



Brussels, 22 April 2026

Time to rethink growth: ELSiA supports UN Roadmap for people and planet

The European Laudato Si' Alliance¹ (ELSiA) welcomes the newly launched UN Roadmap for eradicating poverty beyond growth as a coherent framework for transforming our economy and a timely contribution to the discussion on the next SDGs.

The Roadmap challenges the assumption that we can continue pursuing endless growth while delivering climate justice and bringing Europe back within planetary boundaries. Instead, it advances a framework for building economies explicitly designed to help people and the planet thrive, setting out a wide-ranging catalogue of policy measures – from short-term reforms to longer-term structural transformations – that governments and international organisations can adapt to their specific contexts.

The launch of the Roadmap comes at a critical moment. We inhabit a world of accelerating ecological crisis: seven of the nine planetary boundaries have already been exceeded and global material extraction has tripled since the 1970s, a trend that is expected to intensify in the decades ahead. The EU's material footprint, averaging 14.8 tonnes per capita per year, is more than twice the level considered sustainable and just, and this is likely to continue to increase, especially considering Europe's military spending surge and the environmental toll of conflict and military activity. Persisting in the pursuit of limitless growth on a finite planet is not a viable solution, but a driver of ecological breakdown. In this political and ecological context, the Roadmap offers a necessary shift: a call to move beyond an economic model that measures success by output alone and towards one that centres on justice, human dignity, and the safeguarding of our common home.

The Roadmap calls for a new understanding, one already articulated by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*: the ecological crisis is inseparable from the social crisis. It highlights how climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss and resource depletion disproportionately impact those already experiencing poverty and illustrates the need for climate justice, equitable access to natural resources, community-based governance, and socially just low-carbon transitions. It proposes concrete policies ranging from science-based caps on resource use and emissions to stronger governance of critical minerals, protection against land grabbing, support for agroecology, and financing for loss and damage.

We urgently need to address the structural causes of environmental degradation rather than merely its symptoms. The Roadmap's call to reimagine our economic systems to prioritise wellbeing, human rights and sustainability echoes the [words of Pope Leo XIV](#): "Economic activity cannot be limited to the mere management of resources or the simple pursuit of profit" and of Pope Francis: "in view of the common good, there is urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life" (*Laudato Si'* 189).

With the launch of this Roadmap, we urge the EU to adopt it as a concrete guiding framework for its ecological actions and policies, aligning environmental sustainability with human dignity.

¹ ELSiA is a European alliance of Catholic not-for-profit organisations, networks, and Bishops' Conferences united by a shared commitment to social justice, integral human development, and the care for our common home. Rooted in the rich tradition of the Church's social teaching, our members implement projects across diverse sectors that foster human dignity and social promotion throughout Europe and beyond. We work collaboratively to strengthen our collective impact, increasing our engagement with integral ecology both within our own structures and in the wider society we serve. Founded in 2019, it is currently composed of seven members. They are: Caritas Europa, CIDSE, Don Bosco International, Jesuit European Social Centre, Justice and Peace Europe, Laudato Si' Movement and Pax Christi International.