out his/her work if the work entails a serious danger to one's own life or health or that of another person, the spread of weapons of mass destruction or poisons, commitment of other crimes or damage to sensitive natural environments. Every human being should be guaranteed the right not to have to bear arms. For us, it is a question of strengthening personal responsibility and clarifying that each and every one of us must be responsible for our own actions.

Rule of Law

Maintaining democracy requires a functioning judicial system that guarantees fundamental freedoms and rights. The right to express in speech and writing, to hold meetings, to demonstrate, to organise, and to be able to believe and think freely are elements of this. Democracy is in danger if the tasks of the police are taken over by private security companies. Infringement of the integrity and discrimination in the exercise of authority or within the judicial system constitute dangers to democracy as well. One of our main tasks is to restore confidence in the institutional pillars of rule of law. An important part of this work is to ensure that key functions such as the police and courts of law reflect the composition of society in regard for example to gender and ethnic background.

Developed Police System

The task of the police is to maintain democratic freedoms and rights and to protect citizens.

There must be no scope for arbitrary assessments and the right to demonstrate must be protected. The police's resources must be sufficient to provide adequate staffing across the country and effective control of common criminality. In particular, crime prevention measures must be given priority. Neighbourhood police, work against drugs and a general welfare policy are required for this. Sweden should return to restrictive import quotas for alcohol. We want to strengthen the element of conflict management in police training and give the police education proper college status. Special training is needed for police who are working with for example drug crimes, sexual offences, the questioning of minors, offences involving violence in the home, economic crimes and environmental crimes. A special authority should investigate suspicions of criminal offences by police personnel.

Humane Treatment of Offenders

Criminal policy must be based on the view that everyone has good development opportunities. In essence, this means that alternatives to prison sentences should be sought since prison is rarely a successful method to prevent crime. Locking people up in an institution can partly be replaced by less destructive methods, particularly as regards short sanctions. We would prefer increased use of electronic surveillance as a means of punishment, and to prevent minor offences. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service should collaborate with non-profit associations to implement certain sanctions.

The main task of the treatment of offenders must be to try to prevent crimes. To achieve this, it is important to eradicate the reasons why people become criminals and implement measures to assist young offenders. Society must send a clear message to adolescents who carry out offences, at the same time as adolescents must never be excluded from education or other activities that is essential for them to be able to play an active role in society. The aim of criminal policy should be treatment to rehabilitate inmates to enable them to live a normal life outside the institution. Psychiatric care in the framework of treatment of offenders must be improved.

Society's Responsibility for Victims of Crime

Every crime is a sign of a failure in society, which is why society bears a responsibility for supporting and assisting victims of crime. The State should provide legal assistance and other assistance required for the victim to be able to return to a normal life. We want to give particular priority to young victims of crime so that a person who has suffered in this way does not him/herself begin to experience a sense of being detached from society. Witnesses should be protected in order for everyone to be able to testify without fear of reprisals. We want everyone, both victims as well as suspected perpetrators, also to be entitled to the presence of an independent interrogation witness when in contact with other authorities than the police.

THE CREATIVE HUMAN BEING - THE TOOLS TO CHANGE IN EVERYBODY'S POSSESSION

We believe in a knowledge society with creative individuals. This requires good education, an active cultural and civil society, a business culture where small businesses can grow and a country without any major regional differences. The Green knowledge society requires a flexible education system and citizens willing to learn new things, but we believe that society and its citizens are capable of doing so.

Freedom for Life-Long Learning

We believe in a society where every individual has the opportunity to create, develop and make use of his/her skills and proficiencies. In a society where less natural resources are consumed and where everyone has a given role in decision-making, there will be a focus on knowledge. Through diversity in education, culture and the media, we want to ensure that everyone has the tools they need to participate in democracy and assume responsibility for their own life. We want to strengthen the creative sector by improving the opportunities to develop small businesses and by increasing influence at the workplace.

Equal Opportunities for all

People have different prerequisites to play an active role in society. One important factor is the different prerequisites to get an education. Today, there is a biased social recruitment where people with a foreign background and from non-academic families are underrepresented in higher education. The education system must provide children and adolescents in the risk area with greater and better thought out resources. The education system should not be regarded as a cost, but as an investment. The losers today are the individuals who are excluded from society. Society is becoming increasingly brutalised by widespread exclusion and impoverished since important human contributions are lost.

The basic problem is that traditional economy and social planning is allowed to take place at the expense of human and cultural values. We want to change this. The economy and social planning should serve the human and cultural values on which society should be based.

Research – a Prerequisite for Sustainable Development

An important prerequisite for investing in education is being able to reap the benefits of a good education system. Universities and research must have a central position in society and preserve their independence and critical attitude. The basic free and curiosity-driven research needs to be strengthened. Basic research must be one of the universities' main tasks. The State is responsible for financing and guaranteeing the independence of research. Equality should prevail at all levels within universities. Research will always have a key role in the work for sustainable development of society. The need-driven research needs to be reinforced and the opportunities and incentives to start up companies and commercialise research results and innovations must be increased. Universities should therefore receive a share of the rights to research results.

A functioning interplay between research, the needs of society and the wishes of business and industry needs to be developed. Good contacts are required between universities and business and industry. To be able to transform to sustainable development, knowledge must be built up through an active research policy. In the future, political reforms and investments should, to a greater degree, be accompanied by research investments. In that way, it will be possible to evaluate investments in a scientific manner and to create a good basis for future decisions. It is important to employ an ethical assessment of research in order to extend and stimulate the debate on research ethics, and to protect people's identity.

Research to cure and prevent illness needs to strengthen its interdisciplinary and patient-related clinical parts. Within research in general, attention should be given to the gender aspect. Research must be based on everybody's preconditions.

Viable Development in the Entire Country

A prerequisite for development and equal opportunities for all is to create viable development in the entire country. Green towns and a living countryside go hand in hand. This is based on the fact that we can see people's will and ability to develop assets in the local environment. A system to equalize the differences between economically strong and weaker municipalities is necessary.

Rural development groups, organisations and companies must be able to play an active role in the local work. We want to develop business by lowering payroll tax in regions with low enterprise levels. Government bodies and institutions, county administrative boards, county councils and municipal authorities should always strive to decentralise their activities from central towns or major urban areas. It must be possible to use profits from hydroelectric power, forests and mineral ores to develop the regions producing these resources. In order to halt the depopulation of certain areas in the countryside, we want to give municipalities and regions the right to introduce obligations for active ownership of agricultural and forestry properties and housing in regard to new purchases. By means of lower taxes on locally owned properties, we want to make it easier for people to remain in attractive areas where the assessed value has increased significantly.

Green urban policy involves lower energy consumption, transport systems with lower environmental impact and reduced consumption of resources. Housing, workplaces, childcare facilities, schools and shops should be close to each other in order to reduce traffic. Shops selling food, clothes, appliances and other everyday items should not be built in industrial areas, alongside motorways or in the outskirts of cities where it is difficult to travel except by car. Proximity also creates greater safety and increased concern for those who live in the area. Green areas and nature areas should be an integrated part of the urban environment to provide everyone with the opportunity to experience outdoor life, nature and fresh air. The problems of noise, emissions and safety created by traffic in cities must be solved. More people must be able to walk, cycle and travel by public transport in a safe and efficient manner. Therefore, certain parts of urban areas should be car-free. Dedicated lanes for buses, modern light rail networks and increased investments in rail transport are examples of methods to create car-free cities.

Flexible Education

Our view on education and schools is based on all children and adolescents being fundamentally active and creative individuals, with the prerequisites to become solidary, responsible and

affectionate adults. School should support pupils and students in their personal and social development as well as provide them with knowledge and skills. Therefore, we base our policy on the perspective of the children, adolescents and students themselves. Critical, independent thinking, curiosity and a thirst for knowledge constitute the basis for each individual's opportunities to grow and develop.

Education for Life

The entire education system, from pre-school to university, has a key role in the work to create a long-term sustainable society. To be able to survive as a species on Earth, humans must develop an ecological awareness and respect for nature. This should permeate all topics. As social beings, we must also understand the historical events that have formed our societies, and be given the opportunity to learn about our cultural history. Aesthetical and other practical work should permeate schools. The working environment in school will be positively affected if students are given different opportunities to express themselves. Schools must in earnest allocate time to further their students' harmonious development. It is a question of working, in a conscious manner, with feelings, empowerment, respect for others and oneself, conflict management and democracy. We want curricular goals for the above areas to be set as well. School should be characterised by a cognitive approach based on discussions using the individual's own thoughts and experience as the foundation for all learning.

Diversity within Child Care

There should be a diversity of activities for children that provide every individual with the optimum conditions to develop. In pre-school, the basis should be the children's own premises, starting from free play and respect for the child's security and integrity. Active equality work should be carried on in pre-school to counteract fixed gender roles. The size of the child groups and number of staff in pre-school should be based on an assessment of the children's best interest rather than on financial considerations. We want to create opportunities for parents to stay at home during the child's first years, to let the child be in a family day nursery or to provide them with a place at a private or municipal pre-school that meets the child's needs. Municipalities should be given greater opportunities to support alternative forms of child care. Parents who want to be at home with their children should be given increased financial opportunities to do so. One way of doing this could be giving each parent who wants to be at home with their child in the first three years the right to receive remuneration equal to subsistence income.

Schools with Pupil Power, without Grades

We are working for a flexible school start with the opportunity for the child to start school between the age of six and eight. School should be a meeting place, a workplace and a social forum; it should promote tolerance and provide each individual with the best possible prerequisites to make choices in life. Therefore, it must be given the necessary resources to meet a complex reality. Special schools are needed for the students in need of the support provided by these schools. Mother tongue education is a self-evident right.

Boys and girls are treated differently in school. Therefore, it is very important that schools draw up equality plans in order to counteract inequality among students. In addition, all school personnel should receive continuing training as regards disabilities, equality, antiracism, mobbing and the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual persons (LGBT competence). All schools should have functioning pupil welfare work.

School should be a zone free from commercial interests. No sponsored textbooks should be used. Schools' international commitment should increase as exchanges between countries and knowledge about the whole world is an important task for school.

Every compulsory school should be governed democratically by those concerned with the school's activities, in the form of a committee consisting of staff, pupils and parents.

In order to provide equal opportunities for all students to make use of their education, school meals should be guaranteed, free of charge, for all students at compulsory schools and upper secondary education.

School should guarantee all students nutritious food irrespective of the students' ethical choice or medical requirements. School food should be organic.

Better than Grades

We want to end the current grading system. The grading system is a significant contributory factor to stress and is not a fair and objective system to reflect the individual's capabilities. A developed and improved system is needed to provide students and parents with information about knowledge level, development and future prospects. Therefore, we want to replace grades with an assessment system that provides a more all-round picture. This can also function as a selection instrument to university. Until grades have been abolished, we want to give students the right to have their grades reassessed.

Upper Secondary Schools

We want upper secondary school to be based on diversity, freedom of choice and autonomy. All upper secondary schools should have boards with a student majority. We welcome upper secondary school progressing towards greater decentralisation of responsibility. We want all subjects in upper secondary school to be more adapted to the respective specialisations in school, for example through apprenticeship training and education in skilled trades. Apprenticeship training should be available as an alternative to the ordinary upper secondary school. Adequate education in the working environment and safety should be offered to all students and apprentices. Theoretical and practical knowledge must therefore be given the same value and allocated the same amount of time. The choice of specialisation should be made by the student him/herself. Therefore, admission to upper secondary school should preferably be open to all who are qualified. Upper secondary school should be dimensioned primarily in accordance with the students' choices and interests.

Diversity of Schools

The individual school should be given greater freedom to develop its own goals and teaching methods. To create confidence in such pedagogical freedom, the local goals must be supplemented by clear national guidelines and goals. We believe that independent schools and municipal schools should be subject to the same economic conditions, regulatory framework and supervision. We want a variety of different organisational forms and pedagogical specialisations in school. Independent schools have contributed to greater diversity and freedom of choice, and are a positive addition to the Swedish educational system.

We believe that organisational form and ownership affect the school's contents and quality to the utmost degree. We want supervision of all schools to be expanded, both of municipal and independent schools. Everyone should be confident that schools comply with the regulations and objectives laid down. We want to counteract independent schools being operated to make a profit. Independent schools should not be allowed to charge their students. We promote small and autonomous schools and safeguard small schools in the countryside.

Life-Long Learning

In a knowledge society, people must be able to learn, teach and re-learn. A constantly developing society needs a well-functioning higher education system. The task of universities should be to spread knowledge to students and society and to continually analyse and develop the common knowledge mass. Higher education should be permeated by an interdisciplinary perspective to promote holistic thinking. The objective of education should be to enable students to take responsibility, critically consider and solve problems. Student influence in higher education must be strengthened. Compulsory student union membership is an obsolete form of collective affiliation that should be abolished. At the same time, students' rights must be protected by law. The socially biased recruitment to university education must be broken. We want to develop the opportunities to study practical vocational education courses at college level.

