

**Plan B for
Europe
European
Parliament
Election
Programme 2019**



**Partij voor
de Dieren**

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Introduction

Plan B for Europe

Can green and progressive ideas be combined with a critical attitude towards Brussels and Strasbourg?

They surely can! And this is badly needed. The European Union is doing everything in its power to win the sympathy of the voters with popular measures, such as low cost calling and mobile internetting everywhere in Europe, and European student grants. But at the same time, the EU fails to take action against the threat to our future: climate change. We have the moral obligation to the climate crisis and to preserve the Earth for the next generations. For humans and animals. Brussels does not seem to feel that obligation enough.

Cooperating for more democracy

Criticising the European Union does not mean that the Party for the Animals is against international cooperation. It is not a coincidence that there are now 20 parties for the animals across the world, all inspired by the Dutch Party for the Animals. At least ten of them will participate in the European Parliamentary Elections next May. Together we want to change Europe.

However, we are highly critical of the current, undemocratic form of the European Union. Many people in Europe feel uncomfortable about the influence of the EU on their country. About tightening the budgetary standards of the eurozone, which oblige the Member States to cut into public services, such as healthcare and education. And about the 2,600 billion euros of uncovered cheques pumped into the European financial sector by the Chairman of the European Bank Mario Draghi, in an effort to make the people believe that that would make the economy flourish again. The Party for the Animals shares this discomfort with increasingly more citizens. Cooperation between democratic governments can bring about improvements for humans, animals, nature and the environment. But that is not what Brussels focuses on.

Agricultural subsidies and free trade cost more than we like

In the current European Union there is plenty of room for mega farms, plant and animal species are becoming extinct, overfishing continues unabated, and ecosystems are disrupted. The agricultural and fisheries subsidies have represented the highest costs of the EU for years. The intensive poultry industry has used those subsidies for conducting its promotion campaigns, and bullfighting is maintained with it. Oceans are depleted of fish at the expense of taxpayers. Developing countries run into trouble because subsidised, and thus dirt-cheap, European products are dumped on their markets.

Free trade agreements like the one with Ukraine result in false competition for farmers in the EU with intensively farmed chickens and factory farm eggs. All this while Member States are increasingly losing their authority to Brussels without involving their citizens.

Economic integration used to be the means to ensure peace between countries; currently, the EU has grown into a technocratic machine to serve short-term economic interests. Europe trusts blindly on economic growth and hijacks the debate by focusing on short-term human interests. The EU diminishes citizens to consumers and taxpayers - and animals to consumables.

The EU is bad for animal welfare

The Party for the Animals' second concern is the way Eurocrats are pushing through their dream of a United States of Europe, without listening to what citizens want.

Does that automatically make everything the European Union does bad? Of course not. European cooperation can be very useful. For example, for the protection of waters, nature conservation areas and animals in wildlife, effected through European legislation, where the Netherlands is still finding it hard to meet the European standards in flora and fauna. The EU has also made steps in the area of animal welfare, i.e. the ban on battery cages and curtailment of the use of pulse techniques in the fishing industry. But compared with the huge industrialisation and the expansion in the agricultural sector - very much encouraged by Europe with its unilateral focus on production increase - only minor steps have been taken to heal the wounds. The traditional battery cages may be banned, but Europe does not mind that chickens are kept en masse in 'enriched' cages: wallpa-

pered battery cages. And the endless animal transports with overloaded livestock trucks is a direct result of exaggerated free trade.

Above all, most decisions made in the interest of animals, nature and the environment were taken in the 90s, when the EU still consisted of only 15 Member States. With twenty-eight, mainly conservative Member States, the European ambitions for appropriate, strict rules in the area of animal welfare, nature and the environment have almost completely disappeared.

Disabled ambitions

After initially having been the driving force behind appropriate climate arrangements worldwide, the poor climate objectives that Europe has now set for itself are a sad reflection of the lack of ambition and solution-oriented approach. In short, the bigger the EU has grown, the more European rules have become part of the lowest common denominator. We live in a Europe of the minimum. The problem is that Member States use Europe as an excuse for not having to do anything themselves. It is like they say in politics: 'no national add-ons to European policy.' As a result, the EU cripples policies at national level and further ambitions of Member States are ended. In some cases, the EU even prohibits Member States from taking progressive measures.

A new, sustainable course for Europe

The tide must turn. A new course for Europe, with different forms of European cooperation: that is what the Party for the Animals advocates in the European Parliament. Cooperation that is aimed at realising ideals: sustainability, compassion, freedom, and responsibility. And not at looking after economic short-term interests. The Party for the Animals wants a Europe that gives both humans and animals the chance of living a good and full life.

Such a Europe consists of independent countries that democratically decide to make cross-border arrangements together. Which share key values and agree to uphold them - and to help each other with this and to adhere to them. In such a cooperation, countries can learn from and support each other to reach a better society that is in harmony with their living environment. That is only possible if we stop considering economic growth as a holy grail, and start working on decreasing our ecological footprint instead.

We have to talk about what type of society we want, based on what values, what life we want to live, and how we can enable ourselves and others - humans and animals - to live this life now and in the long term. The European society that the Party for the Animals stands for gives priority to sustainability and compassion over short-term economic gain. It respects the freedom and privacy of its citizens and gives them a greater role in decision-making than banks, multinationals and Brussels' lobbyists.

The green hare in the marathon

Will a yet still small party like the Party for the Animals actually be able to make a difference in the European Union? Yes, it will! The Party for the Animals has already demonstrated in the Dutch Lower House that it has a disproportional influence on debates with its five seats, and that it is able to encourage changes. It is like that in Europe too. Because the Party for the Animals addresses issues in Europe too that no one else comes up with. Like the hare in the marathon we will continue unabatedly to encourage, inspire and challenge others to start running faster than they ever imagined. Our arguments against the European Union in its current form are green and progressive. A new phenomenon, averse to nationalism or human short-term interest, but rooted in the planet-wide interests of sustainability and compassion. A green hare in the marathon will also get the European Union to make a move.

Only an exceptional party like the Party for the Animals can shake matters up in Brussels and Strasbourg by its unconventional actions, bold proposals and contrary reactions.

There is a world to be won. Stick to your ideals. Vote Party for the Animals.

1. Agriculture and Food

Healthy agriculture, sustainable food

Agriculture is not an industry and animals are not machines. Future-proof agriculture is mainly focussed on plant-based food, free of pesticides, fertiliser or gentech and contributes to maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Today's contemporary livestock farming is intolerable.

Europe's joint agricultural policy has made many victims over the years; the billions of animals who suffer and die in the European livestock industry each year; nature and the environment that have been severely affected by the use of pesticides, fertiliser and eutrophication. Small farm businesses were put on a disastrous road to grow more and more. All of this, at the expense of the European taxpayer: tens of billions of euros are spent on agricultural subsidies on an annual basis, which particularly benefits large businesses.

If it would be up to the Party for the Animals, the European agricultural policy would be completely reformed. Its ultimate goal being an ecological, animal-friendly agriculture that produces healthy food and which is not dependent on imports at the expense of humans and animals elsewhere. But this makes it inevitable that the number of animals in the livestock industry will be reduced and requires a switch to a more plant-based food pattern.

Farming

Abolishing the livestock industry

Current livestock farming is intolerable. More than 7 billion animals are kept and slaughtered in the EU for the production of meat, dairy products and eggs every year. In addition to animal suffering, it also creates an enormous environmental burden and causes greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants. This is how the livestock industry contributes to global warming and biodiversity deterioration to such a great extent.

- Countries that fail to observe the European regulations already made in the field of animal welfare are severely dealt with through high penalties and other sanctions. This applies, for example, to the plucking of live geese and the tail docking of piglets.
- A limit will be established for the production of milk by setting a maximum production per acre of grassland. Other sectors in livestock farming will also become soil-bound.
- Mega farms and animal welfare do not go together. A European ban on the establishment and development of mega farms will be introduced. Europe is encouraging a reduction in animal numbers.
- Strict fire safety regulations will be introduced for existing and new barns and holding rooms: the animals kept must in any case be able to leave the barn in case of fire.

Room to root about

Chickens should have room for dust bathing, pigs have to be able to root about, and sheep and goats should be in grasslands. As long as animals are bred and killed for food purposes, livestock farming systems should be adjusted to the needs of animals instead of the other way around. The European Union indeed sets minimum welfare conditions for the way animals are kept, but these are insufficient and used by countries as an excuse for not having to impose stricter regulations themselves.

- Animals should not be behind bars; the use of cages in livestock farming will be prohibited. In the livestock industry, all animals should be able to exhibit their natural behaviour.
- All animals should have the option to go outside and also have sufficient shelters available. This will be laid down in a directive.
- In the barns animals should have sufficient room, straw and distraction material.
- Cows will be kept in family flocks. Calves will no longer be taken away from their mother straight after birth, but will be allowed to drink the milk that is meant for them.
- Keeping calves in cages on a low-iron diet to produce white veal will be prohibited.

