

ENGLISH VERSION

PRESS KIT · APRIL 2025

CITIZENS AFFECTED BY EXTREME WEATHER TAKE FRENCH STATE TO COURT



Summary

For all sources of figures shared in this press kit, please refer to the French version, which is authoritative.

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EDITORIAL

Stronger together !



An unprecedented legal action to demand that the State protects us all in the face of climate risks.

While crises and conflicts monopolize the debate, ecological urgency is being eclipsed from the political agenda. Yet, in the field, climate change does not wait. Every year, the number of people affected by climate change in France increases. Heatwaves and floods ravage our territories, but these disasters are only the visible part of a much deeper issue. Lack of drinking water, cracked houses, agricultural losses: a huge number of French people are already suffering, on a daily basis, the consequences of a State that does not protect them sufficiently and fails in one of its prerogatives.

Environmental policies are under attack the world over. The European Green Pact, which was supposed to strengthen the ecological transition, is being gutted under pressure from industrialists and conservatives. In the United States, Donald Trump dismantles climate regulations and attacks climate scientists. Such global decline will only worsen the crisis and multiply the number of people affected by climate disasters. In France too, ecology is relegated to the background and sacrificed on the altar of short-term budgetary arbitration. For the most vulnerable among us, climate injustice is hitting harder than ever.

The French government has just presented its third national plan for adaptation to climate change (PNACC-3). The content of this plan is largely inadequate: it neither effectively nor fairly protects populations exposed to climate risks, and does not guarantee adequate funding for the interests at stake. Once again, policy responses are too slow, too weak and too far removed from the reality of disaster victims.

Left to fend for themselves in the face of insurers' refusal to pay compensation, trapped in uninhabitable homes, many of these people have tried to raise the alarm and take local action. To no avail. Yet the polls are clear: French citizens expect the government to take "swift and energetic action" to deal with the climate emergency, even if this means radically changing their lifestyles (67% of French people) or making financial sacrifices (47%). Environmental issues are now the second most important concern for the French, just behind purchasing power. It's time for politicians to realise the scope of this concern. Today, in the absence of truly protective public adaptation policies, more than half of our fundamental rights are under threat.

We, the citizens affected, have decided to take action. Inspired by L'Affaire du Siècle, we are launching an unprecedented legal action against the French government, together with Greenpeace France, Oxfam France and Notre Affaire à Tous. Our political leaders' lack of action on climate change has already been condemned by a court of law. Their failure to adapt and protect populations could be condemned once more tomorrow.

This is the first time in the European Union that disaster victims have taken a state to court to demand better protection. We are proud to speak on behalf of all those directly affected by climate change, and to assert their right to live in a country that protects the life, health, safety and well-being of its inhabitants.

Together, we're stronger. We'll make our voices heard.

02

WHO WE ARE

14 applicants

Jérôme Sergent
Rumilly, Pas-de-Calais

Marie Le Mélédo
Les Lilas, Seine-Saint-Denis

Jean-Jacques Bartholome
Grenoble, Isère

Jean-Raoul Plaussu-Monteil
Villard-Bonnot, Isère

Salma Chaoui
Paris

Mayotte A Soif
Racha Mousdikoudine
Labattoir, Mayotte

Locataires Ensemble
Salim Poussin
Lyon, France

MIRAMAP
Evelyne Boulongne, Florent
Sebban
Paris and Pussay, Essonne

Association Urgence
Maisons Fissurées
Mohamed Benyahia
Le Mans, Sarthe

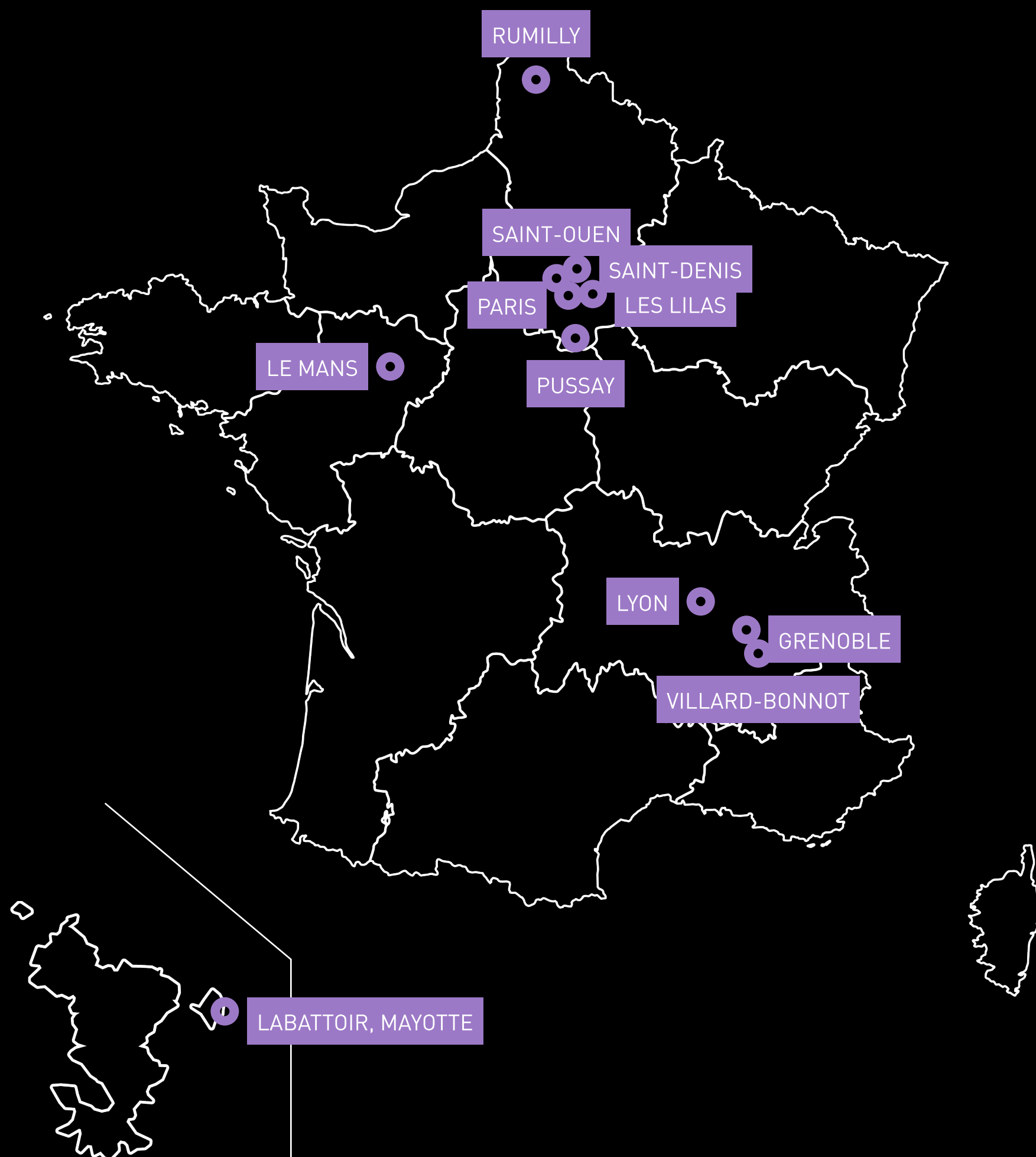
Ghett'up
Rania Daki
Saint-Denis, Seine-Saint-Denis

Association Nationale
des Gens du Voyage
Citoyens
William Acker
Saint-Ouen, Seine-Saint-Denis

OXFAM France

Notre Affaire à Tous

Greenpeace France



Who are we?