Those who study not only contribute to their own development, but also to society in general. Therefore, we want to, in the long run, introduce a student wage. As a step on the way, we want to change the regulatory framework governing financial support for students to increase the part of the financial support paid out as a grant. The financial support system for students should be characterised by flexibility and greater opportunity for the individual to control his/her own life situation. It should be possible to study for as long as a person wishes to and when he/she wishes to do so. Flexibility should also mean that the student him/herself chooses how much to borrow up to a certain total sum. The social safety net for students must be based on a comprehensive view of the students' situation and make it possible to study as a mature student. Educational associations, municipal adult education and folk high schools also fill an increasingly important function for life-long learning. These organisations must be flexible to be able to meet different requirements and different groups. Therefore, they must be guaranteed both freedom and resources. Students should also be included in the social security systems. No fees should be charged for college or university studies.

The Mental Environment

The society in which we live constitutes, together with our own thoughts, the mental environment. Today, our mental environment is filled with advertising, commercialisation and fixation on appearance. Time has become a scarce commodity. At the same time, many people in our part of the world spend more time consuming media than with their family and friends. Children have come to be brought up by TV. Many adolescents and women, and men too, have eating disorders as a result of the fixation on appearance. Enforced gender roles affect both men and women. Self-harm and the consumption of antidepressants are increasing among adolescents.

We want to expand the environmental debate to include the mental environment, which sets the limits for our creative ability. People must take back the right to their thoughts and integrity. Political tools, such as restricting advertising, introducing an advertising tax, introducing regulations against the pornification and sexualisation of the public space can be used to address

the destruction of the mental environment. The problems that arise as a result of pornofication, sexualisation and violence in the media should also be discussed in schools, which together with public service have a responsibility for making people aware of how they are affected by media and advertising.

Media Diversity

A knowledge society with participatory democracy requires objective information, active societal analysis and investigative journalism. A rich media supply must assume responsibility for keeping an open and broad debate on important issues in society. Today, the media industry is changing ever faster and conflicts of interest arise between legal rights and integrity, both as regards ownership and supply. The media groups that control the media supply on a global basis and in Sweden now function like multinational companies. As a consequence, there is a search for profit at the expense of quality official information. Stronger legislation against the concentration of ownership is important to guarantee diversity of views and freedom of expression in society. Public service should have a clear responsibility for quality and preferably be financed by a general media fee. We want to supplement public service with a nationwide newspaper. Ethical standards and consideration to children should be upheld by a powerful broadcasting commission and through viewer and listener influence.

We have a positive outlook on the emergence of a new media landscape and new media. Therefore, we want press subsidies to be increased and also cover new media. At the same time, we want to work to increasingly redistribute press subsidies to small and newly started media, at the expense of the major media. In order to finance this, we want to raise advertising tax. In particular, we hope that new media can help change the unequal image of men and women today being portrayed within the media world. The media should not be occupied by sexualised pictures. Pictures of men and women in advertising, in TV and in magazines must be equal and free from discrimination. One way to do this is to challenge the media industry to tighten, modernise and clarify the ethical rules for the press, radio and TV. If the players cannot manage to do so themselves, society must be able to use press subsidies and other control mechanisms to stimulate an equal and equitable range of media without compromising freedom of expression.

Flourishing Culture Life

An active dialogue and an active exchange of knowledge require a flourishing cultural life. A large part of the existing culture pays its own way in the form of charges, sales, ticket revenue and similar. We think that the part of culture that has difficulties bearing its costs should be eligible for financial support from the public sector. The dynamic force and freedom of culture is however best promoted if operated completely independent from commercial interests, detached from the public sector. We want society to find ways to achieve this. Municipalities should provide support to activities such as music and culture schools; and free theatre and dance groups. Regions and county councils are responsible for their theatres, music institutions, libraries and museums. The State organises the overall culture activities through other theatres, museums and music institutions. For cultural workers to be able to make a living from their profession, we want to improve their financial conditions. Our point of departure is that a rich range of culture needs classic institutions, independent groups and all the people who enjoy being culturally active. To counteract commercial interests taking over independent culture, clear-cut rules must be applied to all sponsoring. When publicly-owned premises are being built, renovated

and extended, at least one per cent of the costs should be allocated to aesthetic design. VAT on books should be kept low and completely abolished in the long run.

Cultural Education

School is our largest cultural institution. We want more culture in compulsory schools and in upper secondary schools. We also want to encourage independent music and culture schools. All adolescents, regardless of family income and place of residence, should have the opportunity to play an instrument, sing, dance, make films, make handicraft, paint, write or act in their free time. The cultural activities carried out by local non-governmental organisations strengthen the local community. Folk music and dancing provide meeting places that stimulate participation. Because of this, the organisers' conditions should be improved. Society's contribution to culture should be allocated to fulfil equal opportunities and integration targets.

Swedish Film

Film is the art form that, next to music, reaches the greatest number of people. Despite this, Swedish film production is seriously underfinanced. In order to provide a contrast to the entirely commercial films and to promote breadth and quality, greater public sector support for Swedish film production is desirable. Equality should permeate the film sector, which can be promoted through, among other things, the allocation of financial funds. Scandinavian production of children's films is unique in Europe and must be given beneficial conditions.

Sport and Physical Exercise

In Sweden, there is a broad organisational base with many voluntary associations that organise meaningful leisure activities for children, adolescents and adults. It is important that voluntary associations can continue their democratic work to provide places where people can meet on equal terms. Physical exercise is an important element in creating good health and well-being for people. Sport is the largest popular movement in Sweden and the funds received by sport organisations must be more equally distributed between the genders to, among other things, give women's and girls' sport better conditions and financial support than is the case today. The resources received by the sport movement should be channelled primarily to sport activities for adolescents and sports for all. These activities include sport for the disabled and sports for exercise.

Outdoor activities have great significance for people's health and well-being. People have a basic need for both physical activities and contact with nature. We are working to increase the number of recreation areas and to make them more accessible. School should provide the opportunity for physical activity every day. We are working to include physical activities in more lessons. Learning and creativity improves with time spent outdoors.

Libraries and Museums

Well-equipped and publicly financed libraries should guarantee the general public access to a wide cultural supply. Borrowing books should be free of charge. The existence and quality of libraries should be guaranteed by law. Buildings, memorials and other cultural environments, both in urban and rural areas, must be preserved and protected for the future. To secure the existence, quality and accessibility of museums with a local and regional character, these should be given government subsidies. Admission to publicly financed museums should be free of charge. The contribution made by women in history is often invisible in our museums, and we

therefore want to work for the setting up of a museum or knowledge centre for women history. Our aim is for women history to be a natural part of the activities of all museums. All museums have a duty to meet stipulated goals for equality and equal opportunities.

ECOCYCLE ECONOMY – AN ECONOMY WHERE PEOPLE MATTER

"Only after the last tree has been cut down. Only after the last river has been poisoned. Only after the last fish has been caught. Then will you find that money cannot be eaten" predicted the Cree Indians. We want to prove them wrong by putting environmental and human goals before strictly economic ones. The ecocycle economy, our economic system, is based on people's creativity, small businesses and entrepreneurship. In this chapter, we explain how it is possible to strengthen consumer power, how worker influence can be increased and what social economy is.

People and the Environment before Short-Term Profit

It is really quite simple - economic theories should not take precedence over people and the environment. The main objective of the economy should be to satisfy people's needs, while preserving good prerequisites for future generations. The system should guarantee that nature's diversity is preserved and that people have the freedom to develop on their own premises. If this is to be possible, we must realise that economic theories are not value-free, and can never replace political standpoints.

Fair and Democratic Economy

A precondition for an economy based on environmental and human requirements is that it is based on solidarity ideals. We do not accept the increasing income gaps, which are growing with the internationalisation of the economy. An equitable distribution and a functioning welfare system should guarantee a basic level of security for all. The economic system should be globally sustainable. People must not utilise natural resources in a way that reduces the freedom of poor people in the world and future generations. People must learn to live in a way in which everyone can live, now and in the future.

The free flow of capital, statutory within the EU, creates major problems. With the deregulation of the credit and currency markets, the amount of capital moved around in the global currency market has grown explosively. Speculation against different countries' currencies has contributed to far-reaching crises in many countries and drastically reduced the room to manoeuvre for democratically-elected governments. Transnational companies have enormous power to pit countries' governments against each other in the fight for jobs. The major pension funds in the western world also contribute to the speculation merry-go-round.

We work for a tax on currency transactions. We also want greater public control of pension funds to safeguard sound investments that can create jobs and contribute to ecologically, socially and economically sustainable development. Our long-term goal is an interest-free economy.

To guarantee a democratic and sustainable economy, the ecocycle economy emphasises small-scale over large-scale; decentralisation of power over centralisation; and self-reliance over vulnerability and dependence. Self-administration through small-scale ownership and increased employee influence are important components of our society. Employees should have the right of first refusal when a company or a unit of a company over a certain size is to be sold or closed down. We want to gradually democratise the economy and increase personal responsibility by means of this and other methods to stimulate employee ownership and cooperative enterprise.

The production of goods and services should to a large extent be local for local markets with short transports. We want to reduce the concentration of economic power by giving consumers real insight into and control over the production and trade in goods and services. Public sector companies should follow ethical and environmental guidelines. State pension funds should operate according to ethical and environmental guidelines, and be active at shareholders' meetings in the companies in which they own shares.

An Economy out of Balance

Today, the economy is almost ready to burst. As a result of the constant striving for material growth, short-term profit interests and excessive consumption, we are now standing on the brink of an ecological disaster. At the same time, people's vitality is being burnt out and the gaps between people are increasing, both locally and globally. The combustion of fossil fuels, discharge of chemicals and heavy metals, and reckless utilisation of natural resources mean that we are drastically reducing the opportunities to live a good life. An economy that is continuously producing more articles to satisfy artificial consumerism cannot survive on a planet with limited resources. Human resources are being overused and people burnt out in the fight for increased profit margins. Only a few people are able to benefit from the economic values of an ever accelerating economy, while most people are left behind. This applies not least on a global level where the decreasing supply of resources is currently the primary cause of war and conflicts. The rich countries of the world do not hesitate to defend their position by means of an unjust world order. This world order creates famine and is manifested in the wars for resources that the poor part of the world's population is exposed to.

Economy for the Ecocycle Society

Our economic policy is based on challenging the patterns that run the economy today. In an ecocycle society, we shape the economy on the basis of ecological principles, where people are not permitted to exploit nature's finite resources. We believe in the concept of environmental space, which means an equalisation of the environmental impact between countries and between people. It is not right to force a huge environmental debt on future generations. The present apportionment, where 20 per cent of the Earth's population consumes over 80 per cent of the natural resources, is unsustainable. The rich countries must therefore significantly reduce their consumption of scarce natural resources and reduce the extent of their environmental impact.

Today, corporate goals are based on the requirement for profit. The responsibility for people, the environment and natural resources is pushed into the background. We want to combat this with powerful market-based instruments and tightened legislation. We want strict application of the laws that dictate that the polluter should bear the costs of his/her discharges and emissions, that producers should be liable for the environmental impact of their products and that dangerous substances should be replaced by less dangerous ones. Environmental taxes, environmental charges, the trade in emission rights, deposit and return systems, environmental support and subsidies are examples of market-based instruments that we want to use to a great extent in the transformation of society. The basic idea is that what is good for people and the environment should be inexpensive, what is bad should be expensive and what is dangerous should be forbidden. An important strategy is a green tax system where taxes on labour are lowered while taxes on energy, raw material and environmentally-hazardous emissions are raised. This will provide financial incentives to halt environmental degradation, at the same time as new jobs can be created. Reduced employers' social security contributions will create better conditions for

areas which are important in a knowledge society with participatory democracy, such as education, culture and care. The service sector, commerce and health service will also benefit from lower employers' social security contributions.

Basic Security for Everyone

We believe that everyone is entitled to basic economic security. Society's safety net must be improved in order for no one to fall through it. In the long run, we want to coordinate most of today's different systems into a simpler system, to avoid the arbitrary and unjust differences between different systems. All those without an income should be guaranteed assistance on which it is possible to live, irrespective of their previously income, and irrespective of the reason why they do not have an income. For those on low incomes, assistance should be reduced by an appropriate percentage of the income. This system can be called a form of civic wage or basic income. This basic security reinforces the individual's self-confidence and confidence in the future and creates solidarity among people.

Entrepreneurs Create

The backbone of a green economy, as well as in our democracy and society in general, is people's creativity and commitment. Earth's resources are limited, while people's desires seem to be endless. These endless desires can never be satisfied materially, which is why we believe in a business policy that creates more than merely economic value. Being able to develop an idea into a small business is central. It is particularly important to support women's opportunities to start up businesses. The local and regional economy can become a counterweight to globalisation. This requires cooperation between urban areas, regions and rural areas. New services and production methods, environmentally-friendly technological solutions, local knowledge and involvement must be supported to contribute to regional development. Local and regional business can promote and provide services and food close to consumers. In each region, plans to reinforce the local element in the economy must be drawn up as a collaborative effort between elected bodies, the local business community and local associations. Our policy is aimed at supporting small and medium sized businesses to develop. In our vision, priority should first and foremost be given to cooperative companies with a clear social approach. The development of small and medium sized enterprises in Sweden should be characterised by a clear ambition to produce goods and services that meet actual needs.