- Farrowing boxes in which pigs are housed between bars for weeks on end will be prohibited. Sows will be given the chance to nest and to look after their piglets.
- A stop will be put to painful interventions, such as beak trimming in chickens, dehorning of cows, unsexed castration of piglets, piglet tail docking and piglet teeth clipping.
- Europe will immediately prohibit the production, trade and import of foie gras (goose or duck liver).

No intensively farmed animals

Many animals have been used for breeding so many times that they can no longer reproduce in a natural way or they grow extremely fast within a short time. This results in serious welfare issues. A stop should be put to this.

- A prohibition will be introduced for selective breeding, i.e. on extreme growth rates of chickens and pigs, and on extreme high production for milking cows and breeding sows. Intensively farmed chickens that keep falling over and double-muscle cows that are not able to give birth in a natural way will belong to the past.
- The unnatural and often painful reproduction methods used for special breeds that can no longer reproduce in a natural way will be prohibited.
- The cloning of animals for production purposes will stay prohibited. The import of and trade in (products of) genetically manipulated animals and their descendants will be prohibited.
- The (outdated) European identification rules, which oblige the use of eartags, will vanish. Conscientious objectors will by default be given an exemption until that time.

Abuses in slaughterhouses and during animal transports come to an end

If animals are transported or slaughtered, they must suffer and experience as little stress as possible. The Party for the Animals wants to stop cruel animal transports and serious animal suffering during slaughter.

- Animals may not be transported for more than two hours.
- Live animal transports to and from countries outside the European Union will no longer be permitted.
- The number of movements per animal will be reduced. The European Union will oblige Member States to introduce a toll on animal transports and to equip livestock trailers with a GPS device.
- Compliance with European transport regulations will be checked and maintained more strictly.
- Animals should be better protected during slaughter. The Party for the Animals wants to implement CCTV monitoring in all slaughterhouses across Europe.
- Animals will no longer be slaughtered by methods that cause serious distress, such as waterbath stunning for chickens and carbon dioxide anaesthesia for pigs.
- No animal will be slaughtered or killed without sedation. Nor will ritual slaughter be permitted without sedation.
- A prohibition will be introduced on the European import and trade of the meat of animals that have been slaughtered without sedation. As long as unsexed slaughter is not prohibited, labelling will be mandatory.
- Meat, dairy products and eggs will be clearly labelled specifying where the relevant animal was born, kept and - in case of meat - slaughtered. Misleading indications of the origin of animal products will belong to the past.
- The use, the production, the sale and the import of the fertility hormone 'Pregnant Mare Serum Gonadotropin' (PMSG), for which pregnant mares are abused and deprived from their blood in South American blood farms, will be prohibited in EU Member States.

Health of people and animals first

By regionalisation, banishing long-distance transports and reducing the livestock industry we will furthermore reduce the risk of large-scale outbreaks of animal diseases.

- The European non-vaccination policy will be abolished and preventive animal-friendly measures will be taken to fight the outbreaks of animal diseases.
- During an outbreak of non-fatal animal diseases it will be standard to let the disease run its natural course and to let the animal recover. Animals may no longer be killed for economic reasons only.

- Strict rules will be applied to the use of antibiotics in livestock farms. The preventive use of antibiotics will be abolished. Remedies that are necessary for humans will no longer be used for animals.
- Shooting wildlife animals to prevent animal diseases like (African) swine fever or bird flu is counterproductive; in fact, wounded animals increase the chance of spreading the diseases. Shooting to prevent the distribution of animal diseases will be prohibited.
- Europe will prohibit the establishment and expansion of goat farms. EU subsidies for goat farms will be cancelled.

Fish

Restricting catches

Our seas and oceans are seriously threatened. One in three fish populations in Europe are being overfished. In Southern waters like the Mediterranean this runs up to 90%.

Apart from our 'own' waters, European fisheries also plunder fishing areas outside Europe, for example, off the coast of Africa.

The Party for the Animals wants to abolish the idea that fish is not worth anything if it is not caught by humans. We want respect for the intrinsic value of underwater life and an immediate ban on overfishing.

- Overfishing will be prohibited. Not only the number of fish, but also the total population build-up will be considered when determining the permitted fishing.
- 30% of the European waters will be designated as protected nature reserves, where fishing will be prohibited.
- In places where ecosystems and fishing banks are degrading, a moratorium on fishing will be called for to give nature a chance to recover. A fishing ban on the most vulnerable fish species, such as eel, cod and tuna will be implemented in the short term.
- The EU will scale down the overcapacity of the fishing fleet.
- The Party for the Animals wants to abolish the fisheries subsidies at once. The fishing capacity for overseas EU territories will not be increased.
- The stunning of fish, immediately after they are caught and prior to their slaughter, will be standard practice on board of all fishing vessels. There will be a prohibition on catching and killing methods which cause long-term suffering for fish.
- Destructive fishing techniques will be discontinued. Monster trawlers, floating fish factories, deep-sea fishing and beam trawls that destroy the seabed with their towed nets will be part of the past.
- Electric pulse fishing, which uses electric shocks to drive flatfish into fishing nets, is an extremely animal-unfriendly technique which can seriously injure fish. Additionally, the technique is still damaging the seabed. The EU therefore maintains its prohibition on electric pulse fishing.
- Strict compliance with existing arrangements to abolish harmful fishing practices will be introduced. The prohibition of dumping caught fish at sea in order to catch commercially attractive fish (highgrading) will be seriously checked, including by cameras or supervision on board, at the expense of the sector.
- Fishing vessels of shipowners who do not observe the rules will be chained.
- The EU will strongly reduce bycatch by imposing a prohibition on non-selective fishing methods. Bycatches will be registered and landed, after which they will be deducted from the catch quota, which will be lowered as a result.
- Fishing techniques which involve bycatches of sea birds, sea mammals and turtles, will be prohibited.
- The Party for Animals wants to stop the use of trammel and drift nets. Porpoises among other fish get caught in these standing nets or floating walls, which suffocates them.

No fish farms

Fish farms are a new way of factory farming and are no solution for the problem of overfishing: many farmed fish are fed on wild caught fish. They are not sustainable and far from animal-friendly.

- There will be no new fish farms as long as the welfare of fish cannot be guaranteed and they are fed on wild caught fish.
- A test on animal welfare and sustainability will be implemented for existing fish farms. Farms that do not meet the requirements of animal welfare and sustainability will not be granted a new permit.
- Fish stunning prior to slaughter will become a standard procedure in fish farms.
- Strict rules will be applied to the use of antibiotics. The preventive use of antibiotics will be abolished.

Welfare of marine invertebrates

Lobsters, crabs and other marine invertebrates are not protected by any law in the European Union. This is strange, because there is increasing evidence that marine invertebrates most certainly have feelings and can experience pain.

- Cooking lobsters, crabs and prawns alive will be prohibited.
- Lobsters and crabs may no longer be sold alive.
- The European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming will be expanded, so that it will also apply to invertebrates that can experience pain.

International

Sustainable farming for a fair world

The way in which Europeans consume and produce has a direct effect on the lives of humans and animals in other countries. In their hunt for cheap food and biofuels, Western countries are capturing increasingly more land. The Party for the Animals wants an agricultural policy that does not harm developing countries.

- European agricultural and fisheries subsidies will disappear, creating opportunities for farmers in developing countries.
- Fishery agreements between the EU and third-world countries are robbery agreements and will no longer be concluded.
- Europe helps developing countries to fight fish poaching, but no longer in exchange for access to fishing waters for the European fishing fleet.
- Stricter agreements will be made to stop the capture of land.
- The same environmental and animal welfare demands should apply to products from outside the European Union as to products within Europe. Producers from developing countries will be given assistance to meet the European demands and to process their own raw materials into high-quality products.
- The massive import of (GM) soy and (GM) maize for cattle feed will be stopped.
- The World Trade Organisation recognises animal welfare as a criterium for countries to refuse the import of animal-unfriendly products.

Sustainability ensures food security

People in developing countries are directly dependent on the quality of their environment for their food: a fertile soil, clean water, biodiversity and the presence of other necessary resources. The European Union may not endanger them.

- To fight the effects of climate change and desertification the EU will promote the recovery of ecosystems and the protection of existing nature.
- The EU will stop encouraging and exporting any systems for industrial agriculture, such as mega farms, fertiliser, agricultural chemicals and GM crops. Instead, investments will be made in regional, agro-ecological agriculture and in regional infrastructure.
- Scientific knowledge, new technology and starting material for sustainable agriculture (such as seeds) are essential for sustainable developments. The EU will actively endeavour that patents and other obstacles will not prevent people in developing countries from achieving this. Patents on forms of life will not be granted.

Food

Stop food waste

All over the world, more than enough food is cultivated to feed the entire world population, but too much food is being wasted. The main food wastage is the feeding of animals with food that is also suitable for humans. If we want a fair distribution of food, we have to eat less animal-based and more plant-based products. In the interest of animals, nature and the environment - but also for our own health.

