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Introduction to Green Deal - key concepts and frameworks

Course 1

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GREEN DEAL AND EUROPEAN NEGOTIATIONS GRE DEN

JEAN MONNET CHAIR

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Jean Monnet Chair - Green Deal and European Negotiations

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Content:

1. Introduction
2. Framework and structure
3. Key concepts
4. Conclusions

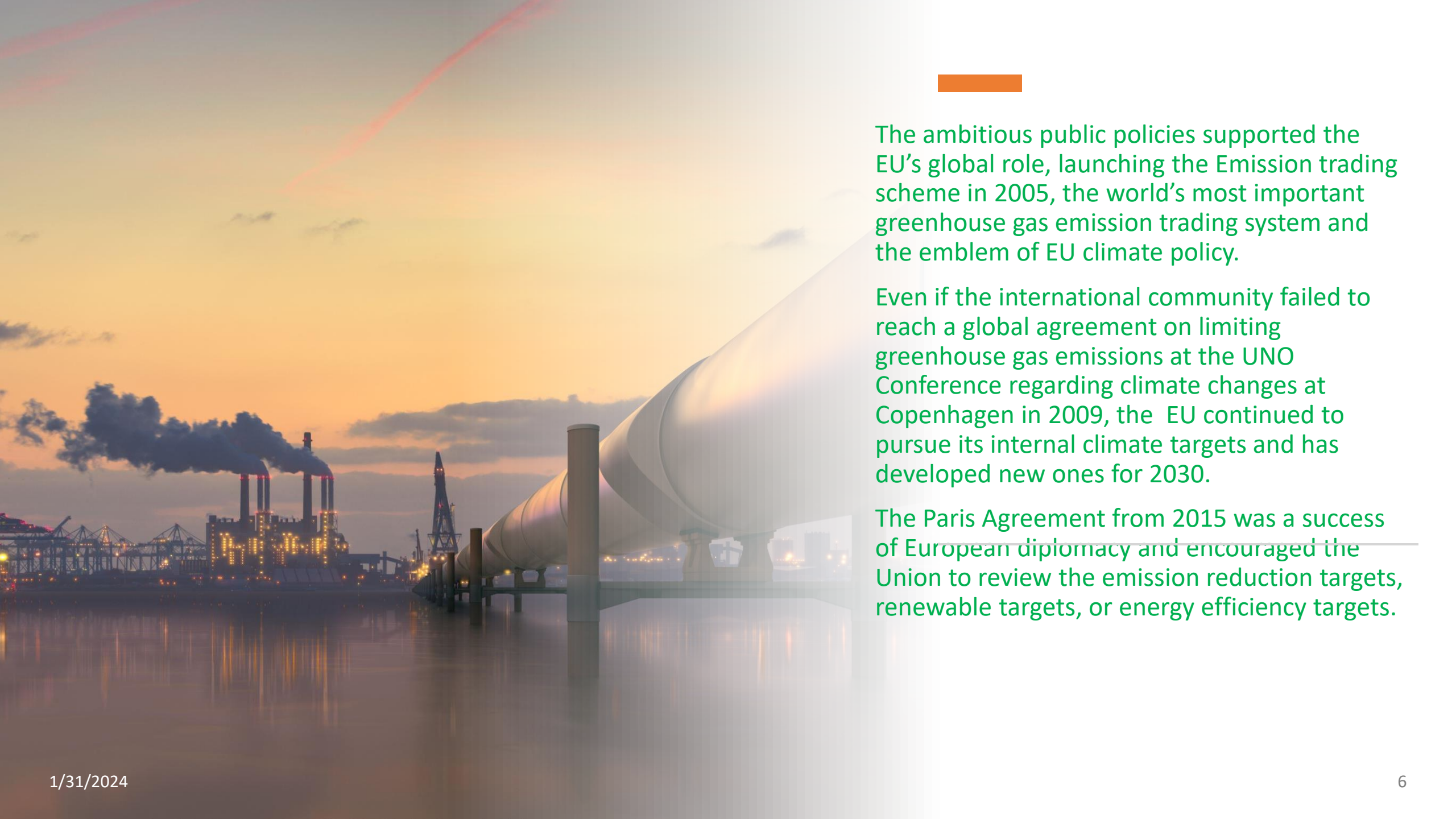


- The European actions against climate changes and the degradation of the natural environment is not exactly new.
- The European Union has long been a leader in policies to combat climate changes. It has been adopting a climate change strategy since 1992, and since 1996, it has approved the goal of limiting global warming to 2 °C above pre-industrial levels.
- The EU consolidated the international leader position in approaching climate changes in 2001, when it had sufficient supporters for the approval of Kyoto Protocol, despite the US's withdrawal.