Small and medium sized enterprises are often flexible and adapt to new solutions while being part of their local community. This is where most jobs are created and the real consumer-oriented services can be found. We want to change the law on public procurement to fully implement local autonomy. It must be possible to act in solidarity both with the environment, the poor and the local population, without legislation creating any obstacles. Society must be able to stop the development towards increased concentration in the market where a small number of major companies are in control. The competitive situation must continually be controlled with the aid of tightened legislation on competition and adequate monitoring. State-owned companies, such as Vattenfall, should be forerunners within the environmental field. To increase personal responsibility in trade and industry, systems should be developed that makes it possible to force major shareholders to assume liability for a company's offence against the environment, against its employees and against consumers. Society should be able to impose ethical standards on the largest companies. Unreasonable golden parachutes and bonus programmes should be prohibited.

In general, better support is needed to protect innovators and inventors. Patent law is an important support for these groups. However, in certain fields, such as gene research and computer software, patent law can involve problems since there are ethical or other reasons to limit patent law in such fields. If Sweden is to retain its prominent position as a country that takes advantage of new solutions, a change in attitude is required where investments are being made also in new and untested ideas.

Common Responsibility

The public sector has an important role to play as a part of our common welfare. It provides the basis for and supports other parts of society. Care services, schooling and health services should primarily be publicly and solidary financed. Health care, education, child care and care of the elderly should not be controlled on the basis of a simplistic competitive and result-oriented philosophy that risks trapping people between society's responsibilities and economic profit interests.

Social Economy

The social economy includes businesses that have a democratic organisation, are cooperatively owned and that put social objectives before profit interests. Politics should in different ways strengthen this part of civil society. We believe in broad popular involvement. The social economy is therefore an increasingly important alternative, both to the traditionally private trade and industry and to publicly-operated activities: It is an economy that encourages businesses that have social objectives, are based on democratic values, but are organisationally independent of the public sector. These could include the provision of care for substance abusers, adult education or support to business owners.

Less bureaucracy is required to make it easier for social companies, cooperatives and economic associations to build up equity. The social economy can also be strengthened by greater visibility and procurement on the basis of social criteria. One of the social economy's main advantages is that it can break the social exclusion many people experience. The social economy can develop solutions where people feel needed, while becoming an important part of welfare. This approach is based on the conviction of people's involvement and equal value, irrespective of whether they are wage earners or not. Care services, schooling and health services should be guaranteed sufficient resources to provide good quality in a humane environment. With security and shorter working hours, it will be natural for people to do things for their neighbours and contribute to their local community. A functioning general public insurance scheme is important to provide the security required.

The informal economy consists of the work that is not rewarded in the traditional sense, such as looking after one's own children and relatives, working in voluntary organisations or with independent cultural activities. The basic view is that people can and will make socially useful contributions, both as wage earners and through work in the informal economy.

The common responsibility not only consists of paying tax. The welfare system must rest on several sets of foundations, publicly financed as well as through people's own efforts. Today, society's resources could be increased through higher taxes, but this is limited in the long-term. We want to support a development that finds alternatives to the solutions of the planned economy and private capitalism in regard to people's needs.

Time to Live

Participation in society and contributions for friends, relatives and neighbours take time. Time is probably the modern person's most scarce resource. For environmental reasons, economic development must mean more leisure time rather than increased material consumption. The present system, where people become ill from a workload that is too high, while other people are suffering because of unemployment, is a total waste of resources. Therefore, we work to reduce regular working hours to 30 hours a week. For the same reasons, we want to develop the mid-life sabbatical leave reform, which makes it possible for an employee to take leave of absence with payment from the unemployment benefit society while, during the same period, someone who is unemployed replaces him/her temporarily. Everyone should also have the right to reduced working hours and to work part-time. We believe that overtime must be restricted and that exemptions for major overtime work should be an exception. The involuntary and unpaid overtime carried out with increased demands on employees must be fought. We want everyone to have stimulating work.

The aim of our reforms is to create conditions for people to fill their lives with other values than solely earning a living. Society's structures, systems and standards must not be one-sidedly developed to satisfy people's roles as wage earners. We want people to be able to build self-esteem and self-respect on considerably broader basis.

Better Working Environment

In a knowledge society, the value of modern companies often rests with the employees' knowledge. At the same time as hierarchies have been demolished at many workplaces and made way for own initiatives and own responsibilities, competition has become tougher. We see increased pressure in the workplace, more insecure jobs and higher requirements imposed on individuals. Society must counteract that this process leads to stress, burnout syndrome, early retirement and people being permanently excluded from the labour market. Therefore, stronger labour organisations, nationally as well as internationally, security of employment and better working environment are required.

We want to improve the working environment by removing sources of risk in the workplace.

Repetitive strain injuries can be avoided through changed physical working environment. Psychosocial occupational conditions such as stress, burnout syndrome and mobbing should be placed on a par with physical occupational injuries. Employees must also be given real influence over their working situation. Work rotation, teamwork and autonomous groups create a better working environment. With a constantly increasing service sector and greater utilisation of modern information technology, the conditions are in place for creating new ways to organise work. Working from home can give people greater opportunities to choose where they want to live, and spread jobs throughout the country.

Discrimination is a major working environment problem in Sweden. Discrimination affects women, disabled people, older people and people with a foreign background. This discrimination results in lower wages and poorer opportunities for promotion. As a consequence of discrimination, ideas and entrepreneurial spirit that can develop the economy are inhibited.

Today, society is losing huge economic value as a result of discrimination. To counteract discrimination, we want clearer and simpler legislation.

An Open Society

The labour shortage Europe will be facing in the next decades requires a global approach. It is not sustainable to talk about the need for more workers while borders are being closed for those fleeing from war, persecution, environmental degradation and poverty. Today, people are instead being exploited illegally in the labour market and increasing numbers are being forced to live without proper papers and permits. These people end up in a legal grey area where they are contributing to society, but at the same time not being able to benefit from society's fundamental welfare. Traditional rights for employees and collective agreements are being challenged. Therefore, we want to give permanent residence permits by means of a one-off amnesty to people who are in Sweden illegally. At the same time, we want to open the door for labour immigration. People who come here to work, start businesses or study should not be excluded. This is an important part of the work for a more equitable and solidary world. We have known for a long time that the most effective form of aid goes from immigrants to their families, relatives and friends in their former homelands.

Consumer Power

The power of consumers to make the economy globally and environmentally sustainable must not be underestimated. Consumers should therefore have a key role in doing this by being provided with good information. We work for laws that guarantee full consumer information, strong consumer organisations and clear rights for consumers. Consumers should be able to assess whether a product is produced in a morally acceptable way from a fair trade, animal rights and environmental perspective. We believe that stronger protection for consumers also needs to be introduced for public services such as care services, schooling and health services, where at present citizens often lack the opportunity to make demands. We also believe that it is important to introduce quality and health controls of goods and services. The public sector should be able to make use of its consumer power by imposing demands in regard to public procurement.

Advertising often weakens the consumers' ability to make independent and informed choices. Advertising readily plays on people's uncertainty and emotions instead of providing objective product information. Today's consumer society is kept alive by created and artificial needs. Advertising also often favours large and financially powerful companies at the expense of smaller ones. This is why we want to restrict the extent of advertising and counteract unsolicited advertising. Advertising aimed at children under the age of 12 should be prohibited. Public service should be free from advertising.

Sustainable Development

The ecocycle economy means that the present consumption frenzy and constant growth fetishism will be steered towards sustainable development. Our ideas are based on the insight that the economy is a wider concept than money alone. The economy concerns many aspects of people's lives: physical and mental health, a good living environment, living forests, lakes and seas, fresh air, clean water and biological diversity. Not all values can be converted into figures and given a monetary value, which is why pure calculations must never be an aim for the economy in themselves, but merely a tool.

Growth in its conventional meaning is neither possible nor desirable, there must however be different economic measures and indicators for us to know in which direction society is developing. The current unilateral focus on growth calculated as Gross Domestic Product, GDP, should be replaced by subtle indicators that portray the real situation for people, animals and nature. The consequences for the environment and people should be analysed before decisions are made.

EQUAL RIGHTS - RIGHT TO GROW ON THE BASIS OF ONE'S OWN PREMISES

Issues of equal rights are concerns of Greens in all countries. Many of our sister parties have been founded by movements that have been fighting for, for example, sexual equality. In Sweden, there is an active network for the rights of disabled people and an active Saami policy. In this chapter, you can read about our work for feminism and means to stop discrimination and racism.

Quality of Life

A positive attitude to life is a central theme in Green politics. It is on the basis of our love for life that we want to create good conditions for the next and future generations, to create more time for things other than waged labour and to increase involvement in society. In order for everyone to have a good quality of life, everyone must have real opportunities to develop as the unique individuals they are. Everyone must have an inviolable right to live their own life without being inhibited by discrimination or prejudice. There must not be any mechanisms that shut people out, and differences in economic and social living conditions must be counteracted.

Equal rights are about equal opportunities, obligations and rights – political, economic and social. In addition to people being equal before the law, the principle of equal rights should apply in school, in the workplace and in all other areas of society. The solidary welfare policy and the participatory democracy we advocate are important in this respect, but not sufficient, to create understanding among people. An understanding and realisation of life opportunities are based on much more than this. There must be more self-reliance and less patronization, more positive recognition of our surrounding environment and less egoism, more confidence in local and civil initiatives and less central concentration of power.

The Powerful and the Powerless

In Sweden as in the world in general, the economy gives people different preconditions. Economic differences determine what power people have over their own lives. Uneven economic distribution brings about a balance of power where the rich have better opportunities than the poor. The imbalance appears at all levels, in the housing market, at work, in politics, in education and on a global level where the rich countries' policies lead to widespread poverty.

Categorising people in working class and bourgeoisie is an obsolete way of analyzing the gaps. A reason for this is that there are many kinds of differences, of which power over production is just one. The economic gaps in our society are linked to social affiliation and background. Gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, education and housing set the conditions for who has the power in society. Those who are in power use their own group as the norm and thereby point out other groups as deviating. In this way, structures emerge where certain groups get to act as a standard for the rest of humanity. This results in gaps between people where those who are economically powerful are favoured at the expense of the vulnerable; the Western World at the expense of the Third World; men at the expense of women, educated at the expense of uneducated and so on through different patterns where these power arrangements interplay with each other.

Politics Combating the Gaps in Society

Our programme leads to reduced gaps by the decentralisation of power, democratisation of the workplace, protection against discrimination, education and housing guarantees, peace and global justice. We want political decisions always to be justifiable from the perspective of the vulnerable in society. We therefore believe in social justice and a basic security for all.

Combating Racism and Xenophobia

Xenophobia is something that most often affects other people than those in power. The most evident manifestation is racially-motivated acts of violence and extremism, manifestations that must be combated by means of a functioning judicial system and increased legal protection. This extremism is a symptom of deeper structural discrimination in society. These structures must be combated by counteracting discrimination and promoting equality. Support must be given to the victims of racism and other discriminatory acts, and the victims' families. People's right to flee from oppression and persecution, the right to seek and be granted asylum and the right to live and work wherever they want to are fundamental for the Green resistance to racism and other forms of oppression. When we live in a way in which we know that the poor of the world cannot; when we accept war against certain dictators while we embrace others; when we accept an economic system that means that tens of thousands die of hunger every day; it is the result of a policy based on acceptance of a racist world order. If racism is to be completely eradicated, a fundamental change in society is required, where the system that depletes the resources of the poor part of the world is rejected.

Active Integration Policy

In the same way as racism permeates the entire world order, xenophobia, fear and racism can be found in the whole of society in the form of prejudice or unconscious discrimination. An active policy against discrimination and segregation is required. If people never meet across ethnic boundaries, it is easy to nurture prejudices against those who are perceived as being different. We therefore believe in a multicultural society where people and cultures meet. We believe that these meetings in themselves suppress xenophobia. We also believe in antidiscrimination as an effective form of integration work. Not least in the housing field, within leisure policies and in the labour market there is a need to counteract discrimination and segregation. Segregation is often due to political decisions or the inability of politicians to act. Focused work must be carried out across the entire political field to create multiculturalism and give people the opportunity to meet people from a different ethnic background. Fundamentally, it is a question of trying to influence people's actions in a way that brings about a change in attitude. Only then will we be able to carry on a continuous dialogue about discrimination in all areas of society. The fight against discrimination and prejudice must be carried out everywhere. We believe in integration where both the special characteristics of indigenous Swedes and newly immigrated Swedes are recognised and respected.

Respect for Minorities

The same respect that applies to new Swedes must also apply to Sweden's recognised national minorities: the Roma, the Saami, the Jews, the Swedish Finns and the Tornedalers. The Saami are an indigenous people who, in accordance with several international conventions, have special rights which Sweden must guarantee. We believe that Sweden should sign the ILO (the International Labour Organisation) Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.