- Grains and vegetable oils will no longer be used as cattle feed for the livestock industry.
- The Party for the Animals wants the EU to strongly support the development of vegetable substitutes for meat, fish and dairy products.
- We want the extreme special meat offers to disappear, and a fair price to be paid for milk and eggs.
- In accordance with the 'polluter pays principle' the EU will reconsider its VAT Directive: in future it will be possible to set a low rate for sustainable food and a high rate for products that involve environmental damage and animal distress.
- Europe will not contribute to advertising campaigns for meat or dairy products.
- The future supply of restaurants in European institutions will in principle be plant-based. Everyone is free to eat meat or fish, but they will have to ask for it. Foie gras or endangered species such as eel will no longer be on the menu.
- Food will be labelled with information about animal welfare, health aspects and the ecological footprint. This will enable consumer to make a sounder choice.
- Many European regulations on best-before dates and external characteristics of food encourage food wastage. Citizens are well informed of the shelf-life of food and how to preserve it, as a result of which less food will end up in the bin.
- Europe will stimulate the development of urban farming and food forests.
- Using biofuel has a major negative effect on climate and environment. The EU will abolish the mandatory requirement for blending biofuels and prevent food crops from being produced or imported as (bio)fuel.

A healthy market for healthy food

The value of sustainable, honest food should be reflected in the price we pay. The real price for food is concealed by the subsidies of millions of euros, giving consumers the idea that food is cheap. The real costs of intensive agriculture and the effect on the environment are hidden from citizens. A change to a sustainable food system is needed, giving farmers a decent price for a quality product.

- The Common Agricultural Policy will be thoroughly reformed. A stop will be put to the subsidies of millions of euros that are presently being given to farmers. The budget will be used to have farmers switch to ecological agriculture and will be abolished afterwards. Organic vegetable products will be supported so that farmers can eventually earn a good living without any subsidy.
- Over the past few years, Europe has spent millions of euros of additional tax money on storing an excess of pork. The production of surpluses of meat, eggs and dairy products is impermissible. A stop will be put to buy-outs and subsidy schemes.
- European money will no longer be allocated to research that is aimed at the further intensification of non-sustainable factory farming or the livestock industry.
- Subsidies for bullfighting and other traditions using animals will no longer be awarded.
- Farmers and horticulturists will receive a fair price for their products. The buying power of supermarkets and big producers will be restricted.
- The Party for the Animals wants Europe to combat cross-border fraudulent practices in the food and feed chain. Food traders suspected of fraud may no longer carry out activities relating to the food and feed chain in any EU country at all.

Prohibiting agricultural chemicals

Vegetables, grains, legumes and fruit are the foundation of good food. Here, the transition to sustainable production methods is also necessary. The cultivation of vegetable food should no longer be dependent on fertiliser.

We want to abolish agricultural chemicals: they kill insects and other animals that are of vital importance to the fertility of the soil. The use of agricultural chemicals, for example, leads to a decline in farmland birds. Furthermore, the use of agricultural chemicals is a threat to our drinking and surface waters; and thus to the health of humans and animals.

- The use of fertiliser and agricultural chemicals will be drastically reduced. Pesticides like glyphosate and neonicotinoids (which cause bee mortality) will be completely prohibited. Europe will no longer give permission for the automatic extension of using agricultural chemicals.
- The EU supports the development of safe, alternative crop protection methods.
- Field margins will be planted to advance biodiversity.
- As long as agriculture is not toxic-free, there will be strict protection for people living around arable and horticultural companies against exposure to chemical pesticides. Non-spray zones will be created between fields that are sprayed with pesticides and houses, schools and recreational areas. Nor is spraying permitted in the vicinity of public roads and paths where people walk or cycle.
- Member States have the freedom to prohibit toxic substances if Brussels fails to do so.
- Plants, animals and varieties cannot be the possession of companies. Our food supply should not be allowed to fall in the hands of monopolists. Patents on forms of life will be prohibited.
- The breeder's right (the right of farmers and cultivators to make free use of seeds of their own plants) is important for the diversity of food crops and will be strengthened. Farmers and cultivators should be able to make free use of the existing agro-biodiversity without any patents making it impossible to do so.
- Accounting rules may not hinder the free trade of seeds. The interest of small farmers and horticulturists, food security and the diversity of crops should be favoured. The development of organic resistant varieties and crops will be supported by the EU.

GM-technology free Europe

The Party for the Animals advocates a GM-technology free Europe. Crops that are made resistant to agricultural chemicals with the use of GM technology, such as GM soy and maize, have rapidly encouraged the use of toxic pesticides. Furthermore, genetic manipulation is a threat to customary and organic cultivation because the crops that have been genetically modified can become mixed with the natural variety. A free choice to be GM-technology free will eventually be impossible because of this.

- Europe will not cultivate genetically modified crops (including crispr-cas and cisgenic crops), nor will it import them. Member States should not be forced by Europe to permit the cultivation of GM crops on their territory.
- Labelling for meat, dairy products and eggs from animals that are fed with GM crops will become mandatory.
- New breeding techniques will be thoroughly assessed on their impact on people, animals, the environment, nature, food safety and food security.
- Additionally, regions and countries that declare themselves GM-technology free will be given support and assistance.

Endocrine disruptors

Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are chemicals that interfere with the hormonal systems of humans and animals.

They affect fertility, have an effect on the development of (unborn) children, and can cause diseases, including cancer. As endocrine disruptors are in many products - from receipts to food packaging - it is almost impossible to protect yourself against them.

The Party for the Animals wants to reduce the use of endocrine disruptors as much as possible and to eventually prohibit their use.

- Chemical pesticides with an endocrine disrupting effect will be taken off the market and will no longer be permitted to be used, not even as an exception.
- The EU will take all unsafe endocrine disruptors off the market as soon as possible. Strict inspections will be put in place for the use of endocrine disruptors and for imported products (possibly) containing these substances.

- As long as the endocrine disruptors have not phased out, manufacturers and producers will be obliged to clearly specify on the label which endocrine disruptive chemicals were used in the product.

Independent testing of substances

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) plays a decisive role in the authorisation procedure of pesticides, endocrine disruptors and genetically modified crops.

- The EFSA will be reformed in such a way that this agency operates transparently and completely independently from politics and trade. Recommendations and underlying documents of EFSA will be made public.
- Pesticides, endocrine disruptors and genetically manipulated crops will no longer be tested by producers but by independent scientists and laboratories. The producer that applies for approval will pay this independent test.
- Animal experiments are not permitted when testing yet to be admitted substances and products.

2. Animal rights

Animals are living creatures, not gadgets, toys or accessories and no products or means to entertain people. Animals deserve appropriate protection. This starts with the recognition of their rights and respect for their own nature and needs. It defines the limits of the purposes for which animals may be used.

Since 1992 the European Union has recognised animals as sentient beings with feelings and consciousness. But at the same time that same Europe places religious and cultural traditions - such as bullfighting - above the interests of animals. Also the interests of the market weigh more strongly than those of animals in the EU. Production increase is officially still the main purpose of the agricultural policy. Animals in Europe chiefly have the status of products or commodities.

Animal suffering in the EU is massive and serious. Next to the billions of animals that die in the livestock industry every year, it is still permitted in Europe to breed animals and to kill them for fur, a superfluous and cruel fashion product. Tens of billions of minks, foxes, chinchillas and rabbits are victim to this every year. In Spain and France, bulls are tortured for entertainment, subsidised by the EU. Everywhere in Europe, also in the Netherlands, dolphins and other sea mammals pine away in dolphinariums. And over twelve million animals are used as test animals in Europe every year.

The Party for the Animals rejects the automatic assumption that animals can be used for any purpose. Europe must become much more reluctant towards the use of animals. Entertainment, sports, advertising purposes and fashion are not good reasons to use, harm or kill animals. In the Netherlands and in Europe, the Party for the Animals is the driving force behind and advocate for the improved protection of animals. Europe should support that protection much more, also across its borders. At international level - for example the United Nations - we want the EU to demonstrate that it strongly advocates the importance of animal welfare.

Significantly less animal testing

Many of the present experiments in which animals are used as a measuring instrument, are superfluous or make no sense. Increasingly more scientists also believe in this. Animals are like humans in some ways but because of the great differences in biology it is not always possible to properly translate the results of animals experiments to humans. At the same time, some promising developments took place over the past years, combining techniques from ICT with cell and tissue culture. In this way, animal-free techniques produce better knowledge about the health of humans and animals much faster and more reliably. Yet, animal tests are still considered a golden standard and are compulsory in many cases. Even if they are not essential. The Party for the Animals wants the EU to strongly stimulate animal-free research and test methods and, at the same time, to slow down the use of test animals by stricter criteria as well as stricter testing. This will enable us to reduce animal tests and eventually abolish them completely.

- The Party for the Animals wants a firm raising of the threshold for the performance of animal tests. An extensive literature study prior to the test will become a standard requirement. Applications for experiments that do not serve a substantial interest, such as health claims on foods, will not be approved.
- Animal-free tests will be used for checking vaccinations. If such tests are absent, the relevant animal-free test methodologies will be developed.
- Genetical manipulation of animals will be prohibited. The same goes for the so-called crispr-cas technique.
- Europe will make great investments in non-animal research and test methods.
- We want a large acceleration of the validation of non-animal research and test methods, so that they can be applied everywhere in Europe.
- Data exchange will become obligatory to avoid the duplication of animal tests. Companies, hospitals, universities and other knowledge institutes will be obliged to share their information on the use of test animals with each other. If companies refuse to do so due to company-sensitive information, they must do these studies or tests without using animals.