1. Introduction

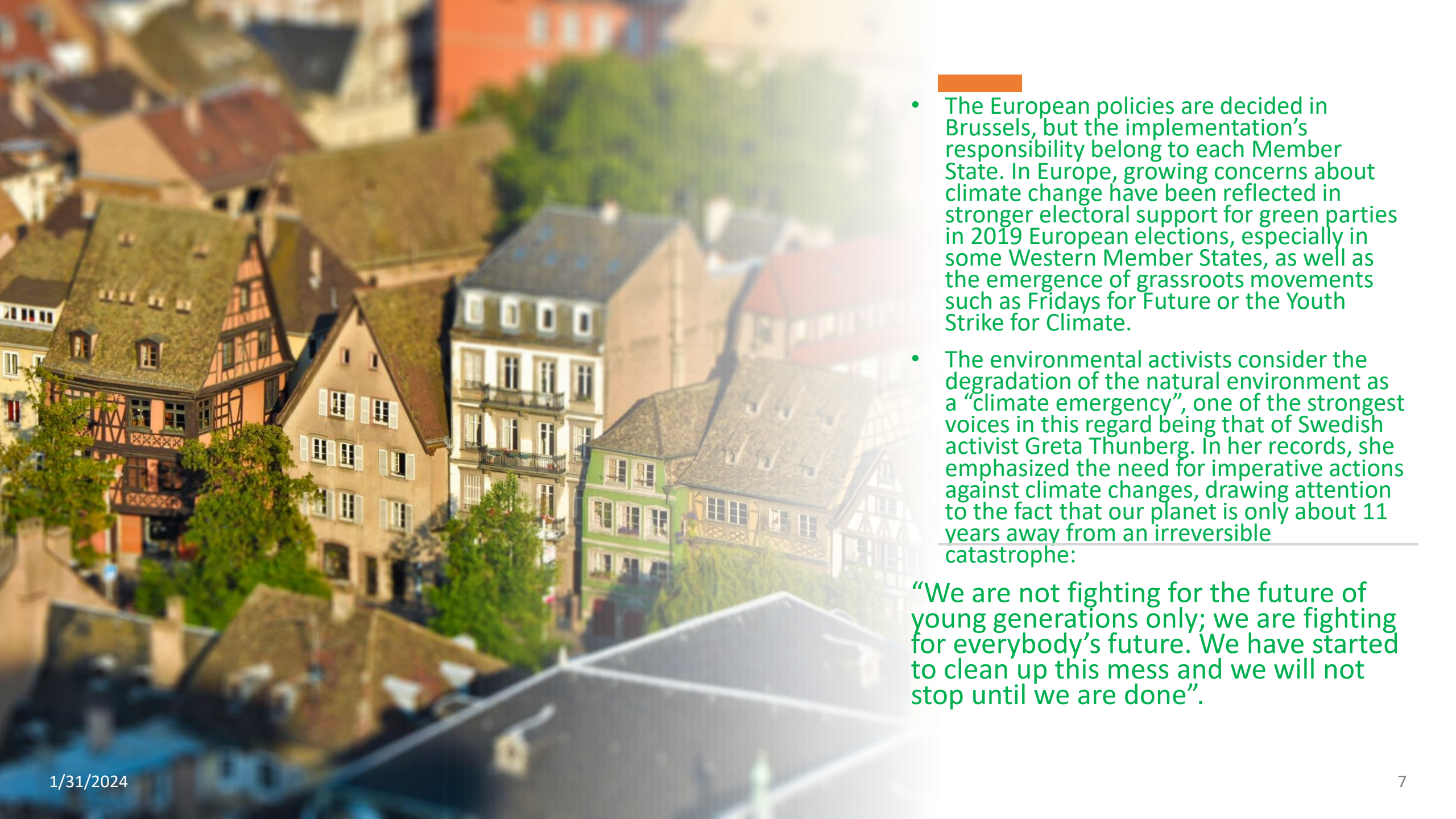




The ambitious public policies supported the EU's global role, launching the Emission trading scheme in 2005, the world's most important greenhouse gas emission trading system and the emblem of EU climate policy.

