



THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
Elements for the Constitutional Treaty



SECOND CONTRIBUTION TO

THE CONVENTION ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

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**Friends of
the Earth
Europe**

The Convention on the Future of Europe is expected to propose a structure for a constitutional treaty at its next plenary session. This will lead to debate on the content of such a constitutional treaty.

The eight international environmental organisations represented in Brussels (the G-8') hereby present the Convention with their common position on the essential elements for a constitutional treaty.



This second contribution to the Convention by the 'G-8' is based on the existing provisions in the Treaty on environment and sustainable development and on the demands made in our initial submission, dated April 18, 2002.



As set out in the attached contribution, the constitutional treaty should guarantee transparency in the Union's decisionmaking and citizen rights to information, consultation and appeal, and retain the objectives of sustainable development and policy coherence and the principles of environmental protection already found in the Treaty.



Our organisations represent more than 20 million members and supporters.

Elements for the Constitutional Treaty

Objectives:

The Union shall have the following objectives:

- the promotion and achievement of sustainable development;
- the protection of the right of every person to live in a clean and healthy environment;
- the protection of the quality of the environment for present and future generations.

Transparency:

The right of access to information, public participation in decisionmaking and access to justice shall be guaranteed to citizens and residents of the Union.

Access to information:

Any person, without having to state an interest, shall have a right of access to documents held by the institutions and other bodies of the Union.

Consultation and public participation:

The public shall be informed of and consulted on, in an early, appropriate and adequate manner, of proposals for legislation, regulation, policy or programs, and given the opportunity to comment, during each stage of decisionmaking, on such initiatives.

Access to justice:

The public shall have a right of access to the European Court of Justice to challenge decisions of the Union's institutions and other bodies.

Open decisionmaking:

The Council shall meet in public when acting in its legislative capacity. The records of its proceedings and votes shall be accessible to the public.

Environmental policy:

The activities of the Union shall include a policy in the sphere of the environment based on the objectives and principles set out in the current Environment Title of the EC-Treaty.

Policy coherence:

Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union's policies and activities [referred to in article 3, EC Treaty], in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.

Principles of environmental policy:

Union policy on the environment shall be based on the following principles:

- the precautionary principle;
- the principle that preventive action should be taken;
- the principle that environmental damage should be rectified at source; and
 - the polluter pays principle.