JÉRÔME SERGENT

Location

Rumilly, Pas-de-Calais

Personal situation

43 years old, farmer

Associated risk

 Flooding



Jérôme is a new farmer. He produces Natural preparations of lower concern, alternatives to phytosanitary products. Since 2019, he and his partner Audrey, a baker, have been working on a farm that has been transformed into a nourishing and educational eco-location.

Every year, they experience runoff and flooding. Between November 2023 and March 2024, their farm was flooded eight times and they lost 18 poultry and equipment. The bakery was damaged and the land was under water for almost two months. Since last winter, Jérôme, trained in regenerative agriculture and hydrology, has been heavily involved in flood prevention, raising awareness about nature-based solutions, taking part in actions led by disaster victims' associations, and meeting with local and regional elected representatives and government departments.

To date, no short, medium or long-term action plan has been issued by the institutions, which means that Jérôme and Audrey are unable to serenely develop their activities and their community location.

Who are we?

MARIE LE MÉLÉDO


Location

Les Lilas, Seine-Saint-Denis

Personal situation

37 years old, agro-ecology expert

Associated risk

 Clay shrinkage and swelling



Marie bought her apartment in Les Lilas in 2018. After two years of refurbishment work, she moved in in 2020, just as the region was experiencing a historic drought. On her return from summer vacation, she discovers major cracks in her new home. The new doors and windows no longer opened. The mayor of Les Lilas quickly declared the building to be in ordinary peril. She now can no longer live there, and has had to finance her own rehousing for the past two years.

Upon discovering the cracks, Marie took the proper steps including recognition of the state of natural disaster in her commune of Les Lilas. After several years of negotiations, studies and thousands of euros spent by her co-ownership syndicate, the co-ownership insurance experts recognized the shrink-swell of clay as the cause of the cracks in the building. The insurance finally granted a sum of around 400,000 euros to carry out the work, which has still not been carried out to date and may never be.

Who are we?

JEAN-RAOUL PLAUSSU- MONTEIL

Location

Villard-Bonnot, Isère

Personal situation

45 years old, engineer, epileptic

Associated risk

 Heat waves



Jean-Raoul is finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the increasing number of heat waves. Heatwaves, because of the altered sleep patterns, dehydration, anxiety and hyponatremia they generate, considerably increase the risk of epileptic seizures. In addition to increasing the risk of epileptic seizures, heat waves also disrupt the absorption of anti-epileptic drugs.

The summer of 2023, marked by long periods of heatwave, was particularly trying for him: for several weeks, it was impossible for him to go out during the day. In France, almost 1% of the population is epileptic, and for these 600,000 people, heat waves represent moments of great suffering, forcing them into isolation and even affecting their professional activity.

The vulnerabilities of people with epilepsy, as well as those of the sick and marginalized (the elderly, the disabled, diabetics, pregnant women, the homeless, etc.), remain largely ignored, accentuating inequalities in the face of extreme heat episodes.

Finally, Jean-Raoul would like to point out that while "being epileptic" is an abnormal neurological reaction to a normal situation, "having an epileptic seizure" is a normal neurological reaction to an abnormal situation.

Who are we?

SALMA CHAOUI

Location

Paris

Personal situation

23 years old, student in the last year of a Master's degree in economics.

Associated risk

Specific vulnerabilities



Now living in Les Lilas, Salma used to live with her mother and brother in a Paris Habitat social housing scheme, whose apartments are rated between D and F for energy efficiency. Her mother, aged 53, has been unemployed for three years, and is raising her 12-year-old brother alone, who suffers from uveitis, a chronic eye disease. Salma and her mother also suffer from sleep disorders and joint pain linked to chronic ailments respectively. Since their arrival in 2018, their three-room apartment has suffered from damp and mold problems due to inadequate insulation.

The fragility of their home increases the risk of infiltration, fire and thermal discomfort in periods of heatwave or extreme cold. Salma and her family have taken legal action against their landlord, Paris Habitat, to condemn the apartment's inadequate insulation.

The situation of Salma and her family is a striking example of social vulnerability exacerbated by climate change: not only are they exposed to health risks due to the conditions of their housing, but also to risks linked to climate change, notably heat waves. Their situation illustrates how populations that are already vulnerable - due to their economic, social and health situation - are the most exposed to the negative effects of climate change.

Who are we?

JEAN-JACQUES BARTHOLOME

Location

Grenoble, Isère

Personal situation

68 years old, mobility impaired

Associated risk

 Heat waves



In August 2023, during a heat wave, the temperature rose above 32°C in Jean-Jacques' social housing, which was poorly insulated and unsuited to his motor disability, forcing him to use a wheelchair. His disability makes it impossible for him to close his shutters alone or access his balcony, making these heat waves particularly trying.

Involved in the HandiCitoyens collective and the Locataires Ensemble residents' union since 2020, he campaigns for better access to housing for disabled people and against insalubrity. Faced with the difficulties he encounters, he decides to publicize his daily life and to question his social landlord, notably by occupying his premises. Thanks to this mobilization, work was finally carried out, enabling him to close his shutters independently and regain access to his balcony.

Who are we?

MAYOTTE A SOIF

REPRESENTED BY RACHA MOUSDIKLOUDINE

Location


Labattoir, Mayotte

Personal situation

36 years old, president of the association



Associated risk

 Access to water



Racha founded the Mayotte A Soif collective in 2023, which has since become an association committed to the fight for access to drinking water on the island. Through grassroots actions, legal action and active media coverage, she challenges political leaders and raises awareness to the public about this critical situation. She recently moved to La Réunion.

In Mayotte, Racha was confronted with recurrent water cuts. One day, when she returned from vacation, she discovered that there was no running water, even though the bills were still due. This situation reflects a widespread problem on the island: a large part of the population suffers prolonged water cuts, depriving them of regular access to drinking water, while suppliers continue to demand payment of bills. The public systems that are supposed to alleviate these difficulties are largely ineffective: they are difficult to access, sometimes discriminatory and require means of transport. Access to water remains a secondary priority for many politicians.

