



**THE PEOPLE'S CLIMATE
CASE**
**Quotes from the plaintiff families and supporting
NGOs**

<https://peoplesclimatecase.caneurope.org/>

Below, the families explain how they are impacted and why they are initiating the case. Please see the website of the [“People’s Climate Case”](#) to reach to the detailed information about the families:

The grandfather of the French plaintiff family, Maurice Feschet said: **“44% in 6 years: this is the concrete loss of lavender harvest we are faced with in Provence due to the impacts of climate change hitting us harder and harder. In European politics, there is a real urgency to take a step back and reconsider the principles of democracy. The EU must now listen to its citizens who are impacted by climate change, and implement the necessary measures to protect them.”**

The German plaintiff, Maïke Recktenwald explains why they have started this case: **“ This legal case is not only about our family and the current situation, but about the future of all of us. What is happening here on our island and in Northern Germany is happening everywhere around the world. We are particularly aware of climate change because we are living in and with nature.”**

Sanna Vannar (22 years), the president of the Saami Youth Association, said: **“If we lose the reindeers, the Saami culture will be lost. Many of the Saami youth want to be reindeer herders, but they cannot see a future. This is mostly due to the threat of climate change. This must be urgently addressed for the safety of our generation and the next generations.” “**

The father of the Italian plaintiff family, Giorgio Elter said: **“We cannot remain silent to the impacts of climate change which are putting the future of our children in danger. This legal action is very important to raise awareness among our decision makers about the need to take more radical actions and measures to stop these impacts of climate change before they become irreversible and it is too late for all of us.”**

The father of the Portuguese beekeeper family, Ildebrando Conceição said: **“Today, we don’t have four seasons anymore, only winter and summer. This situation is disturbing the work of the bees because they take more time to adapt to climatic variations. The decrease in honey production, which has been continuous over the years, has reduced my family’s economic income, which derives from beekeeping activities. We started this legal case because this is a problem that isn’t just national: it requires that the EU does something more to counteract this situation that affects our lives and jeopardises the future of younger generations.”**



The father of the family Armando Carvalho who lost their tree plantation during the forest fires in 2017, said: **“On 15 October 2017, the occurrence of a unique and abnormal meteorological event coincided with the surge of a megafire spreading at the highest rate, affecting my family’s properties and assets. Taking into account my forestry knowledge and experience of fire-fighting during those days, aligned with my conscience and citizenship values, I had to take an active role in this legal case, as I’m aware that it is up to the EU to lead the way and act ambitiously to reverse what’s happening in terms of the impacts of climate change in its territory.”**

The Portuguese organic agriculture farmer, Alfredo Sendim said: **“In a climate change scenario beyond 2°C, which is where we are headed with the EU’s existing climate target, there will be a desert on the land where my farm stands today and we will have to move. Even below 2°C, it will be a real challenge simply due to the higher and more extreme temperatures in the summer, which are a real death threat to our livestock.”**

The father of the Caixeiro family , Joaquim Caixeiro, who is one of the families economically dependent on the work of the Sendim’s farm and a co-plaintiff also underlines: **“Climate change directly affects my job and the life of my family by making our activity less competitive compared to similar activities that follow the conventional agricultural method. What motivates me to participate in this legal action is fear about the future, mine and that of my daughters.”**

The father of the Romanian plaintiff family, Petru Vlad said: **“Year by year, the temperatures are increasing. There is no longer enough water for our cattle and sheep. I have to take my cattle from 700m altitude to 1400m for decent grass to graze, but especially for water. But I cannot go any further up with our herds, because above 2000m there is only the sky.**

Some say it is divine punishment, others blame it on pollution. However, what I can tell you, as a simple peasant with no higher education, is that it is not my fault and that needs to be fixed. And this is why I demand action: not money, but protection.”

The father of the Kenyan plaintiff family, Roba Guyo said: **“We face more and more extreme heat in our region. This threatens our lives on several levels. Water is missing for herding and drinking – most importantly, my children’s health is in danger. They suffer because of these extreme heatwaves that we have been facing for some years now. If the situation doesn’t improve and we continue like this, we are hopeless.”**

Roda Verheyen, the lawyer of the families said: **“Climate change is already an issue for the courts in the European countries and around the world. The plaintiff families are putting their trust in the EU Courts and legal system to protect their fundamental rights of life, health, occupation and property which are under threat of climate change. The EU courts must now listen these families and ensure that they are protected.”**



The NGOs across Europe have already been calling for higher 2030 climate targets to keep temperature rise within the 1.5°C limit set in the Paris Agreement. They underline the importance of this lawsuit in terms of reminding us of the urgency of climate action and the importance of the 1.5°C objective for the survival of communities and ecosystems worldwide.

Wendel Trio, Director of Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe said: **“ In 2015, as part of the Paris Agreement, countries agreed to pursue efforts to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C. Yet, it is clear that the existing EU 2030 climate target is not enough to respect the commitments taken for the Paris Agreement and should be increased. This legal action initiated by families is underlining the urgency and the necessity to increase the EU’s 2030 climate target. ”**

Dorothea Sick-Thies, Founder of Protect the Planet (Germany) said: **“We have only some years left to act, this is about the survival of mankind. A broad coalition is taking the responsibility that governments and the European Parliament are not willing to take. This is what we stand for in the People’s Climate Case. These families and their situations show that we must act now! I am grateful for all the people who struggle to protect the planet.”**

Christoph Bals, Policy Director of Germanwatch e.V. (Germany) said: **"Fundamental rights of more and more people in Europe and other parts of the world are undermined by climate change. It is an important and brave step that families at risk go to court and ask the EU to implement the climate targets requested as part of a global strategy to prevent dangerous climate change. They as people at risk don't accept to be victims but want the EU to protect their rights."**

Marie Toussaint, Founder of Notre affaire à tous (France) said: **"Climate change is having a direct impact on our lives: our health, pollution, mountains, rise of the oceans, multiplication of natural catastrophes, droughts, floods... It is costing more and more. We have to stand together to advocate for new rights for the victims of climate change, and new responsibilities and obligations for the multinationals, and the public sector. The EU is far under what is necessary to protect the climate. We will stand with those families claiming climate justice!"**

Edoardo Zanchini, Vice President of Legambiente Onlus (Italy) said: **"Unfortunately CO2 emissions are increasing again both in Italy and in Europe. We must step up climate action and raise EU 2030 targets in coherence with the Paris Agreement. Legambiente fully supports the legal action of the Elter family because it can help us mobilize citizens and put growing pressure on governments to put in place ambitious climate and energy policies and make Europe lead by example at international level".**

Francisco Ferreira, President of ZERO (Portugal) said: **“Portugal is one of the European countries with the greatest impacts associated with climate change. By 2017, extreme drought and major forest fires caused huge damages to the population. For ZERO, this legal action is fundamental to demand from the European Union the possible and necessary response in the reduction of its greenhouse gas emissions.”**



Raul Cazan, President of 2Celcius (Romania) said: **“In the Romanian Carpathians, a rise in the mean global temperature affects plants and animals as they slowly “seek refuge” to higher altitudes. But in reality, it affects thousands of mountain people, native or traditional communities whose livelihoods are changing at a fast pace. However, these people are ignored and even at the scientific level, there is a lack of research on this link. This is the reason why 2Celsius is supporting this action and the Romanian plaintiff family in particular: we pledge for climate justice for Carpathian mountain communities, more scientific research, and more awareness towards phenomena utterly ignored in the last decades.”**