



MAIN POLICY PRINCIPLES

miljøpartiet
de grønne

LIST OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
1 Ecological sustainability	4
2 A diverse society	5
3 A Green Economy	6
4 A vibrant democrac	6
5 An active peace policy	7
6 Equal opportunity for all	9
7 Digital commons	11
Conclusion	12

INTRODUCTION

The objective of the Green Party of Norway is a human and humane society in ecological balance. The economy shall be subordinated to sound ecological principles and promote peace and justice both locally and globally. A precondition for achieving this goal is living local communities, based mainly on local resources. We aim to design an integrated politics for the present and the future, on the basis of three fundamental principles of solidarity: solidarity with other people, solidarity with future generations and solidarity with animals and the rest of the natural world.

1 ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

We humans are part of a fragile ecosystem on which all life on Earth depends. Preserving biological diversity is essential to the survival and well-being of all species, including ourselves. Green policy is about following through on this recognition. Only by tailoring our energy and resource consumption to natural limits can we create a future of real security and lasting welfare. For the sake of both nature's intrinsic value and the principle of fair apportionment we must be moderate in our use of natural resources. In place of ever-growing consumption of limited resources we will prioritise the resource base, biodiversity and the preservation and restoration of ecosystems. The policy of The Green Party of Norway is thus based on the "precautionary principle": this means that wherever our knowledge is uncertain or our acts can have grave and irreversible consequences, we must put the environment first.

We need action now!

We are facing serious threats to the diversity of life on Earth and thereby our own survival. Human activity is laying claim to large swathes of the surface and is triggering irreversible climate change. The trend is endangering the balance of nature as well as our own life, health, welfare and peace. Ecology – the science of our interaction with Nature – tells us that the greater our population the more vulnerable we become, and the greater our footprint as individuals. To some extent technological progress can counterbalance this, but even so, the development of new technology must be combined with a reduction of consumption and a

stabilisation of the population through a focus on education, fair apportionment and secure living conditions.

Humanity is society plus nature

The Green Party of Norway takes as its philosophical starting-point the thesis that Man is not elevated above Nature, but is a part of Nature. Preservation of biodiversity requires protection of habitats, and we humans must leave some natural areas alone. Animals have value and rights that we must respect and we are morally obliged to treat both individual creatures and the diversity of life and ecosystems with respect. It is our responsibility to allow animals to meet their own needs as individuals and species. Domestic or farmed animals are also part of the diversity of society, and must be respected for their intrinsic value and their fundamental needs, including freedom from human-caused suffering.

2 A DIVERSE SOCIETY

The Green Party of Norway regards cultural diversity as essential to a fundamentally free and vital society. Diversity is a precondition for discovery of new solutions to collective and individual challenges. We of the Green Party believe that all people should be free to make their own choices, express themselves freely and shape their own lives – but with respect for the needs and lives of others. This freedom embraces not only the material but also the social, cultural, intellectual and spiritual aspects of human life. Securing this diversity demands mutual understanding, respect and active protection. Diversity protects us against intolerance, extremism and totalitarian rule, and is an indispensable source of inspiration and renewal. It must never, on the other hand, be used as an excuse to question human rights. The Green Party repudiates negative discrimination. We note that no society or culture is static and unambiguous, that all carry within themselves the potential for positive development. We reject all attempts to stereotype people from a particular area. The Green Party will combat all forms of racism. We value personal freedom, but a green freedom in which individual freedom is bounded by solidarity and compassion – and not contrariwise.

3 A GREEN ECONOMY

A green economy requires that ecological and social interests take precedence over the commercial. Today's economy is based on the relationship between production and consumption, driven by the desire for material prosperity. We want a systemic transformation that bases the economy on fundamental human needs instead. Regarding consumption and production as common systems will help us to reduce total consumption and improve the use of resources over the whole lifetime of a product. A resource-based economy also means the highest possible degree of re-use of recycling.

The Green Party of Norway wants the driving force of the economy to be human creativity and commitment. We want to make more room for small, local companies, entrepreneurs and cooperatives at the expense of the mighty multinational corporations. A democratic and diverse economy is decentralised.