- Europe will endeavour strict observance of the trade ban on cosmetics that have been tested on animals. Additionally, Europe will endeavour to reach a worldwide prohibition.
- The use of primates in animal experiments will be phased out within the EU as soon as possible.
- An end will be put to the breeding of animals and killing of surplus animals.

Banning fur

After extensive global campaigns by animal protection organisations, the EU has restricted the trade in certain furs: meanwhile, a ban has been imposed on the import of dog, cat and seal furs. But in Europe itself still many animals are bred and killed for their fur. The Party for the Animals wants all fur production to be banned.

- Breeding and killing animals for their fur will be prohibited. European fur breeders will be closed down.
- Europe will close its borders to fur from outside the EU.
- For many clothes, it is still not clear if fur has been used in it or not. As long as a ban on the sale of fur is not imposed, it will be obligatory to use clear labelling for fur products, specifying information on the origin of the fur and the animal suffering behind the product.
- Lobbyists of the fur industry may no longer do fur exhibitions in the European Parliament.

Culture is no excuse for animal suffering

The life and welfare of animals is more important than entertainment, traditions or practices which animals are subject to. Where traditions and religious obligations end, animal suffering begins. We want to stop the suffering of animals in the EU due to traditions, rituals and entertainment.

- The interests of animals are no longer subordinate to culture or religion in European agreements.
- Bullfighting will be banned. No subsidies will be granted to this cruel industry as long as this ban is not in force.
- A European ban on the use of animals in circuses and Dolphinarium will be introduced.

Zoos become refuges

The exhibition of animals is an outmoded custom. Moreover, animals in zoos can only show their natural behaviour to a limited extent. This often leads to apathetic and abnormal behaviour and on top of that, zoos kill healthy animals that they can no longer use or that are too expensive. The Party for the Animals finds this unacceptable and wants to change the function of zoos. The interests of the animals will become central to the entertainment of visitors.

- The number of zoos in Europe will be reduced. Zoos which do not comply with the agreed European regulations will be closed. Instead, zoos will focus on the refuge of animals that cannot support themselves in their original living environment or cannot return to it.
- The housing of the animals will be as close to their natural living circumstances as possible. The breeding of animals in zoos will stop.
- Dolphinariums will be closed. The refuge and return of sea mammals in need can still be the purpose of keeping these animals in captivity.
- Action will be taken against zoos that mutilate animals, preventing them from the ability to exhibit their natural behaviour, i.e. wing curtailment with birds, declawing of predators and pulling their teeth.

No sports at the expense of animals

The Party for the Animals believes that sports or hobbies may not be exercised at the expense of the health and welfare of animals.

- Europe will prohibit games in which hares are chased and torn up by greyhounds (coursing).
- A stop will be put to gambling on games involving animals, such as dog and horse racing.
- Race flights with pigeons will no longer be allowed.
- The use of harmful training methods and means will be prohibited, such as in equestrian sport.
- Horse markets, where horses often have to stand in one place for hours and are exposed to parrying people and loud noises, will be prohibited. A stop will be put to the docking of horse tails.

- The Party for the Animals wants a prohibition on hunting safaris during which endangered or protected animals might be killed. Not only the arranging or offering of these safaris should be prohibited, also the participation in them.

Welfare of pets comes first

At present, there are hardly any requirements with respect to the keeping of animals. Animals which are completely unsuited to be kept as pets, such as kangaroos or raccoons, can be kept and traded without impunity. The Party for the Animals wants to stop this. We strive for the appropriate protection of pets in Europe.

- There will be a short European Positive List, specifying the animals that are suitable to be kept as pets. Animals not specified on that list may no longer be kept or traded.
- We want to halt the barbaric treatment of stray dogs and cats in Europe. There will be a plan of action for tackling the stray animal problem in an appropriate and animal-friendly way. The EU will support projects to refuge, neuter, and return stray animals.
- The large-scale breeding of as many pets as possible in order to sell them via internet and pet shops (commercial breeding) will be prohibited. Puppy mills and the mala fide trading in pets or animals will be dealt with severely. A European obligation to microchip dogs and cats will be introduced as well as an obligatory European registration system for all pets. This is how we will combat mala fide breeders and at the same time ensure that missing animals can be found.
- The Party for the Animals wants to set minimum requirements for the housing and care for pets. The solitary housing of social animals will be prohibited as well as the sale of bowls and pens and cages that are too small.
- Europe will fight the breeding of pets with extreme external characteristics and other hereditary conditions. The breeding of 'designer cats' and overbred dogs will be put to a stop. Inbreeding will be forbidden in animal breeding.
- The number of sales channels of animals will be reduced to prevent impulse purchases. Selling animals via the internet (Facebook), in garden centres, on markets and at fairs will be prohibited.
- Europe will prohibit the docking of ears and tails.

International

Advocating animal welfare

Worldwide there is enormous animal suffering. Outside Europe more than sixty billion animals are kept and slaughtered every year - of which the great majority lives in miserable circumstances. The number of animals used in animal research and the fur industry amounts to tens of billions of animals. Numerous animals are victims of hunting, poaching or cruel entertainment - the latter often in the tourist sector. The EU can do something about this at international forums and through international contacts by acting as an advocate of animal welfare.

- The EU will actively attempt to have the United Nations adopt a Universal Declaration of Animal Welfare.
- The Party for the Animals wants the EU and its Member States to use their diplomatic channels to fight serious forms of animal suffering - for example the use of bile bears or the 'Yulin dog festival' in China and whale hunting and dolphin slaughter by Japan.
- Animal welfare will be fully integrated into European assistance, development and sustainability programmes.
- Animal welfare will become one of the explicit criteria in agreements or treaties with countries outside the EU.
- The EU will not enter into any new treaties or agreements with countries that still hunt for whales and/or other marine mammals, whether this hunting takes place for commercial purposes or on the pretext of 'scientific research'.

3. Environment, climate and energy

Our planet provides us with clean air, water, plants and raw materials. If we treat it responsibly, a sustainable future will be ensured for the next generations of humans and animals. Only by conducting a powerful environmental policy and changing our consumption behaviour we will be able to remain within the carrying capacity of the Earth.

To ensure a habitable Earth we have to halt climate change and environmental pollution as soon as possible. For this reason it is necessary to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to protect natural resources, and to use our valuable minerals efficiently. If at this moment each world citizen would consume the same as the average European, we would need almost three globes.

The Western overconsumption not only exceeds the carrying capacity of the Earth, but also the position of humans and animals in the poorer areas of the world. They will be affected first and the worst due to depletion of natural resources, land capture, drought, and flooding. Furthermore, European companies regularly violate human rights and they are guilty of serious environmental pollution, often in developing countries.

The Party for the Animals wants a powerful European climate and environmental policy. The EU Member States can jointly set ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to make energy clean and renewable, and to improve the quality of air and water.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions

As one of the richest continents and one of the main culprits of climate change, Europe carries a great responsibility in taking the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In most cases it is still cheaper for companies to continue their pollution activities than to take environmental protection measures. The Party for the Animals wants the EU to limit greenhouse gas emissions and to start working towards an actual low-carbon economy.

- The EU will take a leading role in producing global binding agreements on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and on measures to stop global warming.
- We want the European greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced by 65% in 2030 compared to 1990. Europe will be CO₂ neutral by 2040 at the latest.
- Sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions will be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Underground CO₂ storage, digestion of manure, biomass and nuclear energy are not included in these solutions.
- Europe will let go of the idea that companies have 'rights' which they can trade, thus harming the climate. The EU Emission Trading System (ETS) will be abolished. As long as the ETS still exists, the ceiling will be lowered annually.
- Europe will reduce the extraction of coal and lignite. A plan will be introduced to gradually phase out coal-fired power plants. The drilling for shale and coal gas will be stopped.
- Highly polluting fossil fuels such as tar sand oil and shale gas will no longer be allowed into Europe.
- Fossil companies like Shell and BP will be obliged to report about the climate and environmental impacts of their fuels and all their activities.
- In order to fight climate change, it is essential that we not only look at the energy sector, but also at our foods: particularly by substituting meat and dairy products by vegetable alternatives, great climate change benefits can be achieved.

Saving energy and improving sustainability

The EU's current energy policy is insufficient to limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees, as was laid down in the Paris Climate Treaty. Europe is addicted to fossil fuels. Energy conservation is the first and cheapest step towards a sustainable energy policy. Energy that is not used does not need to be produced (fossil or sustainable). In addition, a sustainable, decentral power supply underlies a healthy future.

It is not only necessary for the environment and nature, but it also makes us less dependent on oil and gas producing countries. The local and small-scale generation of energy also offers great opportunities for the creation of green jobs.