Rights of the Disabled

The overall objective for people with disabilities is equal rights, obligations and opportunities. Our view is that it is primarily society itself that creates handicaps. By this we mean that inaccessibility in society is the real obstacle for some citizens and not the reduction in the individual's functions. Lack of accessibility implies a particular type of discrimination and must therefore be met by specific legislation.

Legislation should always impose requirements for accessibility, including the right to demand reconstruction of buildings and the right for disability organisations to appeal against planning and building issues. The mentally disabled are a particularly vulnerable group. Their disability is not always visible and tangible, and the existing legislation is deficient in relation to their special needs. In addition, prejudice and negative attitudes still exist in regard to psychological problems and mental illness. We want to reinforce the legislation in several ways, including the introduction of the right to daily activities and personal representatives.

The basis must be to build on what is healthy and that people with disabilities want and can live an active and participatory life. Society should be accessible for all people with so-called hidden disabilities. This means that dyslexics, the partially-sighted and people with an intellectual disability should be able to take part of public information. Electro sensitive people should have rights just as other disabled people and be able to participate in society. Municipalities and county councils that do not meet stipulated targets for accessibility should risk heavy sanctions. The Swedish law on support and service for certain functionally disabled persons, the LSS Act, is an important piece of legislation that enables the disabled to participate in society on equal terms.

Children with disabilities must have access to the help needed. The correct support in regard to the individual's needs from an early stage means that the children later in life will be able to participate in society on equal terms with others. The interplay between school, medical care and other resources should be based on a comprehensive view on the child as an individual, not just on the disability.

In many instances, rehabilitation is a matter of cooperation between medical resources, training and everyday life. Municipalities and county councils must cooperate. The aim of municipalities must be for all disabled people to have a job or employment on the basis of their qualifications. Voluntary organisations and relatives are important cooperation partners.

Safeguarding the Rights of the Child

Children should have the same opportunities as adults to live a good life. No generation has the right to undermine the opportunities of future generations to live a good life. For many years, there has been a specific UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which Sweden has signed and promised to adhere to. Still, refugee children are being deported to face war and persecution, and sick children sent to countries where they cannot obtain treatment.

Not all children grow up in safe homes. We want to strengthen the rights of all children to have their basic needs met and incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law. In particular, we want to focus on support to children in families experiencing violence, drugs or mental illness. All municipalities should establish an action plan for children who have been subjected to sexual assault or abuse. In legal disputes involving children, the best interest of the child should be given priority and take preference over the interests of the adults involved.

Children should have the status of crime victims and their own representative, irrespective of the child's age, in disputes on care, residence and access rights. In particular, the child's legal protection must be reinforced if there is any suspicion of violence or sexual abuse. If the child is perceived as a victim of crime, protective measures can also be implemented earlier, including restraining orders.

Children should be entitled to all information available about their origins. The child's rights and opportunities to participate must also be protected. Participatory democracy also presupposes the participation of children. The number of adults in child care and schools must be sufficient to meet the children's needs. Our demands for decreased work hours also apply for school children. Investments in children and adolescents are not a socio-economic cost, but an investment in a better future. Reductions in activities that are important for the next generation bring about major costs in the form of greater insecurity later in life. To incorporate this view into politics, we want all political decisions to be made on the basis of a child impact assessment. Society's responsibility for children is for example assumed in the form of a child allowance. For redistribution policy reasons, we want to raise this significantly and tax it.

Combating Age Discrimination

Society's diversity should be reflected in people of different ages being able to mix at work, in their free time and in politics in a natural and respectful manner. Relations and the exchange of experience and knowledge across generational boundaries are important for both the young and the old. Young and old people are underrepresented in decision-making assemblies. Age discrimination in the labour market affects primarily older people, but can also hit young people hard. In both cases, society misses out on valuable experience. We therefore demand age discrimination to be prohibited in the same way as any other discrimination. This should of course not apply to age limits that are in place to protect children and adolescents, for example the age limits for purchasing alcohol. Older people's knowledge is a resource that is not sufficiently made use of. We therefore want to introduce flexible pension ages, with the option to take part pension from the age of 60. Hopefully, those who want to will be able to keep working longer than is the case today. This is an element of a perspective on life where the individual has greater freedom of choice to shape the course of life.

The Right to have a Faith, and the Right not to

Freedom of religion is a cornerstone in every democratic society and should also apply to those who do not adhere to any religion. Both religious and ethical life choices should be respected as long as they do not violate anyone else's freedoms or rights. We demand significantly greater support to children with a different religious opinion than that of their parents, for example through increased competence in school, social services and similar authorities. The State should not involve itself in the activities of religious societies, for example by administrating charges to religious societies or leaving the exercise of authority to religious societies. Municipal schools should not promote any specific religious belief. Specific measures are required to counteract anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other religious phobias.

Life without Gender Roles

Gender roles have evolved over a considerable amount of time, forcing men and women to live in a certain way, instead of developing into the individuals they want to be. Femininity and masculinity are social constructions that are enforced on all people. The fact that men and women

are treated differently, have different assumptions and different expectations of themselves is due to the prevailing gender roles created by the social environment, structures and society. We want people to be able to develop as individuals without being categorized in an oppressive manner. Norms that inhibit our creativity and our freedom to develop as individuals must be broken down.

Feminist Policy

For us, feminism is an awareness of patriarchal power structures and limiting gender roles. It is also a willingness to change the gender power order that currently inhibits economic, social and political equality. Women's capability, credibility and competence are questioned solely on the basis of their gender. Both men and women benefit from equality and feminism means emancipation for both sexes. Society is not equal and there is a sexual oppression that affects primarily women, but also men. Women receive lower wages than men for equal work, are oppressed in terms of their sexuality and are affected harder by means of comprehensive sexualisation and objectification. Fundamentally, it is a question of changing behaviour, attitudes and values. Therefore, we oppose the increasing sexualisation of the public space. Sexist advertising and other objectification of women and men should be prohibited. We want to take forceful action against pornography that is humiliating towards men and women. Prostitution should be combated by actions to help prostitutes and international cooperation to prevent the trafficking of women and children. We have a positive view on the prohibition against the purchase of sexual services.

Inequality is clearly manifested in men's violence against women. The violence is structurally conditioned and must be combated along with other forms of inequalities. Society must learn to deal better with violence in close relationships. This requires rapid, coordinated and consistent action from authorities and organisations together with individuals in connection with such offences. All staff involved in such cases at the police, prosecuting authorities and the courts should be trained in the reasons for, the mechanisms behind and how to deal with violence in close relationships. The National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence against Women, women's shelters and services for victims of crime carry out important work to support victims of violence and must therefore be given adequate resources to be able to carry on their activities. More effective measures are also needed towards perpetrators of sexual assaults.

We stand up for an abortion legislation based on the woman's right to her own body. Women must be given good information, advice and support. We want tougher measures against the sexual mutilation of women.

In an equal society, everyone has the same opportunities to do what they are committed to in their free time and in the labour market. Politics should be regulated in order for at least 40 per cent of each sex to be represented in all decision-making assemblies. We believe that both society as a whole and individuals gain from a labour market with an even sex ratio. It is important that equality work is started early; children need counter balances to the gender roles they are brought up into. Therefore, all teachers and personnel within the child care sector must undergo equality training before gaining their qualifications.

In an equal society, it is just as natural for fathers as for mothers to stay at home with their children. This can become a reality if parental leave is extended to at least 18 months divided into three parts, where one third goes to each parent or guardian and one third can be used by either

parent. The opportunity to transfer months between parents should be limited, but to the extent it should exist, it should also be possible to transfer months to other adults who are close to the child.

Queer Policy

Our sexual policy goes beyond creating specific rights for specific groups. Instead, we want to abolish heterosexual privileges. Therefore, we want the legislation to be completely gender neutral. There will not be special homosexual weddings – just weddings; no adoptions by homosexuals – just adoptions; and no bisexual relationships – just relationships. Today, homosexuals, bisexuals and everyone breaking the given norms for how men and women should be are discriminated against. We work for every individual to have the right to define their sexual orientation and their sexual identity and to choose with whom they want to live, regardless of gender. As a consequence, society's legal relationship forms will no longer be reserved for heterosexual relationships but offered to both same-sex as well as different-sex relationships. It also means that a woman's sexual orientation should not play any role for her access to artificial insemination, and that adoption agencies cannot discriminate against same-sex couples.

Society must take crimes with homophobic and transphobic motives more seriously than today. Preventative work must be strengthened.

Today, antiquated laws prevent people from making their life choices. We want everyone to be able to choose their name freely. We also want personal identity numbers and identity documents to be gender neutral.

Anti-Discrimination

The key to achieving equality in regard to gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation and age is anti-discrimination. Discrimination, being rejected for who you are, something you cannot influence, is one of the most offensive things a person can experience. Therefore, discrimination must be prevented and combated in all areas and at all levels of society. Also needed is an awareness of the fact that there are many power systems that interplay with each other. These are based on factors such as gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation and age. The most effective tool against discrimination would be a comprehensive regulation with separate ombudsmen. Coherent legislation would clarify that equal rights are a question of human rights. It should be a natural element of law to draw up equality plans, equal treatment plans and diversity plans in companies, institutions and authorities. The ombudsmen carry out important work by drawing attention to discrimination. The legislation in regard to persecution of ethnic groups should be broadened to include more groups than at present, for example disabled people and transpersons.

Until we reach a society where group affiliation is immaterial for how people are treated, positive discrimination as well as quotas can be useful tools; tools for breaking discriminatory structures and for ensuring that the composition of various bodies reflects the diversity of society. National and local governments should set a good example in regard to discrimination issues and introduce demands for anti-discrimination in all public procurement processes. We also work for local and global initiatives aiming to combat discrimination. More local independent anti-discrimination agencies are needed. In the same way there are conventions concerning discrimination against

women and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity within the UN, conventions should also be implemented in regard to discrimination on the basis of disability and sexual orientation.

ONE WORLD - IN PEACE AND JUSTICE

Obviously, the fight for human rights, democracy, justice and sustainable environmental policy not only concerns Sweden. The Green Party is a proud part of a growing solidarity movement and a global Green movement. Therefore, we want to present a vision of world citizenship, an idea for a just world and our work to strengthen the UN.

World Citizenship

Our policies do not stop at national borders. The rights we are working for in our part of the world are essentially universal. On a planet with limited resources, we are all dependent on each other. We have a joint responsibility for the state of the world. With joint responsibility follows common concerns. Therefore, we believe in world citizenship. People travel more, communicate across the globe and could feel closer to people with a similar background and similar views on the other side of the world than with citizens in their own country. World citizenship requires that everyone should have the right and opportunity to participate in issues concerning everyone on Earth. This requires an equalization and fair distribution of Earth's resources. All people must have their basic needs met.

Our party was founded out of the broad popular movements that for many years worked for peace, a healthy environment, equality and solidarity. Therefore, it goes without saying that we are working for peaceful conflict resolution, for disarmament and against nuclear weapons. We declare solidarity with those who are affected by famine, poverty and environmental degradation all over the world. The fight for universal human rights has always been at the heart of Green politics.

World citizenship means obligations. It entails an obligation to carry out an active foreign policy for environmental responsibility, self-determination, global justice, human rights, democracy and peace. Our vision is characterised by the indivisible value of human rights as well as the validity of international law in international relations. Global military disarmament is required for peaceful relations between the world's countries. The global civil society and peaceful conflict resolution must play a greater role in international politics. Only when this has been achieved, a more just world order can be based on solidarity and sustainable development. World citizenship is based on the individual's participation in the global context and the ability to see oneself as a part of humanity. True global politics are carried out directly by people who work for solidarity, consider global aspects in everyday matters, who act as human shields or who are peace activists. Foreign policy can never replace personal responsibility or direct action as a global political method.

Growing Solidarity Movement

The world is currently facing enormous challenges in the form of environmental degradation, poverty, population growth and military armament. More than one billion people live in extreme poverty; at the same time the wealthiest people in the world receive more and more resources. Famine and disease are a tangible reality for a large part of humanity. Armed conflicts, oppression and restricted civic and political rights inhibit many people's opportunities to live a life in freedom.

People all over the world are standing up in common protest as a reaction to injustices, campaigning for a new world order. The multinational companies and governments of the wealthy countries can no longer unilaterally set the global political agenda. A growing force of social movements, campaigning for solidarity, is challenging them. Global cooperation structures devoted to fair and sustainable development are gaining increasing support among people. All over the world, the solidarity movement and radical political forces are together building counterbalances against the economic power. Examples of this include forms of participatory democracy and strong local economies.

Solidarity Policy

We want Sweden to act together with the solidarity movement and with the world's poor. This means that Sweden cannot subordinate itself to the EU foreign policy. Sweden should act for and advocate global solidarity and a just world order. This should be done without any commitments to the interests of European or other major powers.