Even if the international community failed to reach a global agreement on limiting greenhouse gas emissions at the UNO Conference regarding climate changes at Copenhagen in 2009, the EU continued to pursue its internal climate targets and has developed new ones for 2030.

The Paris Agreement from 2015 was a success of European diplomacy and encouraged the Union to review the emission reduction targets, renewable targets, or energy efficiency targets.



- The European policies are decided in Brussels, but the implementation's responsibility belong to each Member State. In Europe, growing concerns about climate change have been reflected in stronger electoral support for green parties in 2019 European elections, especially in some Western Member States, as well as the emergence of grassroots movements such as Fridays for Future or the Youth Strike for Climate.
- The environmental activists consider the degradation of the natural environment as a "climate emergency", one of the strongest voices in this regard being that of Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. In her records, she emphasized the need for imperative actions against climate changes, drawing attention to the fact that our planet is only about 11 years away from an irreversible catastrophe:

"We are not fighting for the future of young generations only; we are fighting for everybody's future. We have started to clean up this mess and we will not stop until we are done".



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2. EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL – framework and structure

https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zf74KGV0hm4&ab_channel=WindEurope

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkcTN9E33eI&ab_channel=DWNews



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European Green Deal:

It is the most ambitious integrated strategy of EU building a climate-neutral, green, equitable and social Europe and one of the four priorities of the *EU's Strategic Agenda for 2019-2024*.

EU continued to prioritize environmental policy, with the EC, led by Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen, making the fight against climate change one of its primary goals.

It supports MSs in achieving the **goal of climate neutrality** and **sets the guideline for various European policies** for the coming years.



The lines of actions of EGD:

- encouraging and developing research and innovation;
- decarbonization of the energy sector; green construction and renovation of buildings in order to reduce energy consumption and the price of energy bills;
- supporting industry to innovate and become world leaders in the green circular economy;
- introduction of fewer pollution forms of private and public transport; "from farm to consumer" – a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system;
- conservation and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity; and
- a clean environment, free of toxic substances by reducing pollution to zero.

The key actions of EGD strategy derive from the following EU's policies:

Climate Policy (climate ambition),

Energy Policy (clean, affordable and secure energy),

Industrial Policy (industrial strategy for a clean and circular economy),

Transport Policy (sustainable and smart mobility),

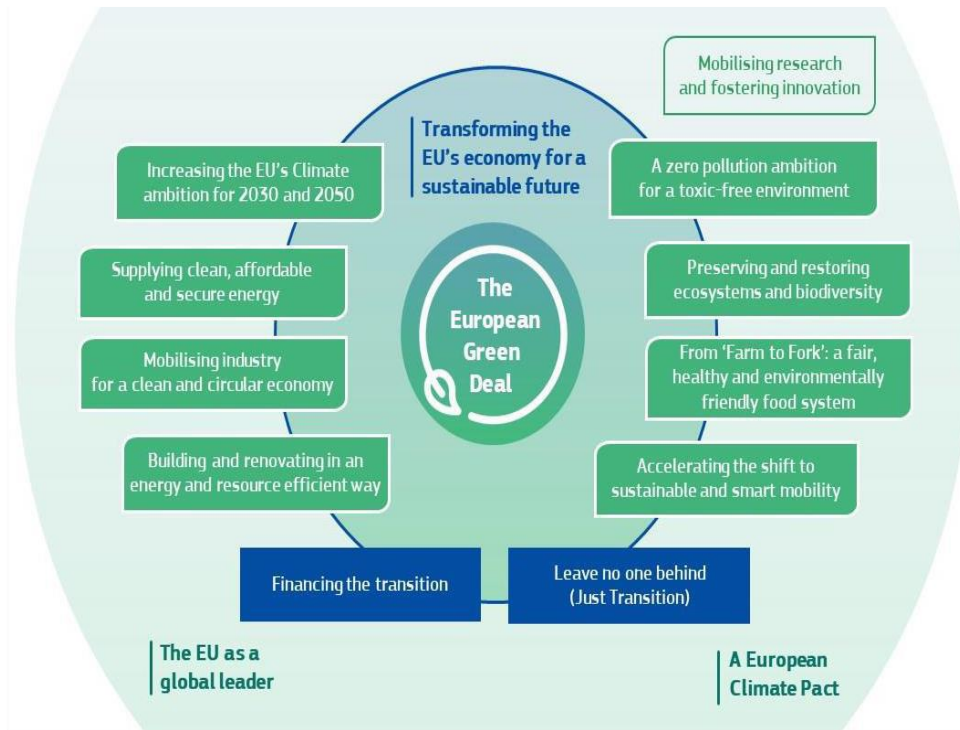
Common Agricultural Policy (greening the CAP, 'Farm to Fork' Strategy),

