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Climate : France Once Again Taken to Court for Failing to Respect Its “Fair Share” in the Global Effort

Just a few days before the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement and following a COP30 widely deemed insufficient to ensure a fair distribution of climate action, *Notre Affaire à Tous* launches a new legal action against the French State: the Fair Share Trial.

Amid a continuous wave of global climate litigation integrating fair share, including Belgium, Sweden, The Netherlands, the NGO brings before the courts an issue traditionally confined to diplomatic negotiations: what constitutes France's equitable contribution to limiting global warming to 1.5°C. The NGO is asking the court to acknowledge that France continues to lag behind in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and is failing to meet its equitable contribution to combating climate change, given its real impact, well beyond its territorial emissions alone.

As even [the COP30 Presidency remarked](#), “*Climate urgency means bypassing COP is necessary*”. With international negotiations constrained by national interests, courts around the world are increasingly becoming the places where climate commitments are clarified and enforced.

According to Jérémie Suissa, general delegate of Notre Affaire à Tous: “*This legal action brings before the courts an issue that until now has been debated mainly in political and diplomatic arenas: the principle of equity, which requires every country to shoulder its fair share of the global climate effort. It is a binding legal obligation for France, as reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice, and we are now asking the French Council of State to enforce it.*”

This case is part of a broader surge in climate litigation across Europe and beyond. It resonates strongly with other landmark actions, including the lawsuit brought by Aurora, a youth-led climate justice movement suing the Swedish state for not doing their fair share. As Aurora spokesperson Ida Edling explains : “*To build a safe and just world, it is vital that rich and high-emitting states like Sweden and France do their fair share of the necessary global climate action. Our movement litigating to hold them accountable for not doing this legal duty is global and growing.*”

A new step in a global movement for climate accountability

The Fair Share Trial builds on the precedents set in the *Affaire du Siècle* and the *Grande-Synthe* cases, two rulings that recognized the French State's failure to act in the face of the climate emergency.

This new case marks another major step forward, as it seeks to establish an expanded responsibility for France in the climate crisis. It is supported by reinforced legal foundations :

- the April 2024 European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) judgment in the Swiss Senior Women case ;
- the July 2025 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ;
- and the EU's new climate targets under the Fit for 55 package.

A growing delay in France's climate action

Despite binding legal and international obligations, France is still falling short of achieving its climate targets, including carbon neutrality by 2050. While the European Union raised its climate ambition in 2021 through the Fit for 55 package, mandating a 55% reduction in emissions by 2030 (instead of

40% before), France continues to fall behind. [Emissions decreased by only 1.8% in 2024 and are expected to fall by just 0.8% in 2025](#), far below the pace required to stay aligned with a 1.5°C trajectory.

Recent political announcements in France, including cuts to climate spending and weakened support for home insulation, further undermine France's capacity to meet its targets. This slowdown is compounded by an increasingly weakened carbon sink capacity, making the objective of carbon neutrality even more uncertain. Public institutions such as the [French High Council on Climate](#) warn that a rapid strengthening of current policies is indispensable.

These figures contrast sharply with the expectations of the French population: [recent polling shows broad majority support for stronger and fairer climate action](#).

“Common but differentiated responsibilities”: acknowledging France's true impact

Climate action cannot be distributed uniformly among countries. At the heart of this case lies a fundamental principle reaffirmed by the ICJ and ECHR: States must reduce emissions in line with their historical responsibility and economic capacity. Under this principle of *common but differentiated responsibilities*, France, a wealthy country with high cumulative emissions, must move faster and further.

This new lawsuit incorporates equity among nations to determine France's real responsibility. The Fair Share Trial thus includes:

- historical emissions (since 1990 for the purposes of this case) ;
- imported emissions ;
- net (rather than gross) emissions ;
- and France's level of economic development.

This analysis shows that France is far below its equitable contribution to combating climate change, given its real impact. France has already consumed nearly all of its “fair share” of the global carbon budget compatible with the 1.5°C objective.

France has both the obligation and the capacity to act

France has multiple levers available to meet its equitable share, including:

- accelerating domestic emission reductions in a socially fair manner ;
- regulating French companies, including multinationals ;
- cutting imported emissions ;
- and making ambitious contributions to international climate finance.

The year 2025 has been defined by advances in global climate justice: COP30 in Belém, two major advisory opinions (ICJ and Inter-American Court of Human Rights), and the 10-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement. **In this context, the Fair Share Trial places France before its own courts, and before the international community.** It is now up to France to prove that it will not be an exception in the growing global movement for equitable, science-based climate action, but a leader.

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[Link to the press kit](#)

[Link to the legal writings \(in french\)](#)