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Press release | 03.02.2021

French court ruling on climate action – L'affaire du siècle

Quote from Marie Toussaint MEP

Today, the Paris Administrative Court has ruled that the French state is liable for inaction on the climate crisis. Marie Toussaint MEP, Greens/EFA member of the Environment Committee, who initiated the 'Affaire du Siècle' (the case of the century) petition and litigation against the French government, comments:

"Today's condemnation of France for climate inaction is a historic decision. It is a victory for all citizens and the two million plus signatories of the 'Affaire du Siècle' petition, launched in December 2018. From now on, climate inaction will no longer be tolerated by the courts. The French state has now been found guilty of failing to take action in accordance with its national and international commitments. The court could now order the State to take action for the climate, after further investigation of the measures taken by the government within two months.

"Our victory echoes the growing number of lawsuits being brought around the world to push governments to take action. Everywhere the climate generation is calling for change. Yet, after 30 years of supposedly binding climate commitments, the inaction of public authorities everywhere is striking. France is criminally lagging behind on all climate policies.

"Today's ruling shows that countries can no longer continue to place the responsibility for action on other states, companies, or citizens. All countries must commit fully, sincerely and concretely to the fight against climate change. The French government must act; Covid recovery plans should be used to develop an economic model that respects the climate and the environment."

More:
Similar actions have been fought and won including: in 2015 by Urgenda in the Netherlands, Ashgar Leghari in Pakistan, 25 young Colombians in 2018 and Friends of the Irish Environment in Ireland last summer.

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