These structural difficulties are exacerbated by extreme climatic events, such as droughts and cyclones. On Reunion Island, the situation is equally worrying. The island is experiencing severe drought, particularly in its eastern part, where numerous water shortages are affecting both the population and businesses, which are subject to hourly restrictions. Faced with this crisis, Mayotte A Soif is taking action to guarantee equitable access to water and report poor water distribution management. In order to obtain long-term solutions, the association has initiated a discussion with the French government, requesting that the Défenseur des droits intervene and launched legal action. Its objective: to obtain a ruling from the French Cour de Cassation that would enable the Mahorais to fully assert their rights.

Who are we?

LOCATAIRES ENSEMBLE

REPRESENTED BY SALIM POUSSIN

Location

Lyon, France

Personal situation

25 years old, archaeologist

Associated risk

 Heat waves



locatairesensemble.org



Salim joined the Locataires Ensemble association in 2024, when it was first set up in Lyon. Born into a family that had lived in insalubrious and indecent housing, he himself endured heat waves in a thermal kettle before benefiting from renovations. This experience made him more aware of the issues surrounding the right to housing and the increased risks associated with inadequate housing in the face of climate change.

Determined to take action, he is now committed to reinstating a balance of power between landlords and tenants - often unaware of the extent of their rights.

Locataires Ensemble is a federation of tenants' unions present in several French and European cities: Aubervilliers, Grenoble, Lyon, Charleroi... Its members defend the right to healthy housing, act against the abuses of real estate capitalism, and fight to make our social housing a common property. For several years now, they have been denouncing housing that is ill-suited to the challenges of climate change, and in particular "boiler rooms" and "thermal kettles". In these poorly insulated dwellings, tenants suffer particularly during heat waves. So, through collective action, media campaigns and dialogue with landlords, social landlords and real estate agencies, the members of Locataires Ensemble are fighting for renovations that effectively meet the challenges of climate change.

Who are we?

MIRAMAP

(Mouvement inter-régional des Associations pour le maintien d'une agriculture paysanne)

REPRESENTED BY EVELYNE BOULONGNE AND FLORENT SEBBAN

Location

Paris & Pussay, Essonne

Associated risk

 Agricultural losses

Personal situation

Evelyne, 74, retired from teaching, mother of three, is an *eater* in an Association pour le maintien d'une agriculture paysanne (AMAP). She prepays the annual production of local organic farmers.

Florent, 43, has been an organic farmer in Essonne since 2011, and is the father of three children. With his partner, they produce vegetables, fruit, honey and aromatic and medicinal plants. Their farm feeds over 200 families in the region. Like many farmers, they suffer production losses due to extreme climate variations.

miramap.org



AMAPs are associations for the preservation of peasant agriculture. They operate through a system of solidarity: eaters prepay for the entire production of a farmer, securing his or her farm, and receive a portion of his or her production each week.

Evelyne and Florent are spokespersons for MIRAMAP, the inter-regional AMAP movement. Its aim is to strengthen the cohesion of AMAPs by sharing a common ethic, pooling experiences and practices, and representing and promoting AMAPs at national level. It brings together farmers from all over France, who are facing increasing difficulties in producing.

Depending on the region, climatic events seriously threaten their harvests: late frosts destroy entire fruit and vegetable crops; recurrent floods inundate fields, complicating all production; increasingly frequent and intense droughts and heat drastically reduce farm yields. MIRAMAP supports farms in their adaptation efforts by encouraging the sharing of experiences between peers, in conjunction with research, and through study trips.

Who are we?

ASSOCIATION URGENCE MAISONS FISSURÉES REPRESENTED BY MOHAMED BENYAHIA


Location

Le Mans, Sarthe

Personal situation

64 ans, informaticien

Associated risk

 Clay shrinkage and swelling



Association Urgence Maisons Fissurées

asso-urgmf.fr



In 2018, cracks appeared in Mohamed's house due to soil movement caused by drought and rain. As the state of natural disaster was not recognized, his insurance company refused to pay any compensation. Since then, the situation has continued to deteriorate: he has had to install props to support his house, and he hears worrying creaks in the structure every day. Faced with this ordeal, he joined forces with other disaster victims and founded the Association Urgence Maisons Fissurées.

In the Sarthe region, some 2,000 houses are affected by shrink-swell clay, a phenomenon that worsens over time. Cracks are spreading, making homes increasingly fragile and plunging many families into deep distress.

The Association Urgence Maisons Fissurées supports victims whose homes have been damaged by cracks, and who are confronted with the refusal of their insurance or the absence of recognition of the state of natural disaster for their house. It campaigns at both local and national levels to raise awareness about the consequences of clay shrinkage and swelling, defend the rights of victims and work for legislative changes. Its aim is to change the criteria for the recognition of natural disasters, and to strengthen procedures designed to help those affected.

Who are we?

GHETT'UP

REPRESENTED BY RANIA DAKI

Location

Saint-Denis, Seine-Saint-Denis

Personal situation

22 years old, student, spokesperson for the association

Associated risk

Specific vulnerabilities

GHETT'UP

➤ ghettup.fr



Ghett'up is an association that works to promote social justice for young people in working-class neighborhoods. It runs educational and leadership programs, produces data and research for a systemic approach to problems, and works to spread fairer, more realistic accounts of working-class neighborhoods through its media and audiovisual content. Ghett'up also offers training in diversity and inclusion for decision-makers. Ghett'up also runs the SAS, a space in Saint-Denis dedicated to social justice.

Ghett'up's aim is to enable all local residents, whatever their project or level of education, to realize their individual and civic potential and take their place in society. Ghett'up is also working on climate injustice, the tenfold impact of global warming on disadvantaged populations, who are all too often forgotten.

The association has published a report, the fruit of over two years' research involving 1,000 young people from working-class neighborhoods and the French overseas territories, denouncing the environmental racism suffered by these populations and putting forward recommendations for a more inclusive and committed ecology. In the face of environmental discrimination, Ghett'up is also committed to the issue of substandard and indecent housing, which is rarely discussed. Inadequate housing primarily affects residents of working-class neighborhoods, and greatly increases their vulnerability to climatic events.

Who are we?