A good mixed economy presupposes that welfare services, infrastructure and the commons are managed by the community through public ownership or regulation. Market forces must also be regulated to avoid exploitation of the natural and human worlds, to hinder harmful speculation and to secure fair competition. A green economy cannot be dependent on growth. The Green Party supports an active and just distribution policy to secure social equalisation and prevent further plundering of nature. We emphasise that Norway is one of the countries that must drastically reduce its ecological footprint, both to preserve the natural world and to make space for the necessary prosperity among the world's poor.

4 A VIBRANT DEMOCRACY

The Green Party of Norway stands for a participant democracy in which all individuals and groups are enabled to involve themselves in their own future and that of the community, and to see the benefits of doing so. Our faith in democracy is based on the recognition that all individuals have an equal value. A sense of political obligation must be achieved by political processes being democratic, inclusive, transparent and as far as possible readily accessible.

Democratic commitment and participation should be ensured by assigning decision-making power to the lowest possible level. We accept major regional differences based on the popular will, but understand that the central state must set the standards that guarantee for example biodiversity. The Green Party thinks that in many matters the processes of direct democracy and referenda will prove good tools for ensuring local variation, maximum participation and optimum solutions.

Democracy is about more than just voting, it is about the diffusion of power. Democracy is exercised through participation but also through ownership. A plurality of administrative levels is essential, as is the widest possible distribution of property and capital. This will hinder the concentration of power in society.

Indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination, rights to their land and the right to protection against discrimination. The Green Party therefore supports both a strengthening of the Sámi Parliament (*Sametinget*) and will work to develop the potential of Sámi culture and business.

Support for democratic development

The Green Party of Norway will work to strengthen democracy throughout the world, and together with its sister parties strive for increased popular rule in all countries. A large percentage of the global population is living under undemocratic regimes, where censorship and human-rights violations are the norm. Even democratic countries can be afflicted by media concentration, systematic discrimination and electoral systems that tend to exclude new ideas.

5 AN ACTIVE PEACE POLICY

The Green Party of Norway bases all areas of politics on the principle of non-violence. Ecological and social sustainability, democracy and human dignity prevent conflicts through removing structural violence in peacetime. When they do arise, conflicts may be dampened and resolved by non-violent resistance and dialogue. It is possible to develop a non-violent culture in which the need for coercion is reduced to a minimum and war is regarded as uncivilised.

Important steps on the road to increased international cooperation include cultural globalisation, digital communications and stronger international institutions. The Green Party will work for an active Norwegian peace policy in international fora.

At the same time, we are a peace party that recognises that peace goes deeper than the absence of war. When governments perpetrate genocides on their own minorities and commit other crimes against humanity, the global community has both a right and a duty to intervene. Norway has a moral responsibility to support non-violent and pro-democratic movements directed against authoritarian regimes.

Use of military power

Military methods are based on violence, which in itself is damaging and degrading. In the spirit of the UN Charter, therefore, military force must be the absolutely last resort and must be combined with non-violent civil resistance and humanitarian action, also after the fact. Norwegian participation in international military operations must only happen in accordance with a UN mandate and there must be consensus that its object is to save and protect life through preventing further violence. In those cases where the world community decides on military intervention, we are obliged to follow up the work of securing peace and stability. The Green Party of Norway wants a very restrictive policy for Norwegian arms exports.

A more democratic UN

The Green Party of Norway places the global community above national interests. We recognise that international bodies are needed to solve supranational problems and consider that the United Nations needs to be strengthened. Norway must work for a more democratic UN in which important international questions are not governed by national or commercial interests. The Green Party does not support Norwegian participation in offensive military alliances.

6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Fair apportionment between individuals, local communities, groups and counties can allow us to give everyone the opportunity to live rich, secure and free lives. Equal distribution of good and benefits is required in order to safeguard ecological sustainability, quality of life and peaceful dealings between different countries and nations. It is a special public responsibility to secure everyone access to clean water, health food and fresh air. We shall all be entitled to a home and to fundamental material security. The Green Party of Norway sees the principles underlying the Nordic welfare model as a valuable foundation on which to build.