- Europe will conserve 50% of energy by 2030 by means of binding national energy conservation purposes.
- The share of sustainably produced energy will amount to at least 60% by 2030. All energy will be generated sustainably by 2040.
- Energy sufficient building will be the standard. By insulating houses and buildings, strongly reducing energy consumption, and generating energy locally and sustainably, the built environment will be a net energy producer.
- The EU will implement strict standards for the energy consumption of equipment, vehicles and data centres. Highly wasteful equipment, such as terrace heaters, will no longer be on the market.
- A stop is put to subsidies towards or discounts on energy taxes for large consumers. Member States will continue to have the freedom to impose an additional burden on non-sustainable energy.
- All investments in energy research by the European Union will in future focus on sustainable energy production and energy conservation.
- Biofuels, biomass co-firing and digestion of manure are no sustainable forms of energy, but trends of a derailed agricultural policy. Subsidies will no longer be granted for those. The mandatory blending requirement will be immediately abolished. The import of timber and palm oil for the production of energy will stop.
- Nuclear power plants will be closed. We resist the underground storage of nuclear waste.
- Liquid gas from shale gas (LNG) will no longer be welcome in Europe.
- Sustainable energy will be given priority in the energy network. Europe will provide for 'smart grids' that will be fed by green, small-scale and decentrally generated energy. The privacy of users and suppliers may not be constrained as a result.

Efficient use of raw materials

Raw materials are limited. We need to use them efficiently and strive for reuse and recovery.

- Europe will reduce its ecological footprint and aim for a circular economy, aimed at the reusability of products and raw materials.
- Strict requirements for product design will be set at European level, meaning products will have a longer life, can be repaired and its materials easily reused.
- Devices will be supported by software updates for a minimum of 10 years, to extend their useful life and cyber security.
- Large companies will be required to keep accounting records of their use of raw materials and provide concrete evidence of their greenhouse gas emissions.
- Lease arrangements, in which companies retain ownership of a product and provide a service to the customer, will be encouraged. This will enable the producer to recycle more raw materials and promote life cycle thinking.
- A European action plan will be drawn up to prevent and combat the issue of plastic waste on land and in the oceans and seas ("ocean garbage patches").
- Packaging will be reusable and biodegradable. All Member States will introduce a deposit system for cans, plastic bottles and other drink containers.
- Companies will be required to use more recycled plastics instead of newly produced plastics. The use of different plastics in the same packaging, making it non-recyclable, will be reduced and eventually prohibited.
- Targets regarding litter and legislation for manufacturers of clothing and washing machines will be incorporated in the Water Framework Directive in order to prevent the release of synthetic fibres into our water. Microplastics in cosmetics will be banned.
- The destruction of returned or other products such as clothing will be eliminated.

Clean air and clean water

Every year, 12,000 people in the Netherlands and 400,000 people in Europe die as a result of air pollution. Major polluters include the livestock industry, heavy industry, aviation sector and traffic.

Surface water is polluted with agricultural chemicals, fertilisers and – increasingly – medicine residues. The Party for the Animals believes everyone has the right to clean air and clean water.

- Europe will adopt the World Health Organisation's guidelines regarding particulate matter, ozone, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide as strict limits. A stringent European soot emission standard will also be implemented.
- Air quality standards in public buildings – in particular schools – will be monitored and maintained.
- Europe will resist attempts by Member States to dilute EU air quality standards, and adopt stricter recommendations as well as sanctions for Member States that do not abide by the rules.
- Europe will take source-directed measures to reduce the pollution of surface water caused by medicine residues.
- The Party for the Animals wants to put an end to artificial lawns in Europe, as a way of preventing water and soil pollution due to the rubber grains in artificial lawns.

Smarter transport

Traffic is responsible for 25% of greenhouse gas emissions in Europe. The Party for the Animals advocates reducing road transport and promoting environmentally-friendly transport.

- A European master plan will be drafted to substantially improve public transport, e.g. through improved rail links between major cities. EU officials, politicians and representatives travelling within Europe will travel by train when travel distance is less than 750 kilometres.
- Means of transport will be made cleaner and more fuel-efficient; Europe will be a world leader in environmental standards for vehicles and vessels.
- The exemption from VAT and excise duties applicable to air and maritime transport will be abolished. The 'polluter pays' principle will also become the standard for air and maritime transport. Flights to and from Europe will be subject to CO₂ taxation.
- The EU will encourage efficient and environmentally-friendly freight transport by train and water.

International

Fair distribution of natural resources

To avoid conflict, managing the Earth's resources in a sustainable way is essential, as is ensuring the fair distribution of food and natural resources. The extraction of materials imported by EU countries often causes major harm to humans, animals and the environment. That must change.

- Strict sustainability criteria will be set for the import and extraction of all our raw materials. Raw materials from conflict areas, where the mining of resources goes hand in hand with war and suppression such as child labour, are kept off our market.
- Stricter rules will also be established for mining companies, which will protect the rights of the local population and warrant the environmental and nature requirements for the extraction of raw materials.
- Large companies will be obliged to give information concerning the origin of their materials and the conditions of their production chain. They will publish an annual profit and loss account with regard to humans, animals, nature, environment and climate.
- The EU will end the export of waste products and toxic substances to developing countries for cheap processing.

International environmental policy

Existing international treaties in the fields of biodiversity and climate are rarely observed, if at all. The Party for the Animals believes the time for non-binding guidelines is over. The responsibility that countries share for a habitable planet should be translated to firm and enforceable commitments. The EU should lead the way and set a good example without curbing the individual ambitions of the Member States.

- The European Union will act to fight conflict, human rights violations and environmental destruction worldwide.

- In UN context, the EU will do everything in its power to develop a far-reaching agenda for sustainable development, containing ambitious global sustainability targets based on human rights, the earth's carrying capacity and respect for animals and nature.
- The European Union will take the lead with ambitious agreements in international environmental treaties.
- In order to achieve results at international conferences, the European Union will form coalitions with other countries in setting ambitious international environmental targets.
- International treaties and agreements on environment, climate, biodiversity, human rights and corporate social responsibility will be transposed into binding legislation as soon as possible.
- The Party for the Animals recommends that European Member States invest in climate action in developing countries in addition to the existing development cooperation budgets.
- The EU will promote the establishment of an International Environmental Court responsible for settling environmental conflicts.
- The infliction of serious harm to large natural sites or regions or its destruction ("ecocide") should be criminalised. The EU will advocate that the International Criminal Court has jurisdiction to penalise ecocide.

4. Economy

Your money or your life?

The economy should be about what we can afford. Financially, but also ecologically and socially. The Earth's limitations should not be exceeded. Everyone has the right to a fair share –particularly vulnerable groups: people in need of care or living in poor countries, and animals that inhabit the earth alongside us. The continued economic growth is an illusion in a world of finite resources and limited carrying capacity of ecosystems. Still, Europe seems to have blind faith in economic growth. In Europe, citizens are mainly regarded as consumers, animals as commodities or consumer products.

Different way of measuring prosperity

In 2018, the EU's economy grew by about 2%, following a trend of economic and macro-economic growth in previous years. However, a growing economy does not necessarily guarantee a healthy society or happy citizens. Not prosperity, but welfare should be the compass for all European cooperation. In calculating the European gross domestic products, a pleasant living environment, clean air and healthy nature are not taken into account as a positive contribution to our prosperity. Unlike activities that harm the environment, public health or animal welfare, such as the livestock industry, coal-fired power stations and gas extraction, which are included in the calculation. That does not make sense. The Party for the Animals wants to use better tools to set the course of European economy.

- In order to determine and guide European policy, the EU will use indicators that give direction to a sustainable and socially inclusive economy. Its focus will be on biodiversity, animal welfare, livelihood security, and a clean and safe living environment.

Budgeting within Earth's carrying capacity

The European Union is increasingly putting pressure on its Member States to reduce their national budget deficits to under 3%. However, the EU neglects to take into account the ecological deficits caused by our way of life. Every year, we are using far more resources than Earth can provide. In 2018, our global use of renewable resources exceeded Earth's carrying capacity as early as 1 August. This so-called Earth Overshoot Day is coming earlier each year, resulting in an ecological deficit of over 40% so far.

We desperately need these resources, not in the least for future generations. Care for animals, nature and environment is not a luxury we simply cannot afford at the moment, but an essential condition for a sustainable economy, without the blind focus on growth.

- The EU will no longer primarily focus on reducing the Member States' budget deficits, but will make every effort to reduce the European ecological deficit.
- Investments in an environmentally-friendly energy supply, enhancing and protecting biodiversity, and making our production chains green and sustainable, will strengthen the real economy in the long term. The current Stability and Growth Pact's 3% rule should therefore not stand in the way of these types of investments.

The polluter pays

The Party for the Animals promotes a strong greening of the tax system. Instead of imposing tax on labour, we want to tax environmentally damaging products and activities. That way, the tax system will provide the right incentives to improve sustainability and stimulate employment. The Party for the Animals thinks that, rather than raising taxes, the EU should act as a catalyst of green tax agreements between Member States, thus encouraging green innovation. The 'polluter pays' principle will be the leading principle in Europe, which implies an end to tax reductions for multinationals and major consumers of fossil fuels. That way, Member States competing to bring in multinationals can be avoided.