ASSOCIATION NATIONALE DES GENS DU VOYAGE CITOYENS

**REPRESENTED BY WILLIAM
ACKER**



Location

Saint-Ouen, Seine-Saint-Denis

Personal situation

34 years old, lawyer and general delegate of the association

Associated risk

  Heat waves, floods



angvc.fr



The Association Nationale des Gens du Voyage Citoyens promotes and defends access to rights for Travellers, who are particularly vulnerable to extreme climatic events. Halting sites available to them do not allow them to adapt in the event of a heat wave or flood. These sites constitute temporary accommodation solutions that are now used as homes by many families as a result of inadequate housing solutions. Yet these sites are largely concreted over. Like conventional parking lots, these spaces absorb massive amounts of heat, preventing water from being absorbed in the event of heavy rainfall. In Thouaré-sur-Loire (44), on June 20, 2024, a mudslide swept away all the caravans of the families parked on the reception area, which had already experienced similar episodes. This is the case for many halting sites in France, including Louhans (71), Breuillet (91) and Trignac (44). A study by the APATZI association shows that 7.5% of large halting areas are located in flood-prone areas.

When Travellers are affected by these disasters, the damage is even greater than for the rest of the population, because it is cumulative and reinforces already existing inequalities, such as the absence of insurance products for caravans (the State imposes no obligation on insurers in this respect, as the caravan does not have the status of a dwelling). More often than not, these families lose everything without compensation.



OXFAM FRANCE

Oxfam France is an international solidarity association founded in 1988, and a member of the Oxfam confederation. It fights against inequality and poverty through advocacy, citizen mobilization and the financing of development projects around the world. The association works on major issues such as climate justice, fair distribution of wealth, tax justice, access to fundamental rights and regulation of multinationals. It regularly publishes reports denouncing the impact of economic, social and climatic inequalities on the most vulnerable.

➤ oxfamfrance.org



NOTRE AFFAIRE À TOUS

Launched in 2015, Notre Affaire à Tous is an association that uses law as a strategic lever in the fight against the triple environmental crisis - climate, biodiversity, pollution. It defends a vision of law in favor of social justice and the primary communities concerned. After securing the conviction of the French government in the Affaire du Siècle case, the association continues to take legal action at local, national and European levels. Through such action the association is at the root of systemic appeals against the inaction of public authorities and the impunity of multinationals. Through a network of mobilized citizens, Notre Affaire à Tous works to push back the frontiers of the law in favor of a democratic system that protects life and fundamental rights.

➤ notreaffaireatous.org

GREENPEACE

GREENPEACE FRANCE

Founded in 1971, Greenpeace is an international organization that acts according to the principles of non-violence to protect the environment and biodiversity and promote peace. It is independent of any economic or political power, and relies on a citizen movement committed to building a sustainable and equitable world.

➤ greenpeace.fr

03

BRINGING THE STATE FACE TO FACE WITH ITS OBLIGATIONS

Repeated flooding in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, repeated heat waves, devastating cyclones and the water crisis... **The effects of climate change are already a reality for many people in France, where extreme phenomena are multiplying and intensifying.** In the face of these threats, the State fails to act accordingly: public policies in climate change adaptation are inadequate, leaving entire areas and their inhabitants in a situation of great vulnerability.

The first victims of this inaction are often those with the fewest resources to cope with the consequences. Precarious, marginalized and disadvantaged people - because of their economic situation, gender, age, state of health or origin - bear the brunt of the consequences of this crisis, even though they are the least responsible for it. They live in dwellings that are more exposed to heatwaves, flooding and collapse due to clay shrinkage and swelling. They have more difficulty coping with agricultural losses, water restrictions, or the costs of rebuilding after a disaster.

Photo: Damage to infrastructure after Hurricane Belal passed through, La Réunion. © Lewis Joly / Greenpeace





At a time when insurance companies are gradually withdrawing from the most exposed areas, and local authorities are struggling to obtain sufficient funding to cope with climate-related disasters, the French government is slow to implement effective protection solutions. Yet it has an obligation to do so: the French Environment Charter, the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Climate Act require it to adopt concrete, appropriate measures to protect the population from the effects of climate change.

In the face of this inaction, disaster victims from all over France, supported by associations and the Affaire du Siècle organizations, have decided to join forces and take their case to the French Conseil d'Etat, its administrative Supreme Court of Law. Their objective: to obtain recognition of the State's responsibility for the inadequacy of current adaptation policies, and to obtain concrete commitments to strengthen the protection of populations in the face of climate risks. This appeal, the first of its kind in the European Union (EU), is based on solid legal arguments and aims to force the State to meet its obligations.

This legal action is part of a dynamic in which the justice system has already played a key role in forcing the French government to respect its climate commitments. The Affaire du Siècle and the Grande-Synthe cases resulted in historic convictions, confirming the illegality of the government's climate inaction. More recently, the suspension of the A69 motorway project demonstrated once again that justice can be a powerful lever for protecting the public interest.

With this appeal, disaster victims are calling for immediate measures tailored to the realities of areas affected. They are demanding that the State provide several billion euros a year in funding for effective adaptation policies that take into account social and territorial inequalities, particularly in overseas territories, where there is too little support for adaptation, making the climatic impacts often far more violent.

At a time when environmental policies are under increasing attack from large businesses and the far right, in France and across Europe, this legal action serves as a reminder of a fundamental truth:

The state has a responsibility to protect its citizens from climate risks. If it fails to take the necessary measures, it will be held liable before the courts.



"When Travelers are affected by these losses, the damage is even greater than for the rest of the population. It adds up and reinforces already existing inequalities in law"

William Acker,
Representative of the Association
Nationale des Gens du Voyage Citoyens

04 ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN FRANCE

While France is struggling to adopt sufficiently ambitious mitigation measures, it is also failing to define clear objectives for adaptation, or to mobilize the resources needed to achieve those already set. In its March 2025 opinion on the PNACC-3, the French High Council for the Climate (HCC) stressed that "France is not yet ready to face up to the impacts of climate change". It clearly states that "funding for adaptation in the PNACC-3 remains highly insufficient", and that the actions stated in the PNACC-3 "do not guarantee [...] the ability to protect people and economic activities from worsening impacts". The HCC also states that, at this stage, "the PNACC-3 does not meet all of these recommendations [of the European Union's adaptation strategy]."

Photo: After Hurricane Irma, September 2017,
Saint Martin Island, Antilles



"France is not yet ready to face the impacts of climate change".

"Funding for adaptation in the PNACC-3 remains highly inadequate".

"PNACC-3 actions do not guarantee [...] the ability to protect people and economic activities from worsening impacts."

**The Haut Conseil pour le Climat (HCC) in
its opinion on the PNACC-3**

FRANCE FACING ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

France's population already exposed to climate risks

The stakes are immense, because the consequences of climate change are already here and are set to become even greater. Overall, 62% of the French population is highly exposed to climate risks.



Photo: Flooding in Bouillante, Guadeloupe

1 IN 4 PEOPLE

lives in a flood risk area.

1 OR MORE HEAT WAVE PER YEAR

have occurred on average in France since 2000. Before 1989, there was a heat wave every five summers.

OVER 10.4 MILLION

single-family homes are seriously threatened by the phenomenon of clay shrinkage and swelling.

