

# Extinction Rebellion : change civilization

58- 23/01/2023 –Extinction Rebellion (XR) is a global, non-partisan environmental movement for the defense of the planet. Its goal: limit the risk of ecological collapse and climate change. The movement wants to bring governments to take radical measures. At the same time, XR seeks to change mentalities, raises awareness and creates a sense of urgency among the population. XR organizes non-violent civil disobedience actions all over the world. As a result, the constant and multi-channel pressure[1] on society has already succeeded in making climate a prominent and mobilizing issue, but tangible improvements are still pending. Nevertheless, the path taken by XR is rich in lessons for those who want to better understand how to build open communities on a global scale and strategies to fight social powerlessness, two fundamental dimensions of the collective empowerment process.

## *" Heading for extinction "*

Earth's temperature is running out of control and it is highly likely that the warming limit of + 1.5°C by 2100, agreed upon in the Paris Agreement (2015), will not be met. Consequences of this overshoot are already alarming - in long term they will be dramatic: water shortages, increased exodus caused by environmental disasters, malnutrition, extinction of species ... The fight against global warming requires a change in civilization.

"We are living the sixth mass extinction, due to the unlimited greed of the 1%, to their blindness to the ecological limits set by the earth and the limits set by social justice and human rights. According to the latest reports, biodiversity is

collapsing at an incredible rate – 40% of amphibians, -33% of coral reefs... We will leave behind us a more impoverished and polluted world than the one we received\*". Refusing the programmed extinction XR has decided on three fundamental claims that the group systematically recalls:

1- declare a state of climate and ecological emergency and work with other institutions to alert on the urgency of change,

2- stop greenhouse gas emissions by 2025,

3- create a citizens' assembly on climate and ecological justice



« Au sein d'XR, j'ai enfin pu trouver des personnes avec qui partager mes angoisses – ailleurs, je suis catégorisée « écolo de service » témoigne un membre  
©alisdarel on Visualhunt.com

« "As scientist, I have privileged access to numerous reports on threats our way of life poses to biodiversity and even to our very existence. This acute risks awareness awakens in me a feeling of anxiety difficult to share with my family. For them, as for a large part of the population and for politicians, these alerts remain abstract. There is even a denial of scientific word that urges us to change our system, our habits, our economy. Only the prospect of these

*transformations stuns the public. But procrastination time is over. If we want to face the reality and if we are concern by common good, then urgent measures are necessary. This is what citizen jury's work shows.. In France, the 150 people who made up the jury were chosen by lot. They were not particularly green, but once they were informed, once the situation was presented and explained to them, they put forward a panel of measures for the climate, 150 to be exact, which unfortunately were not applied (only 28 were retained, editor's note). The inaction of the authorities is unacceptable. At my level, I want to influence decisions so that the ecological emergency becomes public policies priority. That's why I joined XR," says Djell (the pseudonym has been changed NDLR). » says Djell (the pseudonym has been changed NDLR).*

Founded in 2018 in the United Kingdom, XR has quickly expanded to 83 countries. In January 2023, its website\* counted 1,178 active relay groups, nearly 70% of which are in Europe. In France 53 groups are listed. "At XR, we share the same collective awareness of the immense danger that threatens us and a common desire to fight it," says the website.

## **Intervene and unite citizens around ecological issues**

**In order to impulse change in the way we talk about the climate and ecological emergency, XR organizes mass demonstrations and fist-fights. These large-scale, non-violent but radical civil disobedience campaigns have given the movement exceptional visibility and have reinforced its rebellious image.**

Marches, road blockades, bridge blockades... Among its emblematic actions, the one of April 2019, carried out in London, will be remembered. For over a week thousands of protesters blocked access to five major sites, Oxford Circus, Marble Arch, Waterloo Bridge, Piccadilly Circus and Parliament square to raise public awareness to the 6th mass extinction.

These occupations have resulted in more than a thousand arrests. Such a popular confrontation with the British government led the House of Commons to declare a state of ecological emergency, a world first. Other actions followed in all latitudes, in the USA, in Pakistan, in the Netherlands, in Austria... Organizations like Youth For Climate or Climate Action, Alterniba, Greenpeace joined XR.