- First of all, Europe can save billions each year by abolishing environmentally harmful subsidies. Tax reductions for manufacturers and major consumers of fossil fuels will end.
- The EU will revise its VAT Directive and allow Member States to set a low rate for sustainable products and a high rate for products that cause harm to humans, animals and the environment.

- The Party for the Animals advocates taxing scarce raw materials as well as products that involve a high environmental impact, such as wood, coal and phosphate.
- Europe will no longer focus on mass production and export. Instead, the focus of attention should shift to sustainable local production for the domestic market.

Taking account of alternatives

For the first time in history, a Member State is leaving the European Union. Brexit has led to uncertainty in both the United Kingdom and the European Union. Nevertheless, countries have the democratic right to leave the EU. Therefore, we want the EU to prepare for the possibility of other Member States leaving the EU or the euro. Democracy and the welfare of humans, animals and environment should always take priority.

- The EU should make sure scenarios are prepared in case a country wants to leave the EU or the euro, allowing any departure from the EU to run smoothly – for the leaving country as well as for the remaining EU countries. The rights of EU citizens of a leaving Member State should be guaranteed.
- Eurozone countries should be allowed to leave the Monetary Union if their membership prevents them from pursuing a democratic policy. We think enlargement of the eurozone is a bad idea.
- The EU will maintain the environmental and animal welfare requirements in its negotiations on trade and other agreements with a leaving Member State. Animal transports from and to Member States leaving the EU will be discontinued.
- Member States in danger of being crippled by the public sector debt burden will receive help with rebuilding their economy in a way that is bearable for the population and not destructive to animals, nature and the environment. Responsible debt restructuring will be the starting-point.
- We reject constructs like the European Stability Mechanism: we do not want a Member State like the Netherlands to guarantee tens of billions of euros without having any say over how this money is to be spent. The national parliaments' budgetary rights should not be affected.

EU costs can be halved

The EU budget is expected to be around 1135 billion euros for the years 2021-2027; money paid by taxpayers in the Member States.

The Party for the Animals finds many European subsidies and funds undesirable and wants Brussels to abolish its principal cost, namely agricultural and fisheries subsidies.

- The European multiannual budget is like a credit card: the EU consistently spends more than was budgeted, resulting time after time in Member States having to pay more than was agreed. The Party for the Animals finds this unjustifiable and wants to abolish the flexible multiannual framework.
- Agricultural and fisheries subsidies make up the majority of EU costs and will be abolished as soon as possible.
- Structural funds are unnecessary. It is not up to the EU to pursue regional policies. By abandoning structural policies, we will save one third of the EU budget.
- Thousands of EU officials have a higher income than the Dutch Prime Minister. The Party for the Animals wants the high salaries of EU officials and European Commissioners to be cut drastically.

Restrictions on banks

The irresponsible behaviour of many banks, characterised by financial gain and sky-high bonuses, together with failing supervision, plunged the world into a deep crisis not very long ago. Stricter regulation of the banking sector remains a priority.

To the Party for the Animals, the current banking union is not a solution. Banks that are 'too big to fail' should be split up.

- We want banks to be divided into retail banks (payment transactions, savings, local credit costs) and investment banks.
- Member States will retain the power to lay down stricter rules on their banks than internationally agreed.

- Banks, pension funds and insurance companies will be obliged to make their investments and speculations transparent to their clients.
- From its platform function, the EU will contribute to the introduction of taxes on banks and financial transactions.
- Banks will not be allowed to take any risks unrelated to customer interest. We want to put a stop to obscure financial products.
- Public investments in the fossil fuel industry and livestock industry are undesirable. We want the European Union and its Member States to make sure that these sectors are no longer financed by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The European Parliament will table proposals to increase the European Banking Authority's risk weighting of investments in the fossil fuel industry and livestock industry, making it less attractive for commercial banks to provide loans to those sectors.

EU and world trade

The Party for the Animals is against free trade agreements, as they undermine democracy and have a major negative impact on the environment, animal welfare, public health and consumers' privacy and freedom of choice. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, for example, has led to large numbers of factory-farmed chickens from Ukraine being sold in the Netherlands and other EU countries.

- The EU will not enter into any new free trade agreements. Negotiations on TTIP will not be resumed.
- The EU will leave existing trade agreements.
- Products entering the EU should comply with at least the same environmental and animal welfare requirements as European products. Manufacturers in developing countries will receive help to meet European environmental and animal welfare standards.
- Child labour and the exploitation of workers is unacceptable and should be actively combated.
- The EU will strive to amend the World Trade Organisation's conditions, making social values a decisive factor in world trade.
- Tax avoidance and tax evasion should be opposed. The EU will oblige companies to be transparent about their tax payments.

5. More nature

Nature, with its variety of plants, animals and ecosystems, is our most valuable asset. Nature has an intrinsic value and for that alone, it deserves our careful protection. In addition, biodiversity in oceans and on land forms the basis of our existence. Without healthy oceans and forests, there is no clean air for us to breathe. Without biodiversity, there is no healthy soil for us to grow food in. It is our duty to ensure a habitable planet, now and in the future.

The world's biodiversity is in crisis: every day, plant and animal species become extinct and ecosystems become more and more out of balance. The EU plays an important role in the deterioration of natural resources in other parts of the world. Large-scale imports of soya, wood and palm oil are at the direct expense of tropical rainforests and primary forests, while overfishing by the European fishing fleet seriously damages seas and oceans across the world.

Nature and biodiversity in Europe are also under pressure. Nearly a quarter of all wild species are threatened with extinction. Furthermore, most ecosystems are so severely affected and fragmented that they are no longer capable of delivering their valuable services. This degradation is a threat to food security, which means the EU is faced with major social and economic losses.

The Party for the Animals calls for more nature and wants the European Union to stop contributing to the destruction of nature. We want the EU to lead the way in tackling the biodiversity crisis instead of waiting for other world players to take action.

More nature in Europe

Protecting and restoring nature

Despite all the fine words about the importance of biodiversity, in practice nature is barely protected at all. European directives are not complied with or complied with too late, and Member States such as the Netherlands are trying with all their might to renege on these agreements. We cannot afford to sacrifice any more natural capital for short-term gain.

- Subsidies that cause harm to biodiversity will be abolished forthwith.
- A strong European Nature Network will be established, allowing species to move freely and nature to become more resilient. At least 30% of all land and fresh water surface will be protected and priority will be given to connecting the Natura 2000 areas.
- The intensification of agriculture has contributed to the loss of many ecologically valuable landscape elements in the last few decades, such as brooks, spinneys and hedgerows. Restoration of ecology is crucial and should be paid for by the companies responsible for damaging it.
- Everyone has the right to a green and healthy living environment. The EU will stimulate the greening of urban areas with a view to health, climate and biodiversity.
- The EU will stimulate companies to invest in eco-friendly building and ecological entrepreneurship, ensuring more green and less pollution.
- We want to remove the obstacles in European rivers obstructing fish migration as well as killing many fish. New pumping stations and installations will be fish-friendly.
- Existing European agreements on nature – such as Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive and the EU ammonia limit – are crucial to reduce the damage to nature caused by the European agricultural policy. These agreements will therefore be strengthened and strictly enforced rather than relaxed.
- The Party for the Animals wants to protect at least 30% of European seas by designating them as marine reserves. In these protected zones, fishing and other detrimental activities will not be permitted. Important breeding grounds, such as the Mediterranean Sea where the endangered tuna spawns, will be closed against the hunting of these animals.
- Shipwrecks at the bottom of the sea function as breeding grounds for biodiversity and will be protected to the fullest possible extent.
- Fishing techniques that severely damage sea and seabed, such as deep-sea fisheries and beam-trawl fishing, will no longer be permitted.

- Throughout Europe, attempts are made to exterminate muskrats. This process is not only cruel, but also never-ending and highly expensive: muskrats reproduce at a high rate. A cheaper, better and more animal-friendly solution would be to protect and reinforce vulnerable quays.

Room for animals, not hunters

The habitats of wild animals in Europe are declining every day. Now that people are moving closer and closer towards the animals' living environment, animals are quickly considered a nuisance. People will use any means to control them, often without any other result than the death of countless animals. The Party for the Animals wants wild animals to be left in peace as much as possible.

- The intrinsic value and protection of wild animals will be the starting point for any policy.
- Wild animals will not be killed, but left in peace as much as possible. Any disrupted balance of wild populations will be given the opportunity to restore itself.
- The Party for the Animals wants to ban hunting for sport. This includes recreational fishing, such as angling. Trade in products obtained through recreational fishing should be prohibited.
- Preventive policies will prevent nuisance. If necessary, the EU will assist with animal-friendly solutions to conflicts between people and animals, like with the bears in Romania which are moving to the cities as a result of a decreasing habitat.
- We reject cruel methods of killing such as the gassing of geese, which is currently tolerated by the EU. Existing rules are strengthened and strictly enforced.
- The protection of animals is more important than traditions. The EU will stop turning a blind eye on the collection of plovers' eggs, and the illegal hunting of migratory birds in countries including Malta, Italy and France will be addressed.
- We will fight hunting tourism. European travel agencies will no longer be allowed to offer hunting safaris or other hunting trips.
- The Party for the Animals wants to see an end to the cruel abuse of dogs, including Galgos and Podencos, that are used for training methods and hunt racing.