HALF OF THE COUNTRY'S DEPARTEMENTS

were hit by forest fires in the summer of 2022.

1 LITER OF WATER OUT OF 5

on average, is lost in France due to leaks in the network, and losses are even more dramatic in the French overseas territories, where access to water is sometimes impossible.

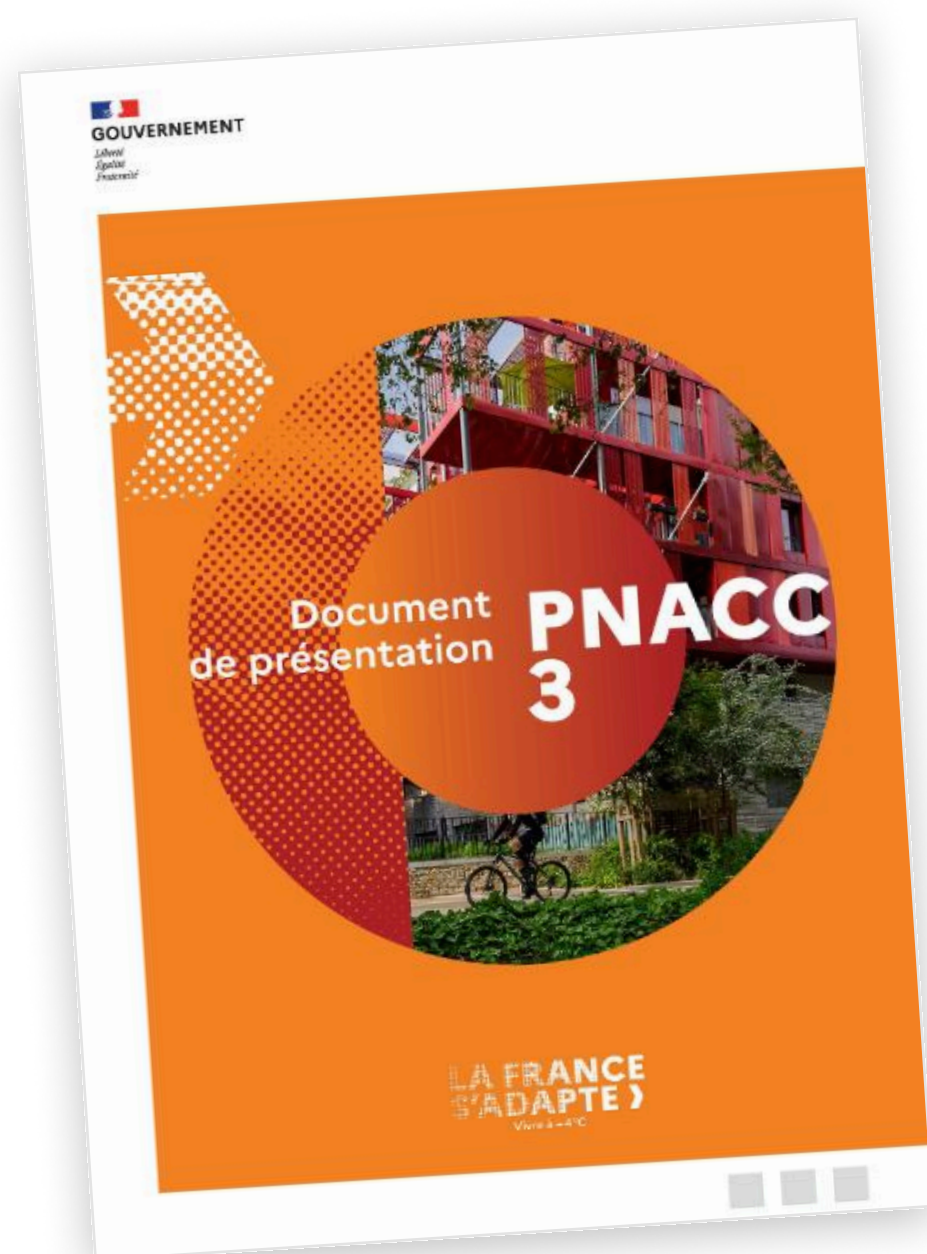
THE AGRICULTURAL CONSEQUENCES

of climate change are already visible and are intensifying: heat stress for crops and animals, soil degraded by flooding, late frosts after flowering, among others, can lead to significant yield reductions.

This multiplication of climatic disasters is already causing heavy damage. These are likely to double every thirty years, amounting to a loss of 7% of France's annual gross domestic product by the end of the century.

FRANCE FACING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

The National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC–3)



After a first adaptation plan published in 2011, then a second in 2018, the third National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC-3) was presented on March 10, 2025 by Minister Agnès Pannier-Runacher. Published more than a year late, it fails to address the growing challenges posed by intensifying climate disruption. While it does contain a few isolated advances, they remain largely inadequate given the scale of the needs. In the absence of budgetary resources commensurate with the stakes, the plan is full of loopholes and leaves many crucial questions unanswered.

BRIEFLY

→ The PNACC-3 suffers from a serious lack of funding, compromising its effective implementation. The funds mobilized (Barnier Fund, Green Fund, Water Agencies) are insufficient and often diverted from other essential priorities, such as biodiversity preservation, energy transition or social justice.

→ The PNACC-3 is largely based on incentive or incremental measures, leaving the population with no real protection against climatic events.

→ The PNACC-3 does not set up a monitoring and evaluation system to effectively measure progress in adapting to climate change, reducing exposure to risks and reducing vulnerabilities. Nor does it provide any feedback on previous plans.

→ The PNACC-3 does not take into account the most vulnerable populations, who are both more exposed and have fewer means to adapt (precarious households, women, children, the elderly, marginalized groups). All ultra-marine territories are left out in the cold, despite the fact that they concentrate a multiplicity of climatic risks in already vulnerable areas.

Adaptation cannot be achieved without massive investments. As the HCC points out, "the worsening impacts of climate change will require increased funding for adaptation. Delaying the implementation of these measures would lead to a reduction in possible adaptation options and increase the long-term costs of adaptation". Waiting for disasters will always cost more than anticipating them. By favoring a reactive model and refusing to commit several billion euros a year to transformational adaptation measures, the French government is not proposing a truly strategic vision to ensure that France's adaptation to climate change is improved.



Photo: A farmer on his land in Burgundy during the heatwave of 2020 in France. © Denis Meyer / Greenpeace

FRANCE FACING ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Insufficient measures and key sectors left unprepared

Despite the urgency of the situation, the measures proposed remain insufficient, lack ambition and, all too often, put off the necessary action until later. In some essential areas, where adaptation needs are most pressing, **there is a blatant lack of preparation, exposing populations and territories to increased risks.**

The example of extreme heat is emblematic. While the increase in heat waves poses a direct threat to public health, the PNACC-3 makes no provision for immediate action to protect the most vulnerable. To date, the thermal renovation of housing financed via the "MaPrimeRénov'" grants has not been made conditional upon consideration of fitness for habitation during periods of extreme heat. France Rénov' advisors will receive no special training in adapting buildings against heat, and co-ownerships, whose renovation is notoriously stalled, have no concrete plan to accelerate the process, apart from the creation of a working group. Even the Diagnostic de Performance Energétique (DPE), a key tool for assessing the thermal efficiency of housing, will not be revised until 2028 to better integrate heat protection issues.

