WHEN THE CLIMATE CRISIS COMES
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TO THE PUBLICLY ELECTED POLITICIANS OF SWEDEN
Two out of three Swedes are worried about climate change since it poses a significant threat to our safety, freedom and democracy. This pamphlet will help you to better understand how our society will be affected by the climate crisis if we do not urgently take appropriate measures. The pamphlet will also give you strategies for how to counteract this devastating development.

We are facing an existential crisis. 99.94 percent of climate scientists agree that humanity has caused global heating. The causal link between our greenhouse gas emissions and the heating of the Earth is as certain as the link between smoking and lung cancer.

Despite this, emissions are on the rise. According to scientists, the heating is already bringing with it massive changes and damages. These will accelerate if the emissions do not decrease rapidly.

We are running out of time. It has fallen on our generation to safeguard the survival of many species and the future of human civilization. The ultimate responsibility for our safety lies with you, in the capacity of being a publicly elected politician. Because of this, it is imperative that you do everything you can so that the Swedish government will start treating the climate crisis like the crisis it is.

READ AND ACT!
THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ACTING NOW

While the planet has become 1.1 degree Celsius warmer since the second half of the Nineteenth Century, the average temperature in Sweden is already approaching a warming of 2 degrees. The temperature in Sweden increases by at least 1.5 degrees for every degree our planet warms. If carbon emissions keep rising at today’s pace, Sweden will be approximately 5 degrees warmer by the end of the century. The consequences of global heating and ecological collapse, unless you and other publicly elected politicians act now, are an increase in suffering and enormous costs to society:

- **Extreme weather.** The warmer climate will cause more and more extreme weather events. Heat waves, droughts, wildfires, storms, mudslides and flooding will become more common throughout the world.

- **Floods.** The risk of floods will increase drastically. The sea-level could rise with as much as a metre if emissions continue to rise. Areas currently inhabited by 280 million people risk being submerged at 2 degrees of warming. At 4 degrees, 600 million people will become affected. Coastal areas in Southern Sweden, such as parts of Malmö, Skanör and Falsterbo, will be submerged. The floods in Sweden 2014 caused damages worth 900 million SEK.

- **Wildfires.** Extreme drought and longer summers will make wildfires more common and the wildfire season longer. The cost of putting out the wildfires in Sweden 2018 amounted to hundreds of millions of SEK and forests worth up to 900 million went up in flames.

- **Food scarcity.** Extreme weather and a decline in wild pollinators lead to worsened conditions for growing food crops, both here and around the world. At the same time, the population of the Earth is projected to grow from today’s 7.7 to 9.7 billion people by 2050, according to the UN. This will cause an increase in food prices as well as food scarcity. In 2018, after the record-breaking summer heat in Sweden, the harvests were reduced to half compared to an average year.

- **Water scarcity.** When contaminated water from flooded rivers and salty sea-water seep into wells the drinking water is ruined. At the same time, the amount of rain will decrease in most dry areas. Long periods of drought take their toll on the groundwater and leads to water scarcity. After the summer of 2018, the groundwater levels were far lower than normal in large parts of Sweden.

- **Increased sickness and death.** More people fall ill and die as a result of the heat. The heatwave in Sweden 2018 was estimated to have caused over 600 deaths. Simultaneously, diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, TBE, salmonella and cholera will spread globally. The warmer weather is one reason for cases of TBE becoming more common in Sweden in the last two decades. Every year between 200–400 Swedes are afflicted with a serious case of TBE.

- **The flow of migrants increases.** When millions of people have a hard time satisfying their basic needs and are forced to migrate, the risk of conflict will increase in the world. 200 million people are expected to migrate due to climate change by 2050. During the 2015 migrant crisis alone around 163,000 people applied for asylum in Sweden.

- **Conflicts, terrorism and war.** The climate crisis will raise the risk of conflict throughout the world, and threatens democracy and human rights. The survival of our civilization is at stake.
The commitments that Sweden and other countries have made in the Paris Agreement are insufficient. The goal is to not go above 2 degrees Celsius of global heating, with 1.5 degrees being the target. All indicators point to that we will miss this target by a large margin. If all countries keep their promises and decrease their emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030, we will still reach a warming of 3 degrees by 2100.

What is more, the trend is pointing in the wrong direction. Sweden’s emissions rose by 0.2 percent during the first three months of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018.

- July 2019 was the hottest month on record since measurements started in 1880.
- Today we have the highest concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere in 3-5 million years.
- The 20 hottest years since measurements began have been recorded in the past 22 years. The temperature increase correlates well with emission levels. Half of the industrial societies’ total carbon emissions since 1750 have been released after 1970.
- Temperatures in the Arctic are rising two to three times faster than the global average.
- If everything continues as today, the risk is great that we will hit the 1.5 degree target by 2030 if not sooner.

The collapse of the ecological system is another threat to our existence. Species go extinct at a rate that is 10 to 100 times faster than normal. Intensive agriculture, deforestation, and urbanisation destroy natural habitats. The death of species is also an effect of the use of chemical herbicides and pesticides, the spread of invasive species, overfishing and climate change.

- Of today’s 8 million species, one and a half million are threatened by extinction within the coming decades.
- 60 percent of the biomass of mammals today is domesticated animals, 36 percent is humans and only 4 percent is wild animals.
- According to the World Wildlife Fund, the population of wild vertebrates has decreased by 60 percent since 1970.
- 40 percent of all insect species alive today are threatened by extinction in the coming decades. Insects play an invaluable role in the planetary ecosystem — both as pollinators and main food source for many animals. More than 75 percent of all food crops are in part or entirely dependent on pollination by insects. Without the insects’ service to the ecosystem, we risk being without coffee, wine, tomatoes, strawberries and cotton, just to mention a few examples.