In April 2022, during the inter-round of the presidential elections, XR found itself under the spotlight by occupying the Porte Saint Denis. The square was transformed into a living space with conferences, workshops and food distribution. Well relayed by the media, these actions have generated a movement of sympathy. "Each mobilization brings new memberships. The exchanges with the public encourage us to continue" admits Djell. But the situation is more difficult when there is a disturbance of public order and inconvenience for users. The volunteers know that they can end up at the station as for example during the destruction of GMO fields –

Even if the police have a hard time to identify the organizers when there is no hierarchy, no head, no... responsible. "Nevertheless, arrests do take place and activists who get arrested for the first time do not expect to be insulted, to be forbidden to go to the toilet for hours, to experience such a power struggle. Emotionally, these people can feel very shaken up. So we make sure that volunteers receive psychological support, before, during and after the action. We set up buffer zones such as decompression chambers where they can meet for debriefing and comforting. To take care of them, we have trained professionals in active listening, in leading discussion groups.

Extinction Rebellion invites RATP users to an odyssey to the future – a funny and disturbing playlet!

In Paris, to counter lobbies blocking environmental measures implementations, XR sprayed the headquarters of Medef with fake blood, on June 19, 2020. To point out the impact of industry construction, XR launched the operation “Fin de chantiers” and occupied the premises of Lafarge and Cemex\*\*, on February 17, 2020. To support their demand for ending air traffic and its greenhouse gas emissions, activists entered a runway at Orly on June 26, 2020.



Extinction Rebellion France 🐝🌸  
@xrFrance

...

● ACTION EN COURS FACE À #EACOP, #Total, la BNP & leur monde 🇫🇷

#ExtinctionRebellion & les ami·e·s de la coalition #StopEACOP, posons aujourd'hui nos pipelines devant @TotalEnergies & son partenaire financier : @BNPParibas au cours d'une série d'actions : CARNAGE TOTAL 🇫🇷

[Translate Tweet](#)



Attac France and 9 others

10:01 AM · Jan 20, 2023 · 63.2K Views

## XR Twitter account – screenshot

Recently, to denounce investments in fossil fuels and oppose the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project supported by Total and its partners, members of XR, Attac and Fridays for Future blocked streets around a BNP Paribas facility, put up pipelines, banners “The Bank of a Dying World” and covered the facades on January 20, 2023.

Even if XR does not win the case, its actions mark, lead companies to reduce their impact on the environment and

improve the quality of life at work for their employees.

XR also signs softer actions such as anti-advertising posters, 2 to 3 times a week in city centers or encouraging the extinction of illuminated signs. In Toulouse, in the pedestrian streets, the movement proposes times of meditation, of questioning the overconsumption. "By carrying out these actions, everyone realizes that at their own level, they can have an impact ; moving from paralysis to movement is the XR momentum," says Djell.



## **PUBLICITÉ : PAS DE RETOUR À L'ANORMAL !**

Nous sommes de retour dans les rues. Pendant la crise sanitaire, nous avons su résister, nous entraider, agir. Le système économique, de son côté, a révélé ses failles. Nous ne voulons pas de retour à l'anormal, à un système destructeur du monde vivant. C'est désormais à nous toutes et tous de choisir ce que nous voulons pour nos vies et notre société ! Pour sa première action après le confinement, Extinction Rebellion a choisi de cibler la publicité dans les rues.

### **La publicité entraîne la destruction du monde vivant**

C'est le premier maillon de la surproduction : elle incite à la surconsommation pour écouler des produits dont nous n'avons pas besoin et dont la production est coûteuse écologiquement. La production de ces objets vendus par la pub est polluante, créatrice de déchets. Ce système économique est responsable de l'anéantissement du monde vivant. Ces écrans et panneaux illuminés accaparent aussi de l'énergie et des ressources précieuses, dont les stocks s'amenuisent.

### **La publicité est aliénante**

Elle colonise nos imaginaires, nous pousse à désirer des biens inutiles, crée de la frustration et de l'endettement. Elle véhicule un imaginaire sexiste.