Agriculture, crucial to food sovereignty, is addressed without ambition. Most of the actions are limited to studies and diagnoses, with no real plan to strengthen the resilience of farms in the face of losses linked to climate change and accelerate the transition to agroecology. The management of water resources, a central issue for the future of agriculture, is addressed only through measures already provided for in the 2023 "Water Plan", with no clarification or budget to facilitate their implementation.

Most of the PNACC-3 measures consist of incentives, awareness-raising, monitoring and support actions, focused on carrying out diagnoses, deploying studies, organizing training, improving knowledge, or making marginal adjustments. They remain at the diagnostic stage and do not guarantee adaptation to a France at +4°C in 2100. As for the other measures proposed by the PNACC-3, they are not based on transformational adaptation, which is the only way to guarantee the protection of populations from the worsening impacts of climate change.

FRANCE FACING ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

A lack of resources

Implementation of the measures announced in the PNACC-3 is largely compromised by the lack of appropriate funding. Without a dedicated budget, even the most collectively accepted actions will go unheeded, and no progress will be made on adaptation. Human resources must also be allocated to government and local authority operators to support the implementation of measures in the field.

Of over 310 actions proposed in the plan, only 48 have been costed or budgeted for. Among the more than 260 measures for which no budget is available:

- **125 mention a budget "to be defined", "to be refined", "to be evaluated", "to be confirmed", "not quantified", "variable", "under appraisal", "being stabilized" or which "will be specified"**
- **84 are not costed, but the PNACC-3 specifies that they will be financed** within the framework of funding allocated to other schemes (such as the Green Fund, the 'Pacte en faveur de la haie' (the Hedge Pact) or France Nation Verte), or supported by third parties (such as ADEME, the Water Agencies, the European Commission or EDF)
- **57 will require "no additional needs"** or will be carried out "on a like-for-like basis".

The Green Fund is mentioned as the main financing tool for many of the measures in the PNACC-3. However, this Fund has only been allocated 1.15 billion euros for 2025, compared with 2.5 billion euros for 2024 - a budget cut by more than half, which compromises the effective implementation of the measures that depend on it.

At the same time, the PNACC-3 provides for a 30% increase in the 'Fonds de prévention des risques naturels majeurs' (Barnier Fund) to 300 million euros. However, without redirection to the State's general budget, the increase in the 'Cat Nat' (natural disaster) surcharge should have automatically raised the Barnier Fund to 450 million euros. This increase would appear to be largely insufficient to meet the costs already identified, particularly given the decline in other financing tools, such as the Green Fund, and the number of the PNACC-3 measures dependant on it. Other funding requested for adaptation is decreasing rather than increasing: this is the case, for example, of the budget for the Hedge Pact, which will fall by 59% in 2025.

The consequences of this financial imbalance are numerous. Some major risks have no budget allocated at all: measures to protect the population against flooding, for example, are not currently financed (measure 3 of the PNACC-3).

Similarly, adapting agriculture and livestock farming would require a reorientation of agricultural subsidies and greater support for farmers. However, the PNACC-3 does not provide the necessary resources for this transition to agroecology. The announcement of training for professionals in the sector from 2026 remains vague: no budget has been allocated to it, and no quantified objectives have been set.

Beyond the lack of resources, the PNACC-3 suffers from a lack of monitoring and evaluation. It provides for the introduction of indicators, but these are limited to measuring the implementation of administrative actions (such as the creation of a working group or the publication of a plan), and not the actual effects of the measures adopted in the field, which would enable the strategy to be adjusted accordingly.

More broadly, the PNACC 3 does not provide any feedback on the effectiveness of the measures proposed in previous strategies and plans, despite the numerous reports drawn up over the last decade or so by various bodies, authorities and institutions, which have identified weaknesses and areas for improvement in many areas.

Finally, the plan does not challenge the logic of operating in silos, which hinders the integration of adaptation issues into all public policies. This lack of coherence exposes the country to contradictory decisions, such as the current debate surrounding the relaxation of the Zero Net Artificial Development (ZAN) objective: to protect its inhabitants from flooding, the State must respect its commitments in this area and thus avoid aggravating run-off phenomena. In its opinion on the PNACC-3, the HCC observed that "the content of certain laws in preparation or recently adopted risks aggravating exposure and vulnerability to climate change, notably by weakening environmental standards in the fields of development (including artificialization), agriculture and ecosystem protection".

FRANCE FACING ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

A strategy that overlooks inequalities and neglects the French Overseas Territories

Poor and modest households - women, children, the elderly, marginalized groups - are on the front line of the consequences of climate change: they are both more exposed to risk and more vulnerable, as they often lack the economic, social and cultural resources, mobility and access to rights to adapt. Yet the PNACC-3 barely takes account of inequalities in exposure and vulnerability to climate risks.

In its opinion on the PNACC-3, the HCC points out that "certain specific vulnerabilities (inhabitants of densely populated areas, children, pregnant women, the elderly, people with disabilities, poverty, people with chronic illnesses) have not been sufficiently taken into account". In the case of heatwaves, for example, it is clear that the PNACC-3 does not take sufficient account of certain well-documented vulnerabilities, notably for pregnant women, the elderly and people with medical conditions. Certain drugs listed by the Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé (French National Agency for Drug and Health Product Safety), such as certain antiepileptics and treatments for Parkinson's disease, are likely to alter the body's adaptation to heat. The phenomenon of urban heat islands also affects the population unevenly: households below the poverty line are more exposed and have fewer resources to escape the heat. In its planning, the State should therefore systematically take into account the particular vulnerability of certain categories of the population.



Photo: Damage to infrastructure after Hurricane Belal hit La Réunion. © Lewis Joly / Greenpeace

Nor does PNACC-3 address the challenges faced by French Overseas Territories. In its report dated May 27, 2024, the French National Assembly's commission of inquiry into the management of major natural hazards in the French Overseas Territories recommended that the plan integrate these specific issues into the prevention of major natural hazards. Each territory should be provided with trajectories adapted to its geographical situation (TRACCs being developed by Météo France), and specific issues should be taken into account, such as lack of land availability, informal housing, protection against cyclones and structural deficiencies in access to water. Even before cyclone Chido, access to water was "almost impossible" in Mayotte.