We want to intensify Baltic Sea cooperation. There is good reason for this since the countries around the Baltic Sea share many common problems such as the marine environment, overexploited fish resources and organised crime. The Nordic Council needs to be supplemented by a Baltic organisation in order to strengthen cooperation in the entire region. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe are other organisations that are important for ensuring that human rights are safeguarded in Europe.

We want to take initiatives to promote dialogues for peace where there are conflicts. We believe that Sweden should act to draw specific attention to problems facing Africa. The Western world has a historical debt to Africa. Africa was severely struck by colonialism and the national interests of various European countries. A special forceful global support for Africa is required to create economic resources to improve people's living conditions.

Development Cooperation and Debt Cancellation

Today, the rich world is living materially well on the global injustices perpetrated in history and still remaining in different forms. The rich world has a surplus while people in other parts of the world live in conditions that would never be accepted in rich countries. Sweden and other rich countries must change and adapt their way of life to a fair share of environmental space within which it is possible for all the people of the world to live. Sweden's allocation to development cooperation should total at least two per cent of Gross National Income, GNI, and Sweden should take global initiatives to make other well-off countries do the same. Sweden's development policy should be coherent. By this, we mean that Sweden cannot support polluting activities while working for sustainable development. Nor can Sweden export weapons to poor countries while working for peace. The objective of fair and sustainable global development must take precedence over short-term economic benefits for Swedish industry.

When cooperating with developing countries, it is important that the interests of the rich countries and their views on good living conditions are not allowed to dominate. The countries' and the local societies' own culture and democratically-made decisions must form the basis for development. The resource-wasting life style of the rich part of the world should not be a role model. Self-reliance and strong national and local democracy should therefore form the basis for Swedish development assistance policy. Each country should have the right to decide over its

own agricultural and food policy, provided that the surplus is not dumped in other countries. This is called food sovereignty. Each person's right to food is the main priority. Civil society in developing countries must be able to play a bigger role in development cooperation. The Green Party requires low administrative costs for development assistance.

For countries with high and unmanageable debt burdens, debts should be written off immediately, provided that the freed resources benefit the actual countries, which is not the case today. A large part of the global debts can be considered illegitimate since they were inherited from corrupt dictatorships. People's right to food, health care and education should always take precedence over the payment of loans. The developed countries also have a historical and ecological debt to the developing countries.

Municipal Foreign Policy

We want Swedish municipalities to be able to pursue an active foreign policy through international twin town arrangements, global campaigns and development assistance. In large parts of the world, the local arena has come to play an important role for justice, as a counterweight to the negative aspects of globalisation. A cooperation organisation for municipalities across the globe is emerging and should be supported. We want increased cooperation between municipalities in order for these to be able to create alternatives to the present global development. Part of global development assistance should be distributed via municipalities, in the same way as a larger part of the aid should be distributed via non-governmental organisations.

Feminist Global Policy

Women carry a particularly heavy burden in many parts of the world since they often have virtually all the responsibility for the home, children and agricultural production. In all development work, it is therefore necessary to pay attention to the prevailing gender power order. Gender analyses should be carried out and women's positions within politics and the economy must be strengthened. We want men to take greater responsibility for the collective situation. The objective of our work is for women all over the world to be able to decide over their own lives. We are working actively against human rights offences in general and against crimes against women's rights in particular. The global Green movement is completely united behind these demands and behind the work to give all people the same rights regardless of sexual orientation. The work for sexual and reproductive health and rights should focus on women's and girls' right to their own body and sexuality, and be aimed at both women and men. Involuntary genital mutilation is a serious crime against human rights. Today, the spread of HIV is threatening development in many countries. Those already infected by HIV must have access to the progress made by medical research.

Tear down the Walls

We do not believe in artificial borders. We have a vision of free emigration and immigration where people have the right to live and work wherever they want to. We do not accept that the rich world erects high walls to keep refugees out. We want Sweden to be a global forerunner by launching a plan to introduce free immigration. This should be supplemented by a generous refugee reception system. The right to seek asylum is a human right and a moral imperative that cannot be refused, regardless of the socioeconomic circumstances. People who have come to Sweden should have the right to have their case examined in court. Sweden and the rest of

Europe need a more humane, solidary and fair refugee policy. No person is illegal. Therefore, no asylum seeker should be kept in custody without having committed a crime. For a refugee, having to wait several years for a decision about his/her application for residence means an almost inhuman psychological pressure. We therefore believe that residence permits should be granted automatically after twelve months. The asylum seeker should have the right to a decision in his/her case within six months. The interpretation of asylum law for children must be particularly humane and based on the best interest of the child. People who today feel forced to go into hiding must be given access to education and health care on the same terms as everyone else. We want paperless immigrants to be given permanent residence by means of a one-off amnesty.

According to the Geneva Convention, which Sweden has signed and on which it bases its refugee policy, those fleeing from war, hunger or environmental degradation are not regarded as refugees with the right of asylum. In Africa, Asia and Latin America, there are refugee documents similar to the Geneva Convention, but with more generous regulations and broader definition of what a refugee is. In Swedish refugee policy, a stronger position must be given to those whose grounds for asylum are persecution because of their gender, sexual orientation or sexual identity. Women and children who have been subject of the sex trade should have grounds for asylum. Starvation should also be a ground for asylum. This gives scope for a more humane view on refugees and human rights. Ethnic groups without a country of their own have special reasons for humane treatment in the asylum process.

A Solidary International Community

All people have the right to self-determination. A fair and peaceful world requires functioning global structures. The global capital and its organisations act in constant opposition to the United Nations and other international bodies working for human rights, disarmament and an equitable distribution of resources. Several countries, lead by the USA, choose not to respect international law and instead pursue economic policies and war only to safeguard their own interests. The result is a tug-of-war where the solidarity movement's strategy must be to strengthen the international community in general and the UN in particular.

A Stronger and Reformed UN

The UN of today is in many situations lost in its attempts to stop ongoing armed conflicts and to prevent the emergence of new conflicts. The UN needs to be more effective, obtain more resources and renew its commitment to peace and security. We work for a UN with the capacity to carry out the tasks for which it has a mandate. The dominance of the well-off countries in the UN system must be broken for the benefit of the voices of the economically weak countries. This requires a new composition of the Security Council and a reform of the veto right. The UN Human Rights Council should have a powerful position. At the same time, the power and ability of the General Assembly to implement decisions must be strengthened. The global civil society's organisations, working for human rights, the environment and sustainable development, should be given greater opportunities to UN involvement. This will also open up the UN decision-making structure.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an important and positive addition to the global legal system. We want courts for environmental issues and human rights to be established. These courts should be able to bring states and multinational companies that break the rules agreed on

before court. The UN Charter should be supplemented with a chapter on conflict management with non-military methods. The sanction system must be made more effective. We propose a sanction fund within the UN from which UN member states will receive compensation for maintaining sanctions.

Global Taxes

We are working for a Tobin tax on currency transactions to reduce global speculation and a carbon dioxide tax on aviation fuel to reduce climate change. The Tobin tax should be introduced as soon as enough countries have adhered to the idea. The tax can provide independent UN financing and finance global reforms within the UN framework. The UN should also be given the tools to actively combat international organised crime and the criminal economy. We want to abolish tax havens through international agreements. This is, among other things, what we mean when we talk about global rules of play for capital.

Global Welfare for Zero Hunger

Civil and political rights, just as economic, social and cultural rights, as laid down in international conventions, should apply for all individuals and everywhere. Still, three million children under the age of five die every year as a result of external factors in the environment, and more than seven million children die due to chronic undernourishment. We want to make zero hunger a global goal – no one should have to suffer from hunger.

Fair Trade

Fair conditions for trade are an important reform to achieve global justice. The unfair world trade is reinforced by the rich countries' agricultural subsidies, export subsidies, customs duties and quotas for products that the world's poorest countries could export. Increased trade is not a goal in itself, but a means to create development and welfare, when carried out on the basis of the conditions of the poor and within the framework of the environment. We want to remove value-added tax on fair trade labelled products.

Reverse Globalisation

Globalisation is a phenomenon that has increasingly come to characterise our society. With globalisation there is a cultural, linguistic, economic, political and communicative integration process. This process favours, above all, the industrialised world, but also rich groups in poor countries. In all societies, the poorest are hit the hardest by the negative consequences of globalisation. The development is about to turn the whole world into a commodity. Short-term global profit interests must never be put before the right to food, drinking water and a clean environment. For some poor countries, globalisation has been positive when combined with state commitment to education, health care and the fight against poverty. At the same time, compulsory privatisations have crushed the fundamental services in society and health services, and resulted in poor people lacking water and other basic necessities. The global elite is entering the new global society while the overwhelming majority of people are bystanders to this process. The reason for this is that it is exclusively rich countries and major companies that dictate the rules for international trade. As a result of this, the rich are becoming even richer at the same time as economic and social development in the poor countries is being opposed. Therefore, we do not believe in the current structure within organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The organisations must open up, the democratic control must increase and the economically weak countries must be

given greater influence. The WTO regulations must be evaluated and revised in order for the poor to obtain better trading conditions. The WTO, the IMF and the World Bank should be incorporated in the UN in order for their fields of activity to be restricted, subordinated to the UN objectives and subject to international conventions.

EU Reforms

We are opponents of the EU and want the EU to be dissolved. As long as Sweden remains in the EU, we will however try to use the Swedish membership to change and improve the organisation. The EU increases global injustice, and radical changes of the EU fisheries and trade policies are therefore required. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) should be completely abolished. Human rights, peaceful conflict management and a policy preventing conflicts from arising must be given priority in regard to the EU development assistance and foreign policies. We do not accept the gradual militarization of the EU; instead we want to build up a civil peace corps with cooperation ability. We do not believe in the idea that a new European superpower can be a counterweight to the interests of capital or other international interests. On the contrary, we see how Sweden's work for the world's poor has diminished as a result of the EU membership.

New Global Security Policy

The security policy situation has changed radically in the world around us, but unreasonably large resources are still being allocated to the military defence, in Sweden as well as in other countries. The security policy situation has varied throughout the course of history. We therefore believe that military defence is not the right solution to achieve long-term peace. The threats today are not primarily of a military character. The capacity to be able to meet other threats must therefore be improved. Environmental degradation and the greenhouse effect could cause both conflicts and major streams of refugees. Nuclear accidents, oil disasters in the Baltic Sea and crashed computer systems are examples of new threats to security in the economically rich part of the world. Major natural catastrophes require a comprehensive and well thought-out civil emergency preparedness. The causes of conflict and war are often power-political interests and the fight for strategic natural resources, such as oil. In order to bring about a more peaceful mentality and make it more difficult for occupying powers, we want everyone to obtain knowledge about peaceful conflict management and non-violence philosophy already at an early age. Extreme poverty, exclusion, depleted natural resources, environmental destruction and a lack of democracy often constitute a breeding ground for armed conflicts. An active policy to reduce oil dependency, global justice, democratisation and a sustainable environmental policy is therefore a policy for peace.

Global injustice creates a breeding ground for insecurity and terrorism. Violence can never be accepted as a method to achieve political change. But in order to fight terrorist actions, one must be capable of seeing and combating the desperation that is the root cause of terrorism. The world community must never give in to a state's desire to control other regions or accept state-sanctioned terror against civilians. War must not be tolerated.

Peaceful Conflict Resolution and Disarmament

We are a pacifist party. We believe that peace is not only a goal, but also the way. Humanity has developed a whole variety of tools for dealing with conflicts and combating injustice through non-violent means, such as civil disobedience, general strikes and refusal to pay war taxes. The international community often reacts much too late to conflicts, when violence has already made

it difficult to handle the situation with civil methods. The international community must, both at the global and regional level, develop a better system to make us of the early warning signs present when a conflict is developing. Institutions are needed that automatically draw up specific proposals for political action to prevent the escalation of a conflict from becoming violent. Countries where HIV and AIDS have affected large parts of the adult population also risk collapsing and not being able to manage neither civil functions nor economic development. This is also a security risk.

We believe in and support the UN objective of universal and complete military disarmament. A reduction of the world's nuclear arsenal, continued efforts to prohibit chemical and biological weapons and an international regulation of the trade in light weapons are all important targets in this work. Global arms trade also obstructs countries' development opportunities. Sweden should stop its arms export, disarm and replace the compulsory military service with a voluntary service. Swedish security policy should instead be based on a policy of non-alignment and work for international agreements on issues concerning disarmament, non-violence treaties and demilitarised zones. In the long-term, we want to transform the Swedish defence, from a military defence into a non-violence defence, which can both be used against non-military threats, deal with conflicts and carry out non-violent fighting in the case of attacks.

Swedish participation in international peace forces

The UN is an important player for maintaining peace and security. Therefore, Sweden should not take part in any international missions without a clear mandate from the UN and decisions made by the Swedish Parliament. We do not accept any military coordination of Swedish forces with those of the EU, other defence alliances or individual countries, other than those under the auspices of the UN.

LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE – EVERYTHING IS INTERCONNECTED

We live in a time of environmental degradation. At the same time, awareness is increasing about the fundamental ecological prerequisites for life on Earth. The Green Party is working for sustainable development with a resource-conscious life style, renewable energy sources, fuel-efficient vehicles and new technology. In this chapter, we explain how we build a long-term sustainable society.

