

## Landmark Climate Change Lawsuit

### Decisive court hearing in The Hague on April 14

On Tuesday, April 14, a **landmark case** will be heard before the district court in The Hague that could have a major impact on the future of our planet. Together with 900 co-plaintiffs, the **Urgenda Foundation is suing the Dutch government** for failing to enact effective policies that would contribute to preventing **dangerous climate change**. The lawsuit is the first case in the world where existing tort law and human rights law are used to force a government to do what is necessary in order to prevent destructive climate change. The hearing comes two weeks after an international group of eminent jurists launched the **Oslo Principles** which state that governments worldwide have a legal obligation to protect their citizens against climate change.

### Bringing Climate Change to Justice

The Dutch Climate Case sets the rights and interests of citizens at the centre. These citizens will be exposed to the dangers of climate change if no steps are taken to dramatically cut back emissions of greenhouse gases. Acting on behalf of the 900 co-plaintiffs, Urgenda, a Dutch NGO promoting sustainability and innovation, asks the court to rule that the government's inaction is in conflict with the law. At the hearing on 14 April, the Urgenda Foundation will request the court:

- To declare that the Dutch State is acting unlawfully by not contributing its proportional share to carrying out effective climate policies.
- To order the Dutch State to drastically reduce Dutch CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the level that has been determined by scientists to be necessary, that is, by 40% below 1990 levels before 2020.
- To declare that global warming of more than 2 degrees Celsius will lead to a violation of fundamental human rights worldwide.
- To order the State to inform its citizens much better (with specific texts proposed) about causes and effects of dangerous climate change.

Now that more and more people around the world are experiencing the consequences of climate change, turning to the courts will become a more frequent course of action.

*According to Urgenda director MarjanMinnesma, "This climate case is the first court case in the world in which a state is held accountable in this way. When we win, we can finally put aside the political squabbling about whether we'll do what is necessary to safeguard current and future generations from an overheating planet, and finally move on to the question how we'll get there."*

*"Of course no single country can prevent climate change, but we claim that this does not relieve the state of its individual legal responsibility for its own emissions that contribute to climate change. There is enormous interest in our approach. On December 1, 2014, a climate case was initiated in Belgium following the example of our case."*

To support others in starting their own climate cases, translations have been made of all the documents laying the legal arguments that were submitted to the court.

The idea for a Dutch climate case came from the book *Revolution Justified* by the Dutch lawyer Roger Cox, who is also one of the lawyers representing Urgenda.

The Dutch Climate Case received enormous support two weeks ago when the [Oslo Principles on Global Climate Change Obligations](#) were presented. The Oslo principles endorse the arguments that Urgenda brings forward in its climate case and also provides support to initiatives in other countries to involve the courts in their efforts to contain climate change.

More information including reference materials can be found here: [www.urgenda.nl/en/climate-case/](http://www.urgenda.nl/en/climate-case/)

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Notes for editors (not for publication)

Members of the media are welcome at the photo session (8:30 AM) and in the courtroom (9:30 AM).

Kindly inform us of your intention to attend via [Matthijs.Kettelerij@urgenda.nl](mailto:Matthijs.Kettelerij@urgenda.nl) with the subject 'media at climate case hearing'

Photo and video material of the Climate Case is available from April 14th

For more information and interviews, please contact:

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