Environmental Policy (preserving and protecting biodiversity, towards a zero-pollution),

Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU as a global leader) and

Common Defense and Security Policy.

Implementation of European policies of EGD:



Although the European policies are decided in Brussels, the responsibility of their implementation, along with the necessary negotiations, belongs to each MS.

The European negotiations represent the main instrument used in the European decision-making process.

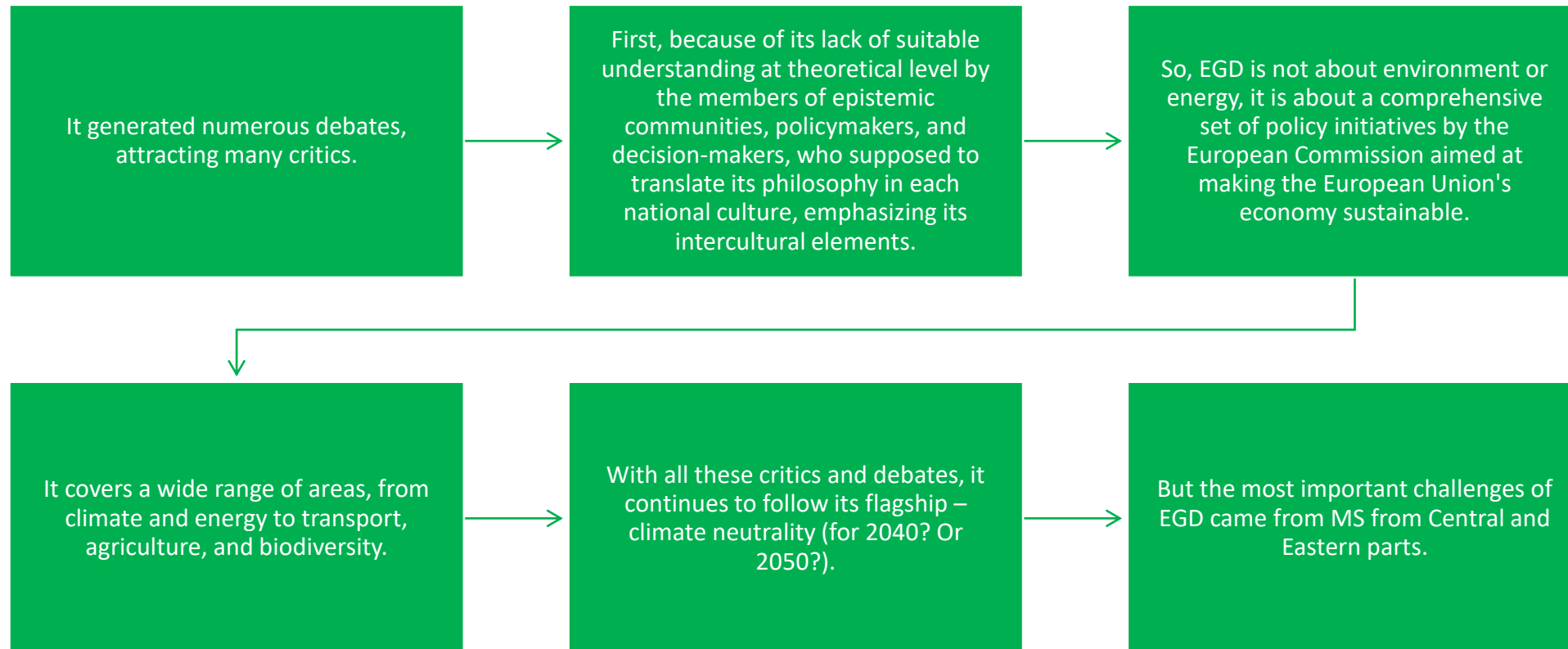
The "new era of negotiations" opened by the European enlargement has set the guidelines for this European tool.