Sustainable Development

In order to have more time for our children and each other, better health and a healthy environment for our children and grandchildren to take over, we could have to accept lower material standard of living than in Sweden today. Reorganising society requires a change in economic thinking as well as a conscious long-term policy. Green politics are about putting a long-term perspective on every decision and every action, and also taking responsibility for the next and future generations. The understanding that everything is interconnected is of central importance to us.

In recent years, new alliances for ecological renewal and innovation have emerged. Some examples of this are municipalities working for sustainable development, Agenda 21 and environmentally-oriented networks of companies. Churches and other social movements have begun to support objectives for a fair share of environmental space for all people. The reason for this is that the world is in the middle of a historical era that is devastating for the environment. The alternative is ecologically sustainable development. It is really a question of justice. It is always the poorest in society who are hit the hardest by environmental degradation, be it in the form of air pollution, unhealthy food, polluted land or lack of access to clean drinking water.

Preservation and protection of the world's sensitive ecological systems, the basis for all life, is also about justice between generations. The overconsumption of natural resources, creating enormous environmental problems for future generations to deal with, is a policy that we reject. Earth is not just a heritage from previous generations, but is also borrowed from future ones.

For us, ecology and democracy are interconnected. Many environmental problems are discovered locally. Therefore, experience shows that where people have the opportunity to exert influence in an open political system with the opportunity for direct participation, environmental problems have also been taken most seriously.

Global Environmental Responsibility

A policy for sustainable development requires local, regional, national and global action. The policy must be coherent. We want Sweden to be a global environmental model. One means of influence is to be a forerunner and show that a positive change is not only desirable but also possible. If dangerous nuclear power plants in the surrounding world are to be abolished; Sweden must abolish its own nuclear power. If polluting industries in neighbouring countries are to be cleaned up; Sweden must transform its own industrial processes. If the deforestation of the rain forest is to be stopped; the last primeval and natural forests in Sweden must be protected. In that individual countries and federal states have dared to make radical environmental decisions

without waiting for international agreements, environmental opinion all over the world has become more powerful and other countries have eventually followed.

Our policy puts a heavier responsibility for the transformation on the rich parts of the world. There is nothing strange about this. If the whole world should have the same consumption level as Sweden and the rest of the rich part of the world, the entire ecological system would collapse. By focusing on increased quality of life instead of high material standard, we can influence the surrounding world in a credible manner. Only in this way can the poor world be developed in a way that does not include making our mistakes and instead begin to use better technology.

Methods are also required to deal with global and cross-border environmental problems. Global concerns such as carbon dioxide emissions, over-fishing of the world's oceans, water shortages and destruction of important ecosystems must be solved by means of political action at all levels. Agenda 21 must be resumed and permeate all efforts. A global environmental court, within the UN framework, must be established in order to ensure that countries and other global players comply with jointly established global environmental regulations. Environmental movements must also have the right to instigate legal proceedings in this court.

Humanity is Reaching the Ecological Ceiling

Today, humanity is living in a way that means that it is reaching the ecological ceiling. The rules of play that nature imposes are being ignored and the prerequisites for life for future generations are being deteriorated. The fact that the rain forest is being overcut, the ozone layer depleted, biological diversity impoverished and the greenhouse effect increasing is leading to increasingly devastating natural disasters. Today's way of life is destroying natural values and creating seemingly insurmountable environmental problems. The notion that problems are being solved without major political changes is wrong. Global capital has taken over command also in the environmental domain, and in a devastating manner. Countries' opportunities to impose strict environmental regulations, to protect natural values and stop genetic manipulation are being curtailed by agreements written in order to appease global economic interests. A global policy for justice is therefore equals a global policy for sustainable development.

Protecting Natural Values

A policy for sustainable development is based on principles that permeate political decision-making. One such principle is that human activities should be carried out with consideration to nature and be adapted in order not to threaten life and its diversity. The protection of nature is not an isolated issue. Other economic and social processes also affect nature and the life environment for all species. Nature conservation issues must therefore be integrated in all sectors of society.

The protection of forests, wetlands, shorelines and a number of other biotopes must be extended and tightened. Sweden's protected areas are still too small and inadequate to be able to safeguard biological diversity. In addition, Sweden allows significant disturbances to fauna and flora even in protected areas. At least ten per cent of Sweden's total area must be protected in order for the continued existence of species and subspecies to be safeguarded. We therefore want to introduce constitutional protection for the national parks.

Biological Diversity

Biological diversity is a measure of nature's wealth. We want to work to ensure that flora and fauna can survive in their natural conditions. The impoverishment of the natural environment must be stopped by means of extended nature conservation, more stringent requirements in regard to agriculture and forestry, reindeer herding and fishing, reduced emissions and discharges of environmentally harmful substances and decreased exploitation of natural resources. Acidification of land and water can be counteracted through a drastic reduction of emissions from traffic, industry and power plants. Liming can only limit the damage; we therefore believe that the causes of pollution need to be attacked. We want to introduce a universal ban on the spread of foreign species and genetically manipulated organisms in nature in order to avoid serious disturbances of ecosystems.

Clean Water, Protected Seas and Sustainable Fisheries

Clean water is a precondition to preserving biological diversity. People have fetched food from fresh water and the sea from time immemorial. Industrial fishing, eutrophication, environmental poisons and exploitation of coastal areas have increased the disruptions on these ecological systems. We want to support sustainable fisheries carried out in balance with the fish' own ability to reproduce. Comprehensive research is required in this field, as well as international respect for scientific results.

We work for the reduction of environmentally-harmful substances such as nitrogen, phosphorous and heavy metals from sewage treatment works by separating industrial and household liquid waste, improving the sewerage system and by replacing environmentally-harmful products. We want to prohibit all drilling for gas and oil off our coastline and work for a Nordic-Baltic agreement to protect the sea off our common shores. We want to increase the protection of key biotopes in the water and of areas particularly important for the ocean's biological diversity or for the reproductive ability of many species. One way in which to increase protection is to establish marine reserves and designate no-fishing areas. Water is our most important food. We must therefore combat wastefulness and the speculative utilisation of water. Water should be a protected right of benefit to the public. Publicly-owned waterworks, regardless of corporate form, must not be privatised or listed on the stock exchange.

Extended Ownership Responsibility

The use of and ownership of forests and land should be linked to a responsibility for not impoverishing natural life. We want to counteract speculative ownership of both land and forests. Landowners and users should have a personal responsibility for their land and its maintenance. The costs for measures to preserve species and other nature conservation should be shared by the landowners and society.

Sustainable Forestry

Clear rules for ownership will enable us to develop more sustainable forestry. The aim should be to produce quality timber to a greater degree than today as this means longer rotation periods and greater biological variation. The forest is of major economic significance, but the production of timber cannot take precedence over the forest's other values. The forest is not only home to many plants and animals; it is the animals and plants themselves that constitute the forest. The forest is an important part of our cultural heritage and important for outdoor leisure, tourism and public health. Particularly unique are the forests in the mountain zone due to their size, unspoiledness and continuity. Sweden has an international responsibility for ensuring that these forests are

preserved. We advocate certified forestry (FSC) which means that it is ecologically, socially and economically sustainable. Approximately one per cent of the country's productive forest area is located near urban areas. The municipalities concerned must guarantee that major consideration is given to nature conservation and recreation interest in these forests.

On a global level, the devastation of the tropical rain forest is a very serious problem. The forest clearing leads to the eradication of species, climate change, soil erosion, floods and drought. Deforestation also brings about serious social and cultural problems for the indigenous population and local communities who have been deprived of their homes and opportunities to support themselves. An important strategy in regard to preserving the tropical forests is therefore to strengthen the control of local communities and indigenous peoples over their own natural resources.

Sustainable Agriculture

We want agriculture to be transformed to be more small-scale and long-term sustainable. Today's conventional agriculture is highly specialised with concentrated animal husbandry. Agriculture is dependent on pesticides and fertilisers. This means a concentration of nutrients and unnecessary loss of nitrogen. It also constitutes a systematic breach of a number of ecological system conditions. Specialisation means one-sided crop rotation and a long-term deterioration of the land's production capacity. We are working to strengthen the role of family farming within the agricultural industry. We want to transform agriculture into a long-term sustainable production system. An ecological agricultural system manages plant growth well and prioritises the soil's long-term production capability. It is important to clarify the effects of the cultivation method on product quality. In order to be able to make better use of plant nutrients, the number of animals on the farm needs to be adjusted to the size of the farm area and drainage systems made sustainable. A sewerage system is needed that separates waste at the source in order for slurry to be restored to the fields. This should be done to prevent plants nutrients from being polluted by different types of chemicals from households, infrastructure and industry. We want high fees on fertilisers and pesticides. But this need not entail any competitive disadvantage for Swedish agriculture since the income from the tax will be returned to agriculture in the form of targeted environmental compensation. We want to abolish value-added tax on ecological food and work to increase the share of ecological food in public procurement. The aim of agriculture should also be to preserve ecosystems. It should be just as natural for a farmer to produce biological diversity on meadowlands as to produce foodstuff. It is important to have a regionally based food production, not just to bring back plant nutrients. We think that Swedish agriculture should account for a significantly greater share of Sweden's food production than is the case today. Farming is often essential for a living countryside. Locally produced food brings town and country closer together and increases knowledge of and understanding for the conditions of agriculture. The same requirements in regard to animal protection as on Swedish animal products should be made on imported animal products. We want to promote small-scale food refinement. Regulation should be simplified, we want to introduce investment and education subsidies, focus on mobile abattoirs and work to minimise the number of animal transports for slaughter.

Food Worthy of its Name

The supply of different food products is enormous. Inadequate labelling means however that it is not easy to be an informed consumer. Consumers should be given full information about where and how food has been produced and cultivated. Government means of control must be used in

order for everyone to have access to good quality food without any toxic substances. The price differences between ecological or fair trade-labelled products and conventional ones must be diminished. This can for example be achieved by lowering value-added tax on food for sustainable products and government subsidies to the farmers' certification system. Unnecessary additives, such as azo dyes, should not be allowed. The precautionary principle should be applied, not least in regard to genetically manipulated food, antibiotics and radiation. Sweden should have the courage to lead the way in respect to prohibitions against foodstuff additives and chemical pesticides.

Accelerating global environmental degradation, soil erosion, reduced fertility and population growth will lead to greater difficulties in managing food supply. Therefore, a considerable share of farmland must be used to produce food. From a global perspective, the consumption of meat and other non-vegetarian food must decrease, especially in rich countries, both for environmental reasons and for the amount of food produced to keep up with population growth.

Animal Rights

Animals have an intrinsic value and each species has the right to live for its own sake regardless of its value to others. The right of animals to behave naturally and not to be made to suffer requires changes in animal husbandry. Fur farms, narrow chicken batteries and painful animal transport are inhumane and must be abolished. Painful animal experiments must be successively abolished and replaced by methods that do not involve animals. Bestiality and other sexual offences against animals must be prohibited and treated as criminal acts.

Animals are sentient beings and all utilisation of animals must therefore be done on with respect for the specific needs of each individual species and for the needs of the individual animal. People's desires to keep pets must not entail restrictions of the animals' right to natural behaviour.

Sweden has one of the world's best animal protection legislations; milk cows graze outdoors in summer; sows give birth to their piglets without being kept in steel cages; and it is not allowed to breed animals with genetic defects or predisposition to disease. However, law compliance must be improved. There are still areas where legislation must be tightened. For example, the castration of unanaesthetized piglets must be banned. Animals must not be exploited in circuses. All legislation concerning animal rights should be gathered in an animal code of law that, similar to the Swedish Environmental Code in the environmental field, reinforces animal protection. Organisations working for animal rights and the prevention of cruelty to animals should be given the right to take legal action.

Animal rights are not only a national concern. Therefore, we work for a UN conference on animal rights that should result in a declaration on the same subject.

Respectful Hunting

Hunting that is respectful, environmentally-adapted, regulated and long-term sustainable can contribute to effective nature and fauna conservation. Hunting should be adjusted to the populations of the species to be hunted and their development over time and space. Hunting periods and the number of animals that can be shot should be evaluated annually and based on stocktaking to ensure biological diversity and long-term sustainability. In spring and

summer, when animals move around and reproduce, hunting should not be allowed. The incidence of wounded animals must be minimised, for example by means of compulsory annual shooting tests for hunters. Cruel hunting, such as hunting with traps, dogs and live bait, should be prohibited.

Policy on Predatory Animals

The predatory animal population should be allowed to increase to be robust. Sweden should have long-term sustainable populations of the four largest predators: wolf, lynx, bear and wolverine. Increased resources should be allocated to nature conservancy organisations and the Swedish Environment Protection Agency to spread information about predatory animals and to mould opinion against illegal hunting. The police must be given increased resources to their work against hunting offences. We want to develop the game preservation policy through consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, such as the indigenous population, the local population in general, researchers studying predatory animals and the animal rights movement.