### **La publicité est antidémocratique**

La publicité en ville nous est imposée. On ne peut pas y échapper alors qu'on ne l'a pas choisie. Préférez-vous des panneaux publicitaires ou des arbres fruitiers, la végétalisation de nos rues ? C'est à nous de décider de l'usage de l'espace public.

### **REPRENONS NOS VILLES !**

### **AGISSONS DIRECTEMENT POUR FAIRE CESSER LA POLLUTION PUBLICITAIRE !**

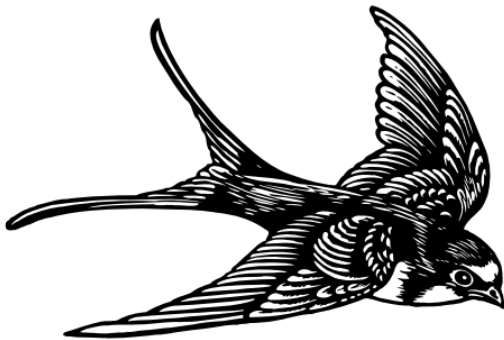
#### **Qui sommes nous ?**

Extinction Rebellion est un mouvement international de désobéissance civile de défense du monde vivant. Nous sommes présent-e-s dans 35 pays, et partout en France. Pour mener des actions avec nous, rejoignez votre groupe local !

[www.extinctionrebellion.fr](http://www.extinctionrebellion.fr)



# LE MONDE D'APRES SERA SANS PUB



*Extinction Rebellion's anti-advertising leaflet – Each year XR plans two important moments, spring and autumn, during which the movement occupies the public and media space desquels le mouvement occupe largement l'espace public et médiatique*

## **An Empowering Organization**

Since its creation, XR adopted a decentralized, self-organizing system breaking with traditional hierarchical structures. Inspired by sociocracy, its governance is based on freedom, co-responsibility of actors and distribution of authority. The fundamental principles: no leader but decisions made by consent, no authorization but mandates and roles self-defined by the groups and their members, all subject to a requirement of transparency and communication. The emphasis is on decentralization, consultation, autonomy and the encouragement of initiative. Thus, anyone who respects the fundamental principles of Extinction Rebellion can act on its behalf[2]. There is no list or membership and only one

imperative prevails: to advance the cause. Initiating volunteers (pairs, trinomials) take on a project and define the working group mandate. They publish a broad call to join the group in order to diversify the profile of the participants as much as possible, a factor of enrichment. People who join the working group commit themselves to stay and to follow its evolution assiduously. The group then drafts a document explaining the decision to be made. Discussion begins with local groups. A consent vote is held. If there are no reasonable objections, the proposal will pass. If there are blocking votes, the working group reworks the document and resubmits it. Several rounds of feedback are held until a consensus solution is reached. The implementation of the project requires the definition of clear and complementary missions, we will speak of mandates for the teams and roles for the individuals. Each group has two coordinators, external and internal, a maintainer in charge of updating and archiving the main documents, a communication manager, a regenerative culture promoter...

XR applies regenerative culture precepts advocated by the American Joanna Macy, PhD, ecologist\*\*\*. This model of development is based on a community approach that is caring and non-guilty, focusing on relationships between humans and the connection to life.

To support its teams, XR offers trainings on resilience, power relations, regenerative culture, self-organizing system, activism, disobedience, direct action and nonviolent communication, and also sessions to hone skills in conference, facilitation... XR shares scientific data online publishing leaflets on insects decline, mangroves, birds, air pollution. Also freely available are Street Art Rebellion action manuals, survival in police custody, an anti-advertising action kit ... Every month, seminars present the movement. "Research and systemic" group synthesizes scientific articles and data and provides easily accessible scientific expertise on ecological,



climate and social issues. Finally, XR can also allocate direct funding according to the needs and local strategies of its branches.

XR is representative of citizen protest movements characterized by their informal, agile, adaptable, and interconnected networks spread in rhizomes across continents.

*“Humanity has a choice: cooperate or perish – It is either a Climate Solidarity Pact – or a Collective Suicide Pact. The blame game is a recipe for mutually assured destruction.”*  
Antonio Guterres CoP27

## War in Ukraine and XR's position

### Two routes to extinction: War and climate destruction



Whether through fossil-fuelled **greed** and **planetary overheating** or nuclear **war, mass murder**, radiation and planetary freezing...