The more species that go extinct, the greater the risk that the entire ecosystem collapses. The extinction of species is accelerating and we are on the way to a sixth mass extinction of life on earth — this time caused by humanity.
### HALF A DEGREE MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

Already at 1.5 degrees Celsius global heating, two of three summers in Europe will be as extreme as the record-breaking summer of 2018 in Sweden or the summer of 2019 in large parts of Europe (see table below). At 2 degrees of global heating, summers like these will become the norm, not the exception.

Half a degree thus makes the difference whether 100s of millions of people will be exposed to climate changes in the form of increased poverty, heat waves, diseases, and food and water shortages.

### TABLE 1

Differences between how 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees Celsius of global heating affect society and nature according to the IPCC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLOBAL HEATING</th>
<th>1.5°C</th>
<th>2°C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people affected by serious heat waves at least every five years</td>
<td>1 billion</td>
<td>2.7 billions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface area where ecosystem is changed from one type to another, e.g. from rainforest to savannah</td>
<td>9 million km² (roughly comparable to surface area of Europe)</td>
<td>17 million km² (comparable to surface area of Australia and USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of coral reefs that die</td>
<td>70–90%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea level rise</td>
<td>40 cm</td>
<td>50 cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SOON, THERE IS NO TURNING BACK

If the current climate politics are not changed, the world can expect over 3 degrees Celsius of heating at the end of the century. If there are no limits on greenhouse gas emissions, we will get a global heating of 4–5 degrees by 2100.

The effects for life on Earth caused by global heating at the higher range cannot be fully predicted. It would be a scenario that humanity has never witnessed, resulting in consequences beyond catastrophic. Global heating of this kind will most likely set in motion dangerous climate feedback effects, where heating will accelerate and move beyond the control of humanity. In such a situation, the emission of methane from melting permafrost in the Tundra, death of rainforests in the Amazon and the disappearance of sea ice in the Arctic will lead to increased global heating. This may happen already at 2 degrees of global heating.

We cannot rely on the possibility that we humans can lower the global temperature once heating has reached a critical level. Soon there will be no turning back. For this reason it is crucial to act today.

### IT IS STILL NOT TOO LATE

According to the IPCC’s Special Report of 2018 it is still possible to achieve the 1.5 degree target. However, during the past year, researchers have become increasingly doubtful about our capacity to limit global heating to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. In order to avoid this crisis, swift and radical measures to the entire society are needed.

It may seem impossible, but people have made enormous transformations happen in the past. During the Second World War, mobilisation demanded that the entire economy was transformed within a couple of months. We can manage an enormous transformation once again, simply because we have to. The alternative is the extinction of large parts of life on Earth.
The fossil industry has for decades invested billions in disinformation campaigns and sponsored researchers who deny the reality of the climate threat, exactly as the tobacco lobby disseminated doubt about the health hazards of smoking. Not only are the methods the same – to a great extent the same researchers are also involved.

A study recently showed that more than half of the examined video clips about the climate on YouTube disseminate misleading information. For this reason it is very important to be critical of sources and to be wary of false information.

The facts in this pamphlet come from the UN’s International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, and other public authorities and scientific studies that have gone through rigorous peer-review processes. All sources can be found at extinctionrebellion.se/nar-klimat-krisen-kommer/kallor.

The climate policy of Sweden matters

It is important that Sweden takes responsibility for its total climate impact. Firstly we have a historical responsibility for already accumulated emissions, and secondly we have continuous high emissions per capita. Sweden has a lot to gain by taking the lead in the transition to climate neutrality. By developing the solutions that the rest of the world needs for its own transition, we can contribute to less emissions from other countries. This will lead to increased innovation, employment and export opportunities. The IPCC argues that the socio-economic gains of the transition are significantly greater than the costs.

Be wary of false information and lies

We citizens call on you, as a publicly elected politician, to act responsibly and to take the climate crisis seriously. It is time to apply the same precautionary principle for the climate as for other societal threats and risks.

It is both your duty and moral obligation to take the necessary measures to protect our country, our planet and all of its inhabitants. It is not only a question of people alive today. At the moment we are using resources that belong to our children and grandchildren. You must ensure that we hand over a well-functioning society to future generations.

Now you need to show courage, both as a politician and a human being. You have strong support, both in scientific research and among citizens. Act now and stand on the right side of history!
HOW TO SAVE MILLIONS OF LIVES

1. TELL THE TRUTH
The government must tell the truth by declaring a climate and ecological emergency and, together with other institutions, communicate the urgency to transform society. Municipalities and regions must also declare climate emergencies with demands for concrete measures, both on local and regional levels, as well as to inform the citizens about the crisis.

2. ACT NOW
The government must act immediately in order to limit the disappearance of species and to reduce Sweden’s emissions of greenhouse gases to net zero by 2025. This work must also be conducted on local and regional levels and by municipalities and regions.

3. BEYOND POLITICS
The government must create and be led by the decisions of a Citizens’ Assembly on climate and ecological justice. Municipalities and regions are also called upon to create citizens’ assemblies and similar forums.

DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE?
Schedule an appointment with Extinction Rebellion. We would love to discuss with you and support you in your initiatives to take the necessary measures to prevent the worst effects of the climate crisis. Send an e-mail to extinctionrebellionsv@riseup.net.

The full pamphlet is available for download at extinctionrebellion.se/nar-klimatkrisen-kommer

All sources and references can be found at extinctionrebellion.se/nar-klimatkrisen-kommer/kallor

Read more about Extinction Rebellion Sweden at extinctionrebellion.se

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