However, the post-pandemic world will need a new model for European negotiations, in which cooperation, interdependence, interconnectivity, and partnerships will design their framework.

The EGD will be an excellent example in this matter.



EGD is facing difficult times and challenges:



The EGD requires:



the elaboration of new transformative policies and national solutions for the implementation by Member States (MS).



it addresses all sectors of activity which generate greenhouse gas emissions, such as:

the transformation of carbon-intensive industries;
increasing the circular economy, digitalization;
energy;
biodiversity and biomaterials with their impact on
agriculture and climate change policies.



An important dimension of the GD's implementation is the European Common Foreign and Security Policy:

Since climate change issues are transboundary, due to the global and regional interdependencies, the problems must be dealt with globally and regionally.

The responses and actions to climate change are debated at an international level, both at the EU and UN. Climate change will also transform the security environment and it could be tackled by international cooperation

The role of the European institutions on EGD:

The role of the European Council and the Council of the EU in the Green Deal is to provide political guidance on the EU's policies (and the commitment to become climate neutral by 2050, which leaders endorsed in the strategic agenda and reaffirmed in December 2019).

The European Commission submitted the proposal and initiatives under the Green Deal to the Council of the EU and to the European Parliament.

All European policies related to the climate-neutrality objective of the Green Deal will be reviewed and revised in line with the increased climate ambition



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The sustainability policy aims to create the framework, principles and capacities to exist and to develop without depleting natural resources for the future:



The United Nations defined sustainability as a development which responds to present needs, without compromising the next generations' capacities to meet their own needs.



It assumes that the resources are limited and, therefore, should be used carefully, assuring that they are sufficient for future generations without diminishing the quality of life of present generations.



The sustainability policy implies social responsibility, focusing on environmental protection and the dynamic balance between human and natural systems.

There are three important principles of the sustainability policy:

- environment protection—it refers to the reduction of CO₂ emissions, water usage, packaging and wasteful processes as part of a supply chain;
- social development—which aims to ensure the responsible, ethical and sustainable treatment of employees, stakeholders and the community in which they are living; and
- economic development—in the sense of generated profitability and sufficient in-come to be continued in the future





Its objectives are the UN's sustainable development goals:

(1) no poverty;

(2) zero hunger;

(3) good health and well-being;

(4) quality education;

(5) gender equality;

(6) clean water and sanitation;

(7) affordable and clean energy;

(8) decent work and economic growth;

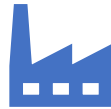
(9) industry, innovation and infrastructure;

- (10) reduced inequalities;
- (11) sustainable cities and communities;
- (12) responsible consumption and production;
- (13) climate action;
- (14) life below water;
- (15) life on land;
- (16) peace, justice and strong institutions; and
- (17) partnerships for the goals .

These objectives could be achieved by following six key transformations:



improving education and healthcare to achieve higher incomes and better environmental decisions;



responsible consumption and production, doing more with fewer resources is important for adopting a circular economy and reducing demand;



decarbonization of the energy industry through clean energy resources and renew-able processes and by providing clean and accessible energy to everyone;



efficient and sustainable food systems that can be achieved by increasing agricultural productivity and reducing meat consumption, which will assure clean food and water for all;



smart cities through intelligent infrastructure and internet connectivity;
and



a digital revolution in science, technology and innovation, necessary for supporting sustainable development



The goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have been the central elements of the European decision-making and policy-making processes for a long time, since they provide the framework and directions of action at a global scale.