International

Preserving biodiversity

If EU policies remain unchanged, global biodiversity will only continue to decline. The most important and effective measure to halt this decline is reducing the consumption of animal products. In addition, the Party for the Animals wants European policies to be weighed against the consequences for nature and biodiversity in other parts of the world. Moreover, we want the EU to actively support the restoration and protection of natural sites worldwide.

- The EU will aim at a reduction in the consumption of animal products and stimulate measures contributing to that goal.
- The import of products that damage tropical rainforests, primary forests or other crucial ecosystems will be banned. At the very least this means loss of nature and land grabbing should be excluded.
- Firm action will be taken against illegal logging in European forests.
- The EU will support developing and other countries in combating illegal logging and monitoring sustainable forest management. We want strict enforcement of the import ban on illegally harvested timber.
- The EU will endeavour to create a global network of natural sites, on land as well as at sea. Developing countries will receive support in protecting their natural sites and biodiversity.
- The Party for the Animals wants the EU to weigh all its policies against the consequences for nature and biodiversity in other parts of the world. Any policies jeopardising ecosystems will be abolished.
- The compulsory incorporation of biofuels will be brought to an end. The high demand for oil seed crops is responsible for the biodiversity loss and rapid primary forest degradation in equatorial regions. Co-firing biomass in power plants will also be ended: cutting down forests and burning them does not contribute to a better climate – it makes things worse.
- We want Europe to close its borders to products associated with the destruction of nature and ecocide, such as tar sand oil and uranium ore.

Protecting animals worldwide

The trade in endangered species has developed into a ruthless form of crime. Compliance with international treaties designed to stop illegal trade in endangered species is positively lamentable. Despite the moratorium on commercial whaling, countries such as Norway and Japan still kill hundreds of whales every year. The Party for the Animals believes Europe should express a strong opposition against these crimes.

- We will fight for a ban on the import and trade in all animals caught in the wild.
- The EU will encourage Member States to step up efforts to end the large-scale wildlife smuggling. Member States at the European borders will be assisted in monitoring trafficking routes.
- Europe will contribute to the protection of wild animals in their countries of origin and support local authorities in their fight against the illegal capture of wild animals.
- Trade in ivory and game trophies will be prohibited.
- Europe will actively combat seal hunting in countries including Canada and Namibia, and the commercial hunting of polar bears.
- The EU will promote a strict enforcement of the moratorium on whaling. Countries that flout the moratorium will be faced with sanctions.
- Whale meat is not welcome in European ports. This includes transit to countries such as Japan.
- Europe will ban the import of kangaroo meat and leather.
- We want to expand the protection of whales to also include smaller cetaceans, resulting in a ban on the hunt of dolphins. The EU will endeavour to end the dolphin slaughter in Japan and on the Faroe Islands.
- Europe will promote a total ban on catching bluefin tuna.
- The EU will make every effort to improve the protection of sharks, rays and other vulnerable species. The ban on removing shark fins will be strictly maintained by means of camera surveillance on board fishing boats at the expense of the fishermen.

6. A just Europe

Earth provides enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed. We want Europe to be at the service of both people and animals, and be guided by compassion and sustainability. Providing aid to the poorest and victims of famine and violence is a matter of civilisation. Human rights should be respected. To that end, European cooperation is wanted when it is useful, and Member States should retain control where it is needed. The Party for the Animals wants a European Union that is democratic and can be controlled, and in which the voice of the citizen is heard. That is the kind of Europe which addresses problems that require a common solution, without encroaching on the national competences of the Member States.

However, the current European Union is far from the picture painted above. Without involving its citizens, an ever-expanding European administrative body has been created. The EU lacks democratic support, it has been joined by countries that were not ready to join, and it has created a common currency, suggesting the different Member States form a single nation with an unambiguous economic and political policy.

European decision-making is the result of negotiations behind closed doors, of obscure bureaucracy, of concealed lobbies by the business sector. The one-sided pursuit of complete free trade between Member States with as few regulations for companies as possible is at the expense of people, animals, nature and environment. At the citizen's expense, tens of billions are spent on subsidies that contradict the general public interest.

In many policy areas, there is no need for EU authority and cooperation between Member States can be improved by giving the EU a platform function in which good ideas and experiences are developed and shared. That means Europe must go back to the drawing board. The question here is not: pro-Europe or anti-Europe? Nor is it: more Europe or less Europe? We want to improve European cooperation. Without further extension of the EU's powers and without allowing any new Member States.

Endless economic growth on a finite planet is impossible and can therefore no longer be the guiding principle of European policy. We want the existing European treaties to be revised in the interest of the necessary change of course towards compassion and sustainability. In a Europe like that, the citizen's voice is heard, animal rights are self-evident and it is not the right of the strong, but the interest of the weak that counts.

International

Investing in development

The Party for the Animals wants Europe to stop policies that are at the expense of other parts of the world. Instead, we want to invest in the individual strength of developing countries. Sustainability, education, health, children's rights and equal treatment of men and women are priorities.

- The EU will stop importing products that are damaging to living environments elsewhere in the world or which are associated with land grabbing or other violations of human rights.
- The Party for the Animals wants EU Member States to endeavour to spend 1% of their gross domestic product on development aid. This money should be given without receiving any products or services in return.
- Development aid will focus on strengthening the position of vulnerable groups in developing countries, in particular women and children.
- Priority will be given to clean drinking water and proper hygiene, quality – preventive and other – healthcare, access to essential medication and contraception, education, sustainable agriculture and clean energy. Supporting emancipation movements will give democratisation processes a better chance of succeeding.
- In its policy towards developing countries, the EU will devote great attention to lifting taboos on orientation, abortion and violence against women.

- Aid will be aimed at the interests of the people, animals and environment in the designated countries, not at the interests of the business sector in this part of the world.

Defending human rights

European companies violate environmental and human rights on a regular basis. Victims often find themselves empty-handed, without the possibility of obtaining justice. On top of that, a billion citizens in fragile states are threatened by violence and structural injustice. These people partly depend on our support for their safety and human rights. Victims of war and violence, oppression and persecution, famine, climate change and natural disasters deserve our help. Human rights come before trade.

- Human rights and sustainable development will be the touchstone of European policy. All European policy proposals will be provided with a standard annex which sets out the policy's impact on environment, biodiversity, human rights, animal welfare and developing countries.
- The EU will help victims of environmental and human rights offences to obtain justice, including those of crimes that have taken place outside Europe by European companies.
- The EU will not seek sales markets in countries where human rights are not guaranteed.
- The EU will speak out against human rights violations and serious environmental damage or the destruction of habitats (ecocide) elsewhere in the world. Curtailing trade with countries where these violations occur will be an explicit part of the tools used to step up the pressure on the countries concerned.
- The EU will offer help to Member States at the European borders to combat human trafficking and human smuggling.

Humanitarian aid is self-evident

The Party for the Animals is worried about the growing number of refugees in the world. In the coming years, tens of millions of people are expected to run from the consequences of climate change, famine and war. Refugee flows have also led to concerns with the people here. Many wonder if Europe – or the Netherlands – can continue to accept refugees. Will it be at the expense of their own opportunities? Will tensions increase even further, for example when the European reallocation turns out to be unsuccessful due to the open borders?

The Party for the Animals thinks people fleeing from famine, drought and violence should be welcomed and assisted. The same goes for people who are persecuted for their beliefs or sexual orientation.

- The Party for the Animals prefers refugees to be offered sanctuary in their own region, but only when this can be done in a humane way. Therefore, the EU's financial contribution to UNHCR, which is responsible for coordinating refugee and resettlement programmes in the region, should be increased.
- Victims of war and violence, oppression and persecution, famine, climate change and natural disasters should be assisted in reaching a safe destination in Europe when accommodation in their own region is not possible.
- More money and capacity will be made available to prevent people from being forced to make the hazardous trip across the Mediterranean. We need to take a tough line on human trafficking.
- The Party for the Animals is in favour of a common European policy on the EU's external borders. The EU will ensure that Member States provide a fair and fast asylum procedure and humane hosting of refugees.
- Fundamental rights, such as access to medical care, will also apply to people without a residence permit.
- EU countries will not send people back to their country of origin when that means they might be persecuted for their sexual orientation, beliefs or ethnic origin.

Limiting weapons

'War: Never Again' was a powerful motive for establishing the European Union. The Party for the Animals wants Europe to start applying that thought to its weapons policy.

- The EU will endeavour to achieve compliance with conventions against landmines and cluster munitions and on global arms trade regulation.

- Europe will lead the way in developing an international legal framework for the prohibition of autonomous weapons.
- The EU's arms exports policies will be strengthened, thereby preventing that repressive and authoritarian states that violate human rights are supplied with EU weapons.
- A black list will be established, containing countries and companies which should not be applied with semi-finished products and chemical, nuclear and bacteriological weapon parts.
- The EU will work towards a universal ban on the use of any form of uranium in conventional weapons, and promote a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons.
- Nuclear weapons still present on European territory will be removed from the EU at short notice.
- The Party for the Animals is against the formation of a Defence Union, as this represents the first step towards a European Army.

