

THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE FACE OF THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF RIGHTS: A GLOBAL CHALLENGE

Thursday 26 september, 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., Nacre room



Juliette Joyeux, Angela Pinna, Taha Hannachi and Fiona Schnell

When we address the issue of climate change, the first thoughts that arise are regarding the inequality that it creates. Because there is an undeniable reality: 'Not all people are affected in the same way,' said Fiona Schnell, executive director of the International Institute for Human Rights and Peace. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Citizen already mentions these issues, stipulating that every human being has a right to life and to a minimum subsistence, rights which are inevitably violated in the event of floods, drought or storms. These climatic changes also have consequences on insecurity and the rise of conflicts in the world. 'We must keep this in mind to think more globally about the management of the climate crisis, which is accompanied by a search for peace and its maintenance.' Hence, these inequalities, fostered by global warming, must be approached

MODERATION

Juliette Joyeux, International Projects Manager

SPEAKERS

Lolita Couchene, Intern at the United Nations Environment Programme in New York and campaigner for World's Youth for Climate Justice

Taha Hannachi, Researcher in social psychology

Fiona Schnell, Director of the International Institute for Human Rights and Peace

Angela Pinna, Coordinator of the project EcoAlity in Italy - OXFAM

from the perspective of the interdependence of rights; one right is always linked to another. 'We can't think about freedom of expression if we don't also think about the right to privacy.'

In mainland France, these inequalities are mainly economic. Drought, for example, impacts water reserves and thus businesses in agriculture or industry. Floods will also affect infrastructure. As Fiona Schnell explained, the consequences of climate change don't have the same impact on populations in northern countries as on those in more fragile southern countries. 'If a flood occurs tomorrow, we're in a country in which we're lucky to have insurance that reimburses the cost of cleaning renovations, while public services offer rehousing and emergency shelters. I'm very down to earth but it's a reality.'

If we expect a long-term result, it doesn't work on the human brain

Taha Hannachi

Based on these observations, Taha Hannachi, a researcher in social psychology, prefers to talk about anthropogenic climate change, i.e. climate change caused by human actions. 'If we look at it from this angle, we can say that by being the problem, we can also be the solution.' A phenomenon linked to the climate cause particularly interests him in his research: eco-anxiety. It's a phenomenon of varying degrees, causing psychological and sometimes physical distress resulting from apprehension about the scale of the environmental crisis.' At



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the highest levels, this eco-anxiety can lead to paralysis, apathy or deep despair. But eco-anxiety can also be a driver for environmental action. 'We can worry, but we can also act,' he reassures. What can foster eco-anxiety is the feeling of personal inefficacy. But feeling that we have the means to act allows us to reduce this eco-anxiety and create a positive feedback loop.

Are human beings capable of acting and providing solutions?

For Fiona Schnell, action comes through consensus, commitment, collaboration and discussion. Taha Hannachi took the example of Gafam (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft) who use neuroscience to perpetuate a habit among users: the instant reward system inherent in all human beings that provokes compulsive clicks and infinite scrolling on social networks. 'But with the creation of a virtuous habit, we can reverse that. There are a few ingredients. Already there's a motivation to change, a spark, a trigger, cognitive dissonance and hence a new reward system. As with schoolwork, you need to divide up the tasks to come up with a reward system and create a positive feedback loop. Our emotional system works like this. If we expect a long-term result, it doesn't work on the human brain.'