... humanity faces **extinction** if we do not pull back from the insane **military-industrial growth and dominance** of our lives and economies.



Graphic of Earth entombed by radioactive dustclouds after nuclear use (source IPPNW)

Deux voies vers l'extinction ([XR](#))

Two paths to extinction (XR)

The conflict is causing a human and ecological disaster through the use of weapons, fires and military displacement. Committed to peace and against fossil fuels XR has relayed the global call of XR Ukraine to take action against the oil and

gas companies of the Russian Federation and their business partners in the EU and internationally.

On this occasion XR recalls its demands and in particular the abandonment of fossil fuels and stresses fossil fuels are a threat to world peace because they enrich dictatorships.

Verbatim

### **Verbatim**

“Climate change causes wars and wars cause climate change”.

“Nuclear weapons are the double threat of extinction for humanity and the planet”.

XR has created a site to spread his ideas <https://xrpeace.org>

### **Decoding**

XR ticks all the criteria of individual and collective empowerment (community[3], collaborative[4] and societal[5]) but does not get the expected resonance at the political level and fails attacking problem roots.

The mass mobilizations and regular micro-actions organized by XR succeed in

- influencing public opinion,
- giving new light and strength to the scientific discourse by giving it popular support,
- bringing political questioning of desirable futures out of utopias, circles of power and the experts

But despite its power, XR’s activism has not, for the time brought direct and concrete changes in lifestyles or fundamental institutional reforms. At worst, blocking demonstrations may end up exasperating the very public that XR intends to win over. There is also a great risk that the right to protest will be tightened and anti-protest legislation will be strengthened.



Le X d'eXtinction symbolise aussi un sablier et l'urgence d'agir pour la planète représentée par le cercle

**Great cause promoted: defense of the planet and to this end, the pursuit of a triple objective 1- declare a state of climatic and ecological emergency, 2- stop greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, 3- create a citizen's assembly on climate and ecological justice**

XR has the competence and the means to organize spectacular and non-violent collective actions. These widely publicized happenings regularly remind us of the climate emergency and the need to act, to change our behavior and our development model.

**2018:** creation of Extinction Rebellion in the UK by a dozen people including Tasmin Osmond and George Barda, Roger Hallam, Gail Bradbrook, and Simon Bramwell...

XR is present in 83 countries and has 1,178 active relay groups, nearly 70% of which are in Europe. In France, 53 groups are listed.

**Next major action:** Surround Westminster (UK) with demands for a sustainable future. April 21st 2023 to surround Westminster with demands for a sustainable future.

**No established membership list**

**Adress** <https://rebellion.global/>

- Facebook □ <https://www.facebook.com/xrfrance>
- Diaspora □ <https://framaspHERE.org/u/xrfrance>
- Instagram □ <https://www.instagram.com/extinctionr...>
- Twitter □ <https://twitter.com/xrFrance>
- Mastodon □ <https://social.rebellion.global/@xrfr...>
- Twitch □ <https://www.twitch.tv/xrfrance>

<https://www.youtube.com/@ExtinctionRebellionUK>

*Marie-Georges Fayn*

\*source <https://rebellion.global/> et <https://extinctionrebellion.fr/>

\*\*one of the most important building materials and cement companies

\*\*\*Macy, Joanna, et Johnstone, Chris. 2018. L'espérance en mouvement. Genève: Labor & Fides.

---

[1] Pressure from XR and many actors including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the International Panel on Biodiversity (IPBES) as well as other NGOs, environmentalists, and others.

[2] Principle #10

the detrimental role of power is highlighted, and the movement commits to “breaking down power hierarchies for more equitable participation” (principle 7)

[3] sharing the same findings, values, goals and sense of belonging

[4] learning and transferring skills, building social capital, consensual collective action, developing advocacy

[5] Development of advocacy, collective awareness of dysfunctions and their root causes, project for the transformation of society, partnership with other organizations, gain in visibility and influence, recognition as a counter-power and social force