These objectives will be included in the European Semester of economic governance.

The EU, especially the Commission, are truly committed to achieve these goals.

Sustainable development became a political priority of the Commission, and the climate neutrality objective circumscribed an interdependent and inclusive approach of European policies, especially with the GD strategy.

The GD will transform the European society



The sustainability policy creates the framework of principles and capacities that exist for development without depleting natural resources in the future.



The implementation of this policy will be required by all companies, institutions will have to meet their environmental responsibilities and the sustainability policy will define the commitments of ethical and environmentally friendly practices.



“a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where climate and environmental challenges are addressed and turned into opportunities, while making the transition just and inclusive for all”.



The World Economic Forum identified several objectives of the sustainability policy:

- (1) promote sustainable business models and practices;
- (2) limit the environmental impact;
- (3) uphold the standards of governance;
- (4) maintain the health and safety of citizens;
- (5) foster responsibility and inclusiveness for employers and clients; and
- (6) positively engage with communities and stakeholders





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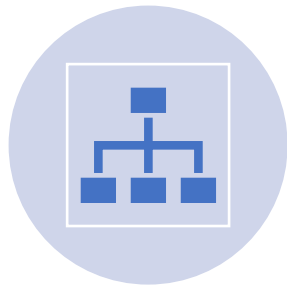
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The measures for delivering the objectives of the sustainability policy are:



implementing the sustainability management system for the daily management of institutions and companies;



establishing sustainable priorities that will support innovation, implementing best practice and knowledge sharing;



developing multistakeholder engagement to support the opportunities provided by the leadership;



and purchasing sustainable goods and services, underlying supplier diversity, fair employment and environmental attributes, and social and ethical criteria

The next few years are important for the EU to prove its commitments to the climate objective through concrete actions with a global impact :

The reduction of global emissions is the priority and the prices of energy complicate achieving the GD's objectives.

Nevertheless, the state and non-state actors (MNC , NGOs and academia) expressed their commitment to tackle climate change, giving the opportunity for specific adaptations at a national and local level.

The green transition represents the solution for going forward and the circular economy is at the heart of designing the national and local implementation of the GD in MS.

Integration and adaptation are key principles to be followed, as well as COVID-19 recovery plans, sustainable development, and building climate resilience and correcting the finance gaps between MS—all are challenges ahead.



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The EU Commission delivered the “Fit for 55” package to make the green transition easier:



It is composed of new legislative proposals and proposals for modifications of existing legislation which will help the EU to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, in comparison with the 1990 figures.



This will be possible by following key actions such as:

- the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions through carbon absorbers, such as forests;
- financing a fair transition;
- promoting renewable energy;
- fostering energy efficiency;
- more alternative fuels and more charging stations for electric vehicles;
- energy taxation;
- carbon-based border adjustment for certain imports; and
- greenhouse gas emissions from all economic sectors, including industry, transport, energy, agriculture and waste

The EU will need to lead its transition to a carbon-neutral, resource-efficient and circular economy:

It means cooperation and collaboration between international actors.

The Action Plan elaborated by the EC for a cleaner and a more competitive Europe requires the coordination and joint efforts of the MS to achieve the GD's objectives.

A regional cooperation between MS with the same characteristics in terms of economic, cultural, and social factors will support a better implementation, and will avoid duplication and a waste of resources, enhancing the coherence, complementarity and impact of the adopted national and/or local solutions.

The plan aims to keep re-sources in economic circles if it is possible.

Conclusions:

All MS expressed their political commitment to the EGD's implementation, including climate policy objectives, but there are some voices of epistemic communities which recently raised several questions for researches on the social impact and sustainable solutions for the GD's implementation.

These voices are mainly from the central region of the EU and have pertinent questions regarding the capacity building and the EGD's implementation capacity.

The social impact of the EGD's implementation in MS from central Europe will have effects on the well-being of European citizens, so the sustainable policies will have to be designed at a national level and particular regional transformative policies (transversal and sectoral) for each MS, including regional cooperation and collaboration, will need to be taken into consideration.