Work

Using our occupational skills enables us to enjoy the fruit of our labours, and is therefore an important part of our identity. A green economy gives us space to reduce the individual's working hours. The Green Party of Norway will work towards a flexible labour market that takes account of responsibilities as carers in the home, at the same time as we will protect basic trade-union rights such as the right to free association. The Green Party is concerned to develop workplaces that meet the needs of a society in ecological balance.

Children and education

The most important task of human society is to make sure that children and youngsters develop into creative individuals with self-confidence and self-insight plus the understanding and the will take responsibility for themselves and their surroundings. Our educational policy shall equip teachers and care-givers with the flexibility to address the individual child's needs, and a fundamental right to transmit their knowledge to the coming generations. A secure upbringing lays the decisive foundation for the good life. The child's needs for security and love, and the absence of abuse and neglect, must always be given priority over all other considerations.

A good public-sector school shall be the cornerstone of the school system and offer both pedagogic diversity and attention to the needs of the individual child. The principle of the neighbourhood school is important if children from different backgrounds are to meet and learn to respect one another. At the same time, we are not blind to the value of pedagogic alternatives outside the state school system, and consider that these are important

contribution to covering the entire spectrum of needs. A good school is based on recognition of the child as an independent individual. The Green Party of Norway wants a school that stimulates critical social thinking and places great emphasis on practical skills and experience. School is also a suitable arena for teaching children humanity, tolerance, empathy and non-violence.

Health and social services

Health services must be equally available for all and in principle must therefore be free and publicly financed. The Green Party of Norway will facilitate a balance between care at home and in good institutions. Preventative health care, nutritional knowledge, physical training and medicine must be available to all. As far as possible, the elderly and those in need of nursing care should be able to choose where they will live and what kind of help they will receive. The Green Party recognises the need for more voluntary participation from both individuals and civil society. Voluntary work involving care services must not lead to loss of income.

Cultural life

The arts and culture are a fundamental component of social life that can enrich, mirror and challenge the past, present and future of society locally, nationally and internationally. Supporting an active cultural life requires a cultural policy that allows for diversity. The Green Party will work for a cultural life and cultural policy that accepts and makes room for the differences inherent in a modern intercultural society.

Infrastructure

The Green Party of Norway will work to make basic infrastructure such as broadband, roads, rail, electrical power and postal services more flexible, on the basis of local resources, needs and opportunities in such a way that we can maintain settlement and transport throughout the country. This facilitation must take place within a sustainable ecological framework.

Agriculture

Farmers shall be guaranteed land rights, access to water, control of their own seeds and the right to sell their produce. Our policy is based on food sovereignty: in Norway no one shall be

able to patent gene-modified organisms, seed corn, other seeds, or indeed any biological product meant to meet our fundamental food requirements.

7 DIGITAL COMMONS

The Green Party of Norway will guard all commons, not only the physical ones. The Internet culture and knowledge are vital global commons that must be protected against all infringements. The Internet helps us create a world in which all knowledge is freely available to everyone, and where anti-democratic forces can no longer hinder the people's access to information and opportunities to organise themselves.

Human rights and the Internet

Digital rights are ordinary human rights transferred to the digital sphere. Here in Norway we are so accustomed to rights to knowledge, learning, sharing, association, expression, privacy and consumer protection that we take them for granted. But the exercise of these rights is now dependent on a free, open and neutral Internet. This should be seen as basic infrastructure to which everyone should have access. We would therefore classify access to the Internet as one of the human rights.

Privacy

Protection of personal data and freedom of communication must be safeguarded against arbitrary infringement, whether by other citizens or by the State. Surveillance and other interference in the private communications of individuals without their express consent must only be permitted in the event of specific suspicion of criminal behaviour.

CONCLUSION

The Green Party of Norway recognises that we do not have complete solutions to all the challenges we are facing. We take, therefore, a humble and listening attitude to both scientific expertise and civil society – such as the international environmental, peace and solidarity movement – so that our policies may remain in constant development in the encounter with new insight and understanding.