Meaningful cooperation

No political or fiscal union

Europe is not a federal state and striving to be one is undesirable and unnecessary. Careful delimitation of the EU's powers is therefore of great importance.

- The EU's authority will not be expanded. Any plans to do so should be put to the people in a referendum.
- Member States will retain full control over their budgets. There will be no European Minister of Finance. The authority of national parliaments to decide on the collection and use of tax revenue on behalf of their people should not be affected.
- Member States will work in close cooperation in their fight against tax avoidance and tax evasion of multinationals and, if possible, they will voluntarily coordinate their policies regarding their tax rates.
- Europe should actively communicate about Member States continually frustrating the battle against tax avoidance and tax evasion.
We reject proposals to set up a European Public Prosecutor's Office, a European Army or European pension schemes. Such matters are better handled at national level.
- No new Member States will enter the European Union.
- The EU should increase the scope for national parliaments to stop Brussels interfering with basic services such as pensions, housing, social security and healthcare.
- The Party for the Animals wants Brussels to refrain from pressurising Member States to privatise public goods such as drinking water, or liberalise public services such as public transport.
- Europe will not be allowed to force Member States to exploit their natural resources at the cost of people, animals, nature or the environment.

More democracy

The voice of the people often goes unheard in European decision-making. A major part of Brussels' authority lies with the European Commission, an undemocratic administrative body over which citizens and elected representatives barely have any control. Heads of government and ministers meet in Brussels behind closed doors to discuss major agreements often insufficiently coordinated with citizens and their representatives. We want to improve democratic control over the decisions made in Brussels.

- The national parliaments and the European Parliament will have increased opportunities to control the European Commission in concluding treaties with countries outside the EU. No more free trade agreements or association agreements will be concluded without the national parliaments' prior approval.
- The European Commission will become smaller. Not every Member State needs its own Commissioner.
- If a majority of the Parliament deems it necessary, it should be allowed to dismiss an individual European Commissioner instead of the Commission as a collective.
- There is no desire for permanent political representatives of the EU. We do not want a European 'President' or 'Minister for Foreign Affairs'. Such positions will hinder democratic control and affect the sovereignty of countries.

- We are against using an electoral threshold during the European Parliament Elections.
- Elected representatives will have the right of initiative.
- The European citizens' initiative should be improved so that, rather than just in theory, citizens will actually be able to put a wide range of issues that matter to them on the EU's agenda.
- The costly and environmentally harmful travel between Brussels and Strasbourg will belong to the past. From now on, the European Parliament will only meet in Brussels.
- Salaries and expense allowances of MEPs from the different countries will be aligned with the average salaries of parliamentarians from the EU Member States.
- Voting age for the European Parliament will be reduced to 16.

Independent and transparent

Ties between Brussels and the business sector are too strong. Multinational lobbies have a significant influence in the EU, while citizens are largely side-lined. Many of the lobbying activities take place behind closed doors, making democratic control impossible. The Party for the Animals wants Europe to operate in a transparent way, independent of multinationals.

- European Commissioners and EU Presidents should not have interests that may stand in the way of their functional independence. After leaving their post, they should restrain from any lobbying work or other employment that might imply a conflict of interest for a period of five years.
- We want a truly open government. Citizens and organisations should be allowed easy access to proposals and decisions.
- Meetings between the European Parliament, European Commission and the Council, the so-called trilogues during which new EU law is discussed, will be made public.
- The same goes for consultations between the portfolio ministers of the different Member States (Councils) and the currently confidential prior administrative coordination (COREPER).
- In future, the European Commission will specify in what way the process of developing legislative proposals was influenced by representative actions.
- There will be stricter rules for European Parliamentarians to avoid conflicts of interest. In addition, the Party for the Animals wants the MEPs' compliance with the Code of Conduct to be verified in a transparent and independent manner.
- In the case of public consultations of the European Commission, any input of citizens and civic organisations will be taken just as seriously as the input from industry.
- Stricter rules will be introduced in relation to the appointment of officials and employees of consultancy bodies and implementing organisations in Brussels, such as the EFSA.
- The EU will take measures to fight misuse of medication patents and will thereby prevent extremely high prices of medicinal products.
- Evaluations of previous treaties between Brussels and countries outside the EU, such as the fisheries agreements with African countries, will be publicly disclosed.

Fundamental rights, culture and privacy

Privacy and freedom

The Party for the Animals stands for freedom and privacy of citizens. We are increasingly using mobile apps, social media and Over-The-Top (OTT) communication services such as WhatsApp, Skype and Facebook Messenger. The Party for the Animals wants the EU to better guarantee the privacy of the users of these online communication services. We think confidential user data should not be sold or used for commercial gain. The belief that taking away people's privacy will somehow make our society a safer place is an illusion. We want Europe to stop participating in unauthorised breaches of privacy.

- The EU will press ahead with adapting the European e-Privacy Directive in order to guarantee the privacy of users of OTT and other online services.
- Collection and storage of personal data of European citizens and companies by foreign intelligence services is unacceptable. The EU will take measures to stop these breaches of privacy as soon as possible. The existing EU-US Privacy Shield is not conclusive and will be improved.
- The EU will protect personal data at the highest possible level. Only in the case of a concrete suspicion verified by a court should police, justice and intelligence services be allowed to

retrieve citizen data from companies. Citizens will gain more insight in stored data about them and they will be given the opportunity to have their information removed from data systems. Companies will report on the number of times they were forced to disclose personal data for justice purposes.

- A notification requirement will be enforced for data leaks. Companies will be obliged to also notify the concerned citizens personally after a data leak. Hackers who expose security breaches will be protected.
- All European policies on citizen data interception, collection and storage will be sharply reviewed for the sake of privacy. This should put an end to the retention of telephone and internet data, passing on passenger information to the US, American access to European banking transactions, and the obligation to provide fingerprints for travel documents.
- Confidential user data will not be sold or used for commercial gain.
- New proposals for EU policies and laws will be checked against their impact on privacy. When it turns out they affect the protection of privacy, they will be either amended or rejected.
- Citizens have the right to a free internet without filters, blocks or providers passing on their data. We want to legally warrant net neutrality.
- Cyber security is not achieved by violating fundamental rights. Investigation authorities should not be allowed to poke around computers without a serious reason which can be reviewed in court.
- Bank and payment details of citizens are confidential and should stay that way. The paragraph 'third-party access to bank accounts' of the new Payment Services Directive (PSD2) will be abolished.
- Cloud services of major internet services should be physically stored within the EU rather than in third countries.
- The Party for the Animals advocates that we exercise caution in our general dealing with electromagnetic fields. There is still much uncertainty about the possible risks of 5G. Before 5G networks are rolled out, possible consequences should be investigated. However, animal testing is expressly excluded.

Free press, culture and science

Free press, the arts and independent science are an essential enrichment of human life: they encourage reflection, enhance our knowledge, deepen our insights, arouse emotions, stimulate creativity, move and distress us. They are essential to a democratic society. Rather than standing in the way of free expression, the Party for the Animals wants the EU to stimulate it, using its platform function.

- The EU will fight concentration of power and conflicts of interest between media and politics. It will support free press and journalists' right not to reveal their sources.
- The Party for the Animals wants copyrights and copyright contract rights to be amended in order to strengthen the creator's position and increase freedom of information. The amendments should not adversely affect the right to a free internet. The Party for the Animals is not in favour of a 'link tax' or forcing the implementation of upload filters.
- The EU will stimulate the distribution and accessibility of literature by investing in translation and digitisation.
- The EU will aid Member States in protecting their cultural heritage.
- Where possible, scientific publications should be freely accessible.
- Exchange programmes for scientists and students should be stimulated, for example by expanding the Erasmus scholarships.

Equal opportunity for everyone

The European Union stands for equal rights of all its citizens. Discrimination, on whatever grounds, is unacceptable. We are concerned about the free movement of migrant workers, which places working people from new Member States at risk and creates a downward spiral of problems which is almost impossible to stop. In order to prevent exploitation and displacement, we advocate regulation of labour migration.

- EU countries will combat all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, gender, conviction or sexual orientation.

- European Member States are encouraged to recognise the marital status of citizens in other Member States. Being married to a person of the same sex should in no Member State mean that you and your partner will be discriminated against.
- The EU will stimulate its Member States to close the gender gap in the labour market and it will set an example by ensuring stronger representation of women and minorities in high-level positions in the European Union.
- All EU Member States will do their utmost to prevent discrimination of different sexes with different sexual and gender orientations (LHBTIQA+).
- The free movement of migrant workers from countries including Poland has led to the exploitation of working people, people being pushed aside in the labour market, and problems in the housing market. On top of that, these problems undermine solidarity among European citizens. To avoid further difficulties, we advocate regulation of the free movement of migrant workers from new Member States including Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia.
- Europe will promote equal rights for people with disabilities. Access to public facilities and institutions and to transport should be self-evident, including for people who depend on an assistance dog because of their disability.