"When you live in social housing, you have less time and fewer resources to adapt to climate change. My family and I live in a precarious situation, in unsanitary social housing, and the inequalities we suffer reinforce our vulnerability to climatic events."

Salma Chaoui,
Student, Paris



05

LEGAL ACTION

Faced with the structural shortcomings of the PNACC-3, the legal action launched by affected citizens against the State aims to have the judges force it to meet its adaptation obligations through concrete, financed measures that genuinely protect everyone.



Photo: Facade of the Council of State, Paris

AN UNPRECEDENTED LEGAL ACTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION, FOR A STATE OBLIGATION TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

This case will be filed directly with the Conseil d'État, France's highest administrative court. As the PNACC-3 is an act issued by ministers, the Conseil d'État is the court of first and last instance, in accordance with the French Code of Administrative Justice.

The action taken is based on a "recours pour excès de pouvoir" (appeal for excess of jurisdiction), which enables a government decision deemed illegal to be challenged before the administrative courts. In this particular case, it is being used to challenge the inadequacies of the PNACC-3 and, more broadly, of public policies for adapting to climate change, in order to strengthen them.

It is important to note that this request is first addressed to the State to allow it to respond. This prior request is necessary in order to be able to file the petition with the Conseil d'État, in the event of no response or an unsatisfactory response from the State. Each party's interest in acting will be specified at the time of referral to the Conseil d'État.

The main purpose of the legal action is to request that the PNACC-3 be strengthened, and that all necessary measures be adopted to ensure or reinforce France's adaptation to the effects of climate change.

05

LEGAL ACTION

The shortcomings of climate change adaptation measures are specified, with particular reference to PNACC-3. This includes the following issues:

- lack of an exhaustive study of risks and vulnerabilities;
- taking into account a single reference trajectory;
- lack of prioritization;
- extensive incentives and awareness-raising measures;
- lack of transformational adaptation measures;
- lack of definition and inadequacy of the financial resources needed to implement the plan's measures;
- inadequate tools for assessing and monitoring the plan;
- insufficient consideration of specific vulnerabilities.

This appeal is part of a growing body of case law in Europe and around the world, in which courts are recognizing the responsibility of governments in the face of climate change. The aim is clear: to get the courts to force the State to immediately and significantly strengthen its climate change adaptation policies, in order to effectively protect populations from present and future risks.



Photo: Future lawsuit (Legal action for the future) in Germany in September 2024. Over 35,000 people have joined the complaint initiated by Greenpeace, Germanwatch, and others, which has been submitted to the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe. © Anne Barth / Greenpeace

05

LEGAL ACTION

In support of these claims, the appeal reiterates the State's obligations in terms of adaptation, and demonstrates the inadequacy of current measures - including the PNACC-3 - in terms of flood prevention, managing access to water, heat waves, fire-fighting, preventing the effects of clay shrinkage and swelling on housing, and supporting farmers in the face of agricultural losses.

The appeal relies in particular on the State's general obligation to adapt to climate change, derived from constitutional texts, in particular the Charter of the Environment, and reinforced by international law, law of the Council of Europe and European law



REGULATION (EU) 2021/1119 OF JUNE 30, 2021, KNOWN AS THE "EUROPEAN CLIMATE LAW"

Article 5 of this regulation imposes a "steady progress" obligation on EU member states, as well as an obligation to adopt and implement national adaptation strategies and plans.



THE CHARTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT (CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS)

On the basis of the principles set out in the Charter of the Environment (Article 1 and Article 3), it will be demonstrated that the State has an obligation to adopt the necessary measures to effectively combat climate change and adapt to its consequences, with a view to limiting, preventing or mitigating its harmful effects.



THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS (ECHR)

The appeal is based on both Article 2 and Article 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which respectively guarantee the right to life and the right to respect for private and family life. With regard to the right to life, this includes "the positive obligation of States to take all necessary measures to protect the lives of persons under their jurisdiction".

Thus, the French State has an obligation to take all necessary measures to reduce exposure to natural risks linked to climate change that could lead to the death of human beings, and to inform those concerned of the existence of such risks. With regard to the right to respect for private and family life, the ECHR in the case of the Swiss Elders for Climate, recognized that this right must be interpreted as "encompassing a right for individuals to effective protection, by State authorities, against the serious adverse effects of climate change on their life, health, well-being and quality of life".

This decision imposes positive obligations on States, i.e. obligations to act, to prevent and limit these effects. The protection of the rights guaranteed by Article 8 entails an obligation on States to put measures into place to mitigate the effects of climate change, as well as to adopt measures to adapt to climate change.

CLIMATE RISKS CONSIDERED IN THE APPEAL

Floods, heatwaves, water shortages, clay shrinkage and swelling, agricultural losses... This appeal, filed by disaster victims, targets these major risks, the frequency and intensity of which are increasing under the impact of climate change. Their impact, which has already been widely documented and publicized in the media, highlights the State's inaction and the urgent need for an effective adaptation strategy, financed and commensurate with the stakes. Fires and sea level rise are also addressed in the appeal, although no victims are directly represented.



Heat waves

Heat waves have become a recurrent reality in France. Whereas before 1989, heatwaves occurred on average every five summers, since 2000 they have occurred almost every year, if not several times a year.

In 2024, heat caused 3,700 deaths in France, including 600 during heatwaves. In the European Union, heat waves were responsible for 60,000 deaths in 2022, half of which can be directly attributed to climate change.

The intensification of heat waves is having a profound effect on society:

- housing that has become unlivable: 55% of French people said they had suffered from heat in their homes for at least 24 hours in 2023. This problem particularly affects those of modest means, who often live in poorly insulated dwellings with no sun protection or effective ventilation,
- devastating effects on health: extreme heat increases the risk of premature deaths, aggravates certain medical conditions (notably cardiac, respiratory and neurological) and reduces the effectiveness of certain medical treatments (e.g. anti-epileptic drugs). It also increases the risk of premature childbirth,
- unsafe working conditions: between 2000 and 2020, the number of workers dying from heat-related causes rose by 42% in the EU.

KEY FIGURES

3,700 HEAT-RELATED DEATHS

in France in 2024.

55% OF FRENCH PEOPLE

suffered from heat at home for at least 24 hours in 2023

In the face of this reality, the adaptation of buildings to heat remains very insufficient. However, solutions exist: controlling the amount of glazed surfaces, certain insulations, sun protections, air circulators, ventilation systems, among others, can improve the habitability of housing in the face of heatwaves. Some essential infrastructures that host vulnerable populations, such as hospitals, nursing homes, daycare centers, and social housing, should also be renovated to better withstand extreme heat episodes.





Clay shrinkage and swelling

Clay shrinkage and swelling (CSW) is one of the most costly effects of climate change on housing. This natural phenomenon is amplified by increased drought and precipitation: in periods of high heat, the clay in the soil shrinks, then swells again as humidity returns. This irregular movement leads to major cracks in buildings, which can even render them uninhabitable.