Renewable Energy Systems

Global energy production is about to change the climate. Climate researchers increasingly agree that the consequences of the current use of fossil fuels in the form of coal, oil and natural gas will be completely unsustainable in the near future. Climate is becoming warmer and, as a result, there will be natural disasters and desertification; and people will be forced to flee to seek new land to provide for themselves.

Nuclear power is not a substitute for the combustion of coal, oil and natural gas. Instead, it creates new problems. Both nuclear fuel and nuclear waste contain material that can be used to make nuclear weapons. Many countries have already concealed projects to develop nuclear weapons by alleging that they are carrying out civil nuclear power research. Another problem is the storage of nuclear waste. Nuclear fuel and nuclear waste contain many of the most poisonous substances known to humans and are in certain cases fatally radioactive in very small doses and for a very long time. No one can foresee or prevent human entry into “nuclear waste depositories”, groundwater streams or chemical dissolution for the next tens or even hundreds of thousands of years. This type of waste cannot just be passed on to future generations. Nuclear power also entails major accident risks. Neither Swedish nor foreign nuclear reactors are risk-free and even minor discharges can lead to major consequences. The mining of uranium for our nuclear power plants also creates major environmental and health problems, globally and locally where the mining takes place.

Life on Earth cannot exist without energy. Energy is fundamental for human society. But energy can neither be produced nor consumed - only converted. However, humans can utilise the energy's contents: exergy.

In the long run, all forms of fossil fuel heating must cease to exist. It will neither be possible to use petrol nor diesel to power vehicles. It will not be possible to use natural gas and coal in power plants or thermal power plants. Nuclear power cannot be accepted. What remains are renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, water and bio fuels. Transforming the energy system is therefore the greatest challenge to achieve a sustainable society.

Saving Energy and Phasing out Nuclear Power

Sweden's energy policy has so far mainly been concerned with increasing the supply of energy and electricity in particular. Instead, we want to stimulate energy efficiency and energy technology, in order to make better use of the energy. Technology is developing rapidly, but the new knowledge needs to be spread by means of more information. We want increased support for technology development and marketing. We want to tighten the building regulations' requirements on energy efficiency. We want rules for subsidies and tax deductions for buildings to be environmentally adapted. In some cases, investment support or economic guarantees are required when new technology is being tested.

Nuclear power in Sweden should be phased out rapidly, starting immediately. This can be done through tightened safety requirements, increased tax on nuclear power and by making nuclear power bear all of its costs, including insurance costs, in full. We also want to legislate on the phase-out, referring to the major risks and the ecological consequences. Half of the nuclear power output can be compensated for by increased energy efficiency, including energy saving and replaced electric heating. The other half can be replaced by bioenergy, wind power and solar power. The use of fossil fuels for heating and electricity must also be reduced. The electricity market must function in a way that it is more expensive to use electricity when it is expensive to produce. By doing so, electric heating will be reduced and thereby also the market for nuclear power. Any electricity shortages arising during the transformation to new energy sources should be solved by the import of green electricity. Using electricity as the only heating source in new buildings should not be allowed.

We think that hydro power is fully developed in Sweden and want to grant constitutional protection to the last undeveloped rivers and river reaches. We can however accept reconstruction and increased efficiency in existing hydro power plants.

Alternative Energy

Sweden should be at the forefront as regards renewable energy production. The development of biogas, solar heating and solar cells needs to be supported and stimulated. Biofuel-powered thermal power stations for electricity production and district heating systems are excellent alternatives for many towns and industries. There are good solutions for energy plants where electricity, heating as well as vehicle fuels can be produced. We want significant investments in wind power. A combination of fuel cells and hydrogen gas provides the opportunity to store renewable energy sources. The surplus production of electricity from solar and wind can be used to produce hydrogen gas.

Global Energy Policy

In international EU and UN climate negotiations, Sweden should advocate that rich countries should reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases most and first of all. Subsidies for coal power, peat and nuclear power must be removed and replaced by minimum taxes within the EU. The trade in emission rights must be developed. The rights must for example to a greater degree be auctioned off instead of being handed out for free. Furthermore, the allocation must be made more restrictive. Sweden must also take vigorous initiatives for a global phase-out of nuclear power. We must require raised safety levels, extended insurance liability and the establishment of international conventions for the transport of nuclear waste. A first step would be to ensure that the Euratom agreement within the EU, with the objective to increase the use of nuclear power, is scrapped.

There are major development opportunities for solar energy and other energy-efficient solutions. The percentage of solar energy reaching Earth's surface every year is many times greater than the energy humanity uses in the form of fossil fuel.

The world's dependence on oil is environmentally destructive. It also contributes to an unstable world economy where the big winners are oil cartels and oil companies. If we do not carry out a regulated transformation now, the same change could be forced upon us later, but at considerably higher economic and environmental costs. In global terms, the market for environmentally-friendly energy production is one of the fastest growing ones. Many countries want to end their oil dependency. This presents great opportunities to export competence, energy efficiency know-how, products and environmental technology.

Sustainable Transports

A key project to halt global warming is converting to sustainable communications. The transport sector is the greatest single source of emissions for nitric oxides, carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons and particles. Traffic contributes, in addition to the greenhouse effect, to eutrophication, acidification, destroyed ecosystems and ground ozone. People are affected indirectly in the form of various diseases and allergies and directly in the form of noise and road accidents. Children are particularly susceptible and the risk to their health is considerable when they are exposed to vehicle exhaust fumes. An additional problem with vehicle traffic is that it takes up a lot of space.

We want to invest in new technology to produce more environmentally-adapted fuels. We believe in technology aimed at developing and using carbon dioxide-neutral fuels. Energy, including fuel, should be used as efficiently as possible. Market-based instruments are possibly the most effective tool to achieve this.

Transport-Efficient Society

We want to build a transport-efficient society based on local supply, local food production and local work, where more people have the opportunity to work from home with access to both information and service with the help of IT. We aim for personal transports to be largely carried out by bike, energy-efficient public transport or by cars with low fuel consumption and renewable fuels. To achieve this, we want to build out the railway system, improve the timetable and frequency of train services, invest in renewable fuels, build more cycle lanes and work for lower fares on public transport. Our vision is free journeys on local public transport and low uniform fares for inter-regional railway journeys. Public transport should be given priority before private vehicles and car-free city centres are a goal in order to preserve living city centres. The different railway companies must coordinate fares, ticketing and timetables to become more consumer friendly. Prices should steer people towards using more environmentally-friendly transport alternatives. Congestion charges are another tool for transport management. Freight transport should be transferred from road transport to the railway. We have a positive outlook on future transport technology, for example personal rapid transport and developed bus systems.

The majority of harmful substances found in city air comes from road traffic. We want to tighten the exhaust requirements to allow for a more rapid spread of better filtration methods and more environmentally-friendly fuels. We also want to work to completely remove the most fuel-guzzling and polluting vehicles from the urban environment.

The reduction of fuel consumption is a strategic issue since it is difficult to replace all the petrol and diesel in the world with biofuels unless vehicles are not also made more fuel economical. The technical opportunities to reduce consumption are good, but political will and stubbornness are also required. After 2015, it should no longer be allowed to manufacture and sell new vehicles in Sweden that are powered solely by fossil fuels.

Sustainable Shipping and Reduced Air Traffic

Shipping has by far the greatest share of the country's freight transport and is an energy-efficient means of transport. In order to reduce environmentally-harmful emissions from shipping, we must impose tougher exhaust emission requirements for ships and also advocate this on an international level. The tendency towards ever faster sea transport with high energy consumption must be stopped. Increased international cooperation is required to prevent the cleaning of ship tanks at sea. All tank vessels should be equipped with a double hull to reduce the risk of discharge in the event of a collision at sea. Aviation is the worst means of transport from an environmental perspective. Airlines must be forced to pay for the negative environmental impact of aviation fuel by means of fuel and carbon dioxide taxes.

Postal Service and Telecommunication

Throughout Sweden there must be access to good postal and telecommunication services at low and uniform prices. The responsibility for this, as for other infrastructure, should rest with society. New information technology, the Internet and mobile telephony create a society with reduced transport needs, without having to reduce communication itself.

The expansion of the electricity network, mobile telephony and third generation mobile telephony, 3G, has led to an increased amount of electromagnetic radiation in our habitat. We want the health effects of this increasing electromagnetic radiation and the 3G network in particular to be investigated. More independent research is required on the total radiation impact, the so-called electro smog, and its effects on our health. Municipalities must have the opportunity, based on the precautionary principle in the Swedish Environmental Code, to close down mobile telephone transmitters when people's concerns or health reasons so require. We demand the introduction of planning permission for base stations for mobile telephony and the establishment of an official base station register.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT – WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR EACH OTHER

At certain times of our lives we are particularly vulnerable - when we are born, when we are ill and when we grow older. At these instances it is important that society provides good and dignified care. In this chapter, we describe our view on a care system with diversity and security.

Diversity and Community

Our vision of society is based on people's need for community. The diversity of society, everyone's participation in democracy and equal rights for all should guarantee that everyone has the same opportunity to make their own life choices. We want everyone to feel secure, needed and involved. This requires, besides new economic priorities, well-functioning preventive health care and health care services, welfare services for all, dignified care of the elderly and a humane social policy.

The gaps in Sweden, and in the part of the world Sweden belongs to, have increased in recent years. The cracks in the welfare system are becoming increasingly visible. Social exclusion, homelessness, violence and drugs create terrible problems for those who are directly affected, but also for society in general. The fear of being excluded is creating a society in which an egoistic striving to fend for oneself replaces community efforts. This means that we risk losing our ability to see ourselves in others.

Social Security

We want our policy to be shaped to strengthen people's security and independence. The aim of our social policy is an open, just, solidary and loving society. We believe that integrity and respect for people should characterise the social work. Help to self-help, good opportunities to determine one's own future and to influence and to deal with one's difficulties should be provided. The social security system should, as far as possible, be administrated by one single authority and the regulations for financial support should be as uniform as possible. It will then be easier for the individual to understand his/her rights and obligations.

Responsible Housing Policy

We want an active housing policy. The housing shortage can be resolved both by constructing more new housing, and by allocating housing on a social basis. The housing shortage cannot be completely resolved by new houses being built, but must also be regarded in a regional policy perspective. Tenancy rights should be allocated first and foremost by local housing authorities. We want to support the construction of ecological housing with small and inexpensive apartments in healthy, well-planned surroundings. Housing and renting out rooms should not be taxed, the environmental impact of the housing and the capital gains from the sale of housing however should.

Housing segregation creates social exclusion. We want to change this through fewer single-type housing environments and more varied residential areas with different types of housing and forms of concession. More residential areas should be characterised by self-administration. The cooperative tenancy right should be promoted and developed, as well as other forms of influence

for residents in multi-family housing. Access to assembly halls and leisure activities are essential to create a good living environment.

Everyone's Right to a Home

The causes of homelessness include unemployment, financial problems and substance abuse. Being homeless involves major psychological and physical suffering. We believe that it is self evident that everyone should be guaranteed a place to live and that suitable housing should be provided on the basis of the individual's situation. For some homeless people, group accommodation with access to care personnel may be necessary; for others it is better to live on their own.

Care of the Elderly

Care of the elderly should be characterised by helping to keep people as healthy and mobile as possible by maintaining each individual's functions and capabilities. Preventive health care and stimulating daily activities are therefore important. Animals and nature have a positive effect on many elderly people's well-being. We want to make it possible for all those who want to have access to animals and nature throughout their lives. Today's municipal geriatric care should be supplemented by voluntary efforts that add value to people's lives. There should be enough staff in care facilities for the elderly to meet social and psychological needs as well. The accommodation issue is of central importance to provide geriatric care adapted to the requests of the individual concerned. We want to create possibilities that facilitate individual accommodation solutions. The option to remain at home should be supported by society. We have a positive view toward generational housing, cooperative and alternative living solutions.

There is a great need to build a clear connection between health care and geriatric care. Geriatric care teams comprising doctors, nurses, occupational therapists and care assistants can optimize care for the individual. When the staff adopts a comprehensive view of the individual, destructive overmedication can for example be eradicated. Health care would not function without the efforts of family and relatives, which is why these should be offered a greater degree of support and relief. The personnel's role in geriatric care is very important. The personnel must be provided with ongoing training that reinforces their identity and knowledge to help them meet elderly people in need of care in the best possible way.

Healthier People

Today's Swedish society makes an increasing number of people ill. People are being negatively affected by tough conditions at work, by demands on how men and women should be and behave, and by a widespread sense of social exclusion. One of the biggest challenges will be to create opportunities for people to be healthy. This is an absolute necessity if we are to maintain general welfare.

Public health issues are a matter of justice. Current differences in living conditions between different groups are also manifest in the form of unequal health. A policy against segregation, discrimination and social exclusion, and to reduce gaps in society, can result in major health benefits. This is most evident among children and adolescents in their living situation. Public health policy must therefore be based on addressing problems early in life. Many diseases are caused by lifestyle and the physical, psychological or social environment. The whole living environment affects both well-being and susceptibility to disease.