Today, almost half of mainland France is at medium or high risk of CSW, and 54% of French single-family homes are affected. This represents over 10.4 million single-family homes at high risk of defect.

The economic impact is considerable. CSW alone accounts for 70% of compensation paid for natural disasters between 2018 and 2023, or 1.5 billion euros per year. And the situation is set to get worse: according to the Caisse Centrale de Réassurance, the annual cost of CSW-related claims could rise by 44% by 2050, taking into account a scenario close to the reference warming trajectory for adaptation to climate change (TRACC). This puts the sustainability of the entire compensation system at risk, at a time when insurance companies are already finding it very difficult to cover claims.

To cope, the French government must make CSW risk prevention a priority. Although 30 million euros have been announced, for 10.4 million single-family homes at high risk, this amounts to just 3 euros per home. Far from the conservative minimum of 100 million a year recommended by the Ledoux Report, this additional budget will not prevent or reduce the occurrence of damage. It is imperative that this risk be systematically taken into account during energy renovations, which also presupposes training for those involved in the renovation and construction sectors. The changes to the legislative and regulatory framework adopted in 2024 must be continued, with a more precise timetable, so that all buyers or tenants of property located in medium or high exposure zones are informed of the risk. A zero-interest loan could be set up to finance CSW protection work. The French government must act to support the millions of residents whose homes have been and will continue to be damaged, so that they do not find themselves isolated in deteriorating living conditions.

Photo: SSC causes facade cracks, deformations around joinery, and even pipe ruptures, particularly in individual houses. © Nian Shan / Greenpeace



KEY FIGURES

54% OF FRENCH HOUSES

affected by a medium or high risk of CSW

1.5 BILLION EUROS

in compensations paid between 2018 and 2023



Floods

Flooding is already one of the most devastating natural hazards in France, and its intensification as a result of climate change is now indisputable. Rising temperatures and sea levels are increasing the frequency of flooding. More than a quarter of the population is at risk, and flooding accounts for half of all natural disasters recorded in France between 1982 and 2023. The scale of the phenomenon is striking: more than half of France's départements were affected by flooding between November 2023 and June 2024.

Flooding can have several causes: overflowing rivers, due to more intense rainfall; urban runoff, aggravated by soil artificialisation and the loss of natural absorption areas; rising water tables, in the event of soil saturation; marine submersions, amplified by rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

Floods cause considerable material losses and threaten human lives. Between 2020 and 2050, flood-related insurance claims are expected to total 50 billion euros, an 81% increase on previous decades.

In the face of rising flood risks, solutions exist and must be implemented without delay. Flood risk management must integrate the impacts of climate change, based on rigorous, up-to-date planning. This means updating and extending risk prevention and management tools nationwide, to ensure effective anticipation and adaptation to the new climatic challenges. In addition, compliance with commitments to prevent the artificialization of land is an essential lever for limiting the worsening of run-off and protecting urban areas, which are particularly vulnerable to flooding and submersion. Finally, the restoration and protection of aquatic ecosystems must be at the heart of adaptation strategies. Revegetating catchment areas and preserving wetlands are effective natural solutions for improving water retention and significantly reducing the risk of flooding.

KEY FIGURES

**1 IN 2 DEPARTMENTS
AFFECTED**

by flooding between November 2023 and June 2024

81% INCREASE

in flood-related insurance claims between 2020 and 2050



Photo: Floods in Esbly, Seine-et-Marne



Access to water

Water is an essential resource for life: a minimum of 50 liters of water per person per day is required to meet basic hydration and hygiene needs. However, access to sufficient, high-quality water is becoming increasingly precarious in France, particularly as a result of climate change and dilapidated infrastructure.

Over the past 15 years, the volume of water available in France has fallen by 14%, an alarming trend that is set to worsen over the coming decades.

Water losses due to leaking pipes are considerable: on average, one in five liters of drinking water is lost in France, and in some communities, more than half of the drinking water is lost before reaching inhabitants. Losses are even more severe in the French Overseas Territories: 37% of drinking water is lost in La Réunion, 42% in Martinique. In several territories, such as Guadeloupe, there is a discontinuity in the public drinking water supply service, with frequent cut-offs. In Mayotte, the situation is even more critical. Even before Cyclone Chido, access to water was "almost impossible", leading to an increase in cases of acute diarrhoea, dehydration and gastroenteritis. At a time when climate change is profoundly altering the water cycle, affecting the availability of the resource, the State must guarantee its population the right to reliable drinking water services.

Investment in the renovation of drinking water networks is necessary to limit losses and ensure equitable distribution throughout the country. The specific features of each Overseas Territory must be taken into account to ensure effective access to water (crisis situations that have already existed for many years, the legacy of colonial history on the dynamics of access to water, plurality of water cultures, among others).

KEY FIGURES

**42% OF DRINKING WATER
LOST**

in Martinique due to leaks

NEAR IMPOSSIBLE ACCESS

to drinking water in Mayotte, even before Cyclone Chido



Photo: An area devastated by Cyclone Chido in Bouyouuni (Mayotte), December 24, 2024. (AP pic, Creative Commons)



Agricultural losses

In 2022, drought and heat waves led to significant yield reductions. Cereal harvests, for example, fell by 10.5% between 2021 and 2022, and a drop of between 20 and 30% was observed for corn. Some agricultural crops are particularly affected by the decline in water resources, and their irrigation needs may give rise to conflicts of use.

Milder winters and earlier springs also encourage earlier blooming, exposing crops to late frosts. As a result, in 2021, fruit tree production was hit hard (-40% apricot production compared with 2020).

Finally, floods also have a considerable impact: they cause excess mortality in livestock, destroy crops and farm equipment, degrade soil and generate massive economic losses.

Faced with these challenges, the development of agroecology is an essential solution. It would reduce dependence on irrigation, preserve soils and increase the resilience of the agricultural sector. France Stratégie emphasizes that the widespread adoption of agroecological practices, combined with better management of irrigated areas, would limit pressure on water resources. The IPCC, for its part, asserts that agroecology strengthens "resilience to climate change, with multiple co-benefits".

For such a global transformation to succeed, the State should support farmers in their transition to more resilient, water-efficient farming practices (e.g. soil cover, crop rotations, agroforestry). We need to develop an agricultural policy that is compatible with adaptation to climate change, by reducing overexploitation of water resources and setting up support and training schemes to help farms.

KEY FIGURES

-40% APRICOT PRODUCTION

between the productions of 2020 and 2021, due to late frosts

-20% TO 30% CORN PRODUCTION

between 2021 and 2022, due to droughts



Photo: Unusual drought in France, vineyard harvest failure

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