A well-functioning social network, good working environment, reduced drug consumption, less stress and altered eating and exercise habits are examples of effective measures. All social players have a responsibility to ensure that the public health perspective is included in all social planning.

Municipalities must be given a defined responsibility for the health of their citizens. Each municipal authority should study public health reports and draw up their own public health plans. Analyses of public health consequences should be carried out before political decisions are made. County councils can strengthen the preventative health work by increased research, education, information and counselling. Competence within the field of environmental medicine should also be extended. Statistics and information from the county councils could also be a good knowledge base for health promotion and preventative work.

At the local level, preventative health care and rehabilitation ought to be supplemented by, among other things, health farms and health centres. Employers can also assume greater responsibility, including by providing employees with the opportunity to exercise during working hours. Health care and medical institutions also have the task to prevent ill-health. This applies not least for the part of the population who lives with chronic or long-term disease. Health care has an important responsibility in this respect, and local care must play a main role in health work. Maintaining and improving health is essential for the single individual's quality of life.

Care for the Whole Person

Solidarity should be the key word for care and health services. Everyone should feel confident that society will provide the health care they need. Medical and health care should be based on the needs of the individual and his/her experience of his/her own situation. It is therefore essential that patients and their families are allowed to be involved in the care. Since each person is a unique individual, care must be provided on the basis of a comprehensive view of the individual that includes both body and mind. Gender, age and personal development must all be taken into consideration when caring for a person. We want to introduce a quality assurance system for health care. This system should be based on quantifiable factors in the form of health benefits and usefulness for the individual patient.

Society must have a comprehensive view of people. Increased coordination facilitates rehabilitation and the ability to function in society. Collaboration is of particular importance when caring for people with chronic diseases or disabilities and for elderly people with long-term diseases. Cooperation and coordination must be improved, not just within health care, but also between health care, municipal care services, schools, workplaces and authorities such as the Swedish Social Insurance Agency and the Employment Service. More emphasis than previously should be placed on the significance of psycho-social factors.

Local Care with a Comprehensive View

Local care should form the basis of medical and health care. Quality local care presupposes close cooperation between health and medical care, primary care and hospital care. Local care thus becomes a function and not an administrative care level, and is therefore defined on the basis of its contents and not on the basis of its organisation. Both planned and emergency local care should be based on security and availability. Complementary and alternative medicine, together

with psychotherapeutic methods, should be natural elements of health care. It should be possible to make house calls to a greater extent than at present, and care in the home should be facilitated through better cooperation between municipalities and county councils.

Patients have the right to be well-informed and active. Having confidence and trust in the care is often of significant importance for the result of the treatment. Being well-informed and motivated as a patient increases the ability to become and stay healthy. With increased knowledge follows the demand for participation and power: to be able to choose for and against. For those who are unsure how different care and treatment alternatives work, the option to choose is of no value. An important task for the health and medical care services is therefore to spread knowledge, to help the individual find his/her way to good health, and to guide the individual in the health services.

Medical and care premises should be accessible to all and provide tasteful design in regard to colour, design and planning, as well as the opportunity for peace and quiet or certain activity. The quality of food and the culture within health care can, together with a warm and humane approach, support the medical treatment.

Self-Care

People who are in control of their own lives more often experience good health. It is important that society provides people with the opportunity to assume greater responsibility for their own health. Self-care is about understanding how to deal with the minor ailments and illnesses that can affect us all. Self-care is about recognising signs of illness and knowing when it is necessary to contact the medical services. A well-functioning health information service can provide support and advice on self-care, and thereby contribute to health care being used in the right way.

Mental health

A comprehensive perspective must characterise the approach to mental illness and the responsibility for mental health should be included as a natural part of local care. People should be given help on equal terms, regardless whether they have physical or psychological symptoms of illness. Care for children and adolescents should be carried out in cooperation with the family, child and adolescent psychiatry, child health centres, pre-school, school, youth centres for service and counselling about sexual health, leisure-time centres and others working with children and adolescents.

People with complex needs for care, due to for example disabilities, chronic diseases, neuropsychiatric problems or substance abuse, should be given the same opportunities as everybody else to obtain psychiatric help. Psychosocial and environmental factors must be given greater importance in medical care. By taking care of people suffering a crisis, long-term diseases can be prevented.

Comprehensive Perspective on Child Bearing

One of the major events in many people's lives is becoming a parent. Therefore, adequate information must be available before birth. The woman's state of health and her safety should determine the choice of care. The basis for the care provided should be the woman's own wishes. Care should be provided where the woman chooses to give birth, regardless whether this is a specialist clinic, health institution near the home, or in the home. We also want to develop the system with midwife-led births. We would like to see a developed chain of care from antenatal

care and birth, to postnatal care and child health care. Alternatives to pharmacological pain relief should be provided. Fathers should be supported in their role before, during and after birth. The costs of birth at home should be paid by the county council. Breastfeeding should be encouraged.

A Dignified End

Every individual should have the right to die in a dignified manner in a familiar and peaceful environment, for example in the home, with good access to care resources and competence. Therefore, education and training in regard to care in the final stages of life must be adequate. Care at hospices can be a supplement to care in the own home, both as a relief for the family and for the patients who want to end their days there.

Good Specialised Treatment

Specialised and highly-specialised care and treatment should be provided on equal conditions in those instances and conditions that require more qualified care than what can be provided by the local medical service. For this to become possible, the organisation of health and medical care must be based on larger areas. In certain cases, the care area should be as large as the whole country and in some special cases even involve neighbouring countries. Specialised and highly-specialised care should apply for both physical and psychological diagnoses.

Dental Care for All

The same conditions should apply for dental care as for all other forms of health care. Therefore, we want dental care to be a part of the publicly-financed health service and included in a common high cost protection scheme. Work among children and adolescents to prevent tooth decay should be given high priority. Vulnerable groups in society should also have access to good dental care. The contents of all dental care material should be disclosed and allergy tested. In addition, research is needed on the effect of dental care material on the environment and health. The use of amalgam should be prohibited for health and environmental reasons.

Complementary and Alternative Care

A good dialogue, collaboration and scientific cooperation, based on openness and mutual respect, is needed between conventional medicine and complementary medicine, also called alternative medicine. There should be a national and public register of practitioners of complementary medicine. Approved complementary medical methods must be an integrated part of the general health care system. In order to increase knowledge and understanding of complementary medicine, health care personnel within the public health service should be offered education and ongoing training in complementary treatment. As with other medical care, complementary medical training and treatment must be quality assured. A complementary medicine information and research centre with an interdisciplinary approach is therefore needed. Diversity is important, which is why the supply of complementary medicine treatment should be increased.

Medication as one Alternative among Several

Today's use of medication could involve a risk that normal life processes are being medicalised. The development where the use of and costs of medication cannot be related to health benefits for the patients must be opposed. Medication can be a good treatment method that reduces the patients' suffering and prevents disease, but it must not be regarded as a given first-hand option. Other measures could for example include physical activity on prescription, complementary

medicine treatment and psychotherapeutic treatment. The differences in ability to break down pharmaceutical drugs and their side effects must be observed for different sexes and ages.

Adequate education and training for health and medical care personnel is necessary to evaluate treatment with pharmaceutical drugs in relation to other forms of treatment. Health problems and major unnecessary costs for incorrect medication indicate the need for greater competence within geriatric care. Regular controls of the use of pharmaceutical drugs should be carried out by the county council and by geriatric care services in the municipalities.

Many drugs are slowly degradable and affect the environment. Pharmaceutical drugs must therefore be environmentally classified and environmentally labelled. As new drugs are being introduced, old and environmentally harmful drugs should be replaced if possible.

The influence of pharmaceutical companies and companies developing new medical technology on health services is presently far too great. Therefore, the opportunity for these companies to advertise their products to the health and medical care sector must be regulated. It is also important that there is clear account of any financial connections and other relationships.

Well-Financed Medical Care

Health and care services must be guaranteed for all people throughout the country. Health care and medical services must therefore be democratically controlled and solidary financed with primarily public funds. However, this does not mean that all medical services must be carried out by the public sector. We have a positive approach to local initiatives in the form of alternative forms of operation such as intrapreneurship, entrepreneurship and cooperatives. In this way, the patients' options increase, as well as the opportunities to make use of new ideas about work methods and organisation. To guarantee a reasonably similar and fair health care structure throughout the country, we are against selling or assigning operation of publicly-owned hospitals to profit-distributing players. We want health care to remain guided by needs and not by the market also in the future.

Prioritisations on Ethical Grounds

The medical technology field is progressing rapidly, which make it possible to treat and cure more diseases. With a growing gap between what is possible and the resources available, it is necessary to ensure that the people with the greatest need receive treatment first of all. The open prioritisations should be based on an ethical platform that is determined nationally. In a solidary society, treatment of the most serious diseases must be given priority. The debate on prioritisations must be broad and allow for all citizens to take part.

A Society Free from Drug Abuse

We are striving for a society free from drugs and drug abuse; and reduced use of alcohol and tobacco. We believe that the perceived need for intoxication reduces if stress is reduced, loneliness and isolation are tackled, people's control over their own lives is reinforced, meaningful leisure activities is offered, and if involvement increases. It is important that we learn to understand the causes and effects of substance abuse to be able to take action as early as possible that can prevent a person descending into misuse and dependence. Abuse is a question of both genetic disposition and environmental factors.

Drug abuse leads to exclusion, isolation and to great suffering, both for the abuser him/herself and his/her family. Alcohol consumption has increased significantly and today the abuse takes far more lives than narcotics. We want a restrictive alcohol policy. We want to keep Systembolaget, the Swedish Alcohol Retail Monopoly, and the high taxes on alcohol, and we want to safeguard alcohol-free environments. Taxes on alcohol must be high in order to check consumption and limit abuse, and also to contribute to paying society's costs for the consequences of alcohol. It is of particular importance that society takes strong measures against bootlegging and the sale of alcohol to minors. Sweden should have heavily restricted import quotas on alcohol in relation to other EU states and work for the introduction of high minimum taxes on alcohol within the EU.

We want to increase the support to information and knowledge about drugs. Society should manifestly work counter to the smuggling, sale and use of narcotics. All drug addicts should have the right to drugfree rehabilitation. We believe that the aim of a drug-free society and a restrictive narcotics policy can and must coexist with the opportunity to reduce the harmful consequences of the use of drugs. Everyone has the right to medical care and it cannot therefore be required of someone to be drug-free to gain access to medical care. This also means that we do not require that the drug addict is drug-free to receive medical treatment aiming to reduce the damage caused by his/her drug abuse. We believe that pharmaceutically-assisted treatment is compatible with a restrictive drug policy. The addict's often complex problems require close collaboration between the different links in the care chain. Above all, patients with so-called double diagnoses must be paid attention to.

PIONEERS – A PARTY IN MOVEMENT

We have assumed a double role. We are both pioneers and a political party in the traditional sense of the word. We are both ahead of our time and in the midst of it. This combination is often difficult. We cannot be so far ahead that we lose touch with those behind us; we mustn't let the path become grassed. At the same time, we know that there is no time to lose. We dare to be one step ahead. We are the pioneers in Swedish politics— an alternative for survival and solidarity.

Love for Life

We are an inconvenient party. We Greens question the current conception of the world, the current power structures and the ideologies that control the world. But changes require patience and persistency. The flame within must be kept alive, also when one is overwhelmed by setbacks, sadness and fear. The flame burning for life, love and solidarity must never ever die down. It is essential for people's own humanity.

Like all other fires, this one too must get its energy from somewhere. For us, the guiding star can be summarised in the words: love for life. It is from such a fundamental love for life that the entire contents of our politics stems. It is the source to pour from. Together with the burning will, it forms our immense driving force.

The Way to the Future

The way to an ecologically sustainable society involves changes – often painful ones – but also the joy of participating in the work to regain the future and a good life for our children and grandchildren. It is only within the limits that nature sets that our society can maintain prosperity and well-being over a longer period of time. Someone once said that the beating of a butterfly's wings in the Amazon can be the beginning of a hurricane in Europe. The world is full of complex connections and mutual dependence, which is why we should not consider ourselves to be nature's rulers. We cannot know how little or how much we have understood.

It is not too late, but it is urgent. The longer change is delayed, the deeper will the problems be and the harder it will be to change. Yesterday's time margin has already shrunk. Time is slipping like sand through our fingers.

It is not too late, but it is urgent. The smallest stone can become a mountain to climb when the deserts and holes in the ozone layer are growing, while forests are being devastated and dying.

It is not too late, but it is urgent. Life is a constant miracle. In each word that is uttered, there are opportunities. More and more people do not accept that the future is disappearing in a haze of pollution. More and more people do not accept that the crucial decisions are being moved beyond reach. Together, we can make words grow into action and action to grow into change. There is hope since love for life is greater than apathy.

The way to the future does not go via great theories or party programmes. The way to the future goes via people's hearts. If we have the courage, the energy and the will, we also have a future.

*Let us together
search without delay
a way to live
that is possible for everyone on Earth
for thousands of years
without destroying the environment
or abusing people*