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"Nicolas Hulot's resignation is an invitation to change our objectives."

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An electric shock. On Tuesday 28 August, the Minister of Ecological Transition, Nicolas Hulot, announced his resignation. He explained: "I don't want to continue lying, I don't push the illusion that my presence in the government means that it is up to task of facing those those high challenges, and so I have decided to leave the government."

This decision prompted a reaction from ten green NGOs, who have written an op-ed addressed to President Macron and published on Franceinfo. It speaks of the need for a "jump forward" in the executive's environmental policies. Here they express themselves freely.

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Photo of Hulot and Macron last October. (REUTERS)

Nicolas Hulot's resignation surprised by its suddenness. For fifteen months, he had come up against institutional resistance and political calls that were too often lost. The political orientation of the President left little room for a genuine transition in ecology and solidarity. Despite Hulot's stated ambition, Macron's willingness to handle both the ecological goat and the productivist cabbage did not lead to creating the conditions for clear and coherent ecological policies.

The superficiality of Macron's ecological commitment is revealed.

From the non-banning of glyphosate to the many decisions made favorable to the building of new motorways, from the non-choice of in matters of energy transition to the importation of palm oil, from the last gifts made to the hunting lobby by way of CETA, with a long list of small concessions and large renunciations, Nicolas Hulot's year has been marked by disappointments.

Now he has always justified his presence in the Philippe government by his tenacious desire to put France at last onto the rails of ecological transition. The use of pesticides continues to increase from year to year, biodiversity is falling, the use of rail continues to fall sharply, our emissions of greenhouse gases, for their part, have continued their sinister rise and the share of nuclear power-generation remains unchanged while that of nuclear weapons will rise by 50%.

Implicitly, the departure of the now ex-minister reveals the superficiality of Macron's ecological commitment, opting for an ecology of words, preferring speeches to actions, hoping that the mere presence of Nicolas Hulot would justify policies that fall far short of the oft-heralded break with the past.

The symptom of a huge failure to understand.

The sudden departure of Nicolas Hulot is an occasion to ask again what place the Minister of Ecology has in the institutional arrangements. Placed at the top of the protocol order, the Minister of Ecology is called on to find compromises between actors with very divergent interests. Conferences at Grenelle and elsewhere have changed nothing in that. Faced with the Ministry of Agriculture, or with those of the Economy, Industry or Defense, faced with the agricultural or nuclear lobbies, or the BTP lobby, faced with the liberal orientation of the Philippe government, the margin of manoeuvre available to the Minister of Ecology was narrow, even non-existent. Fame in the media is insufficient against all the little soldiers of productivism, who are ready to do anything to retain what they have. This resignation is an opportunity to recall the providential man does not exist and that a minister, even a determined one, is and remains one man. Given the tensions caused by ecological transition, it is necessary to create and maintain a mobilisation of citizenry and common people.

This is not a time for bitterness. In view of the ecological crises and accumulating threats, urgency commands us not to fall into a defeatism that will get no one anywhere.

This resignation is the symptom of a huge failure to understand. Ecological transition is neither a walk in the fresh air nor a soul-supplement for politicians lacking imagination. Emmanuel Macron would be wrong if he misjudges the symbolism of this surprise resignation. To act "as if" would be the worst response to Hulot's decision. The ecological crises that are multiplying don't care about our illusions and our beautiful speeches. These crises will not disappear just when somebody waves a green wand.

Action is now not optional but essential

Given the climatic and military threats, and the collapse of ecosystems, action is now not optional but essential, urgent and morally imperative. Emmanuel Macron cannot continually aspire to a synthesis when what we need is clear, ambitious choices, fully assumed.

In ecological matters, we can no longer support biological agriculture and "at the same time" glyphosate, support energy sobriety and "at the same time" nuclear technology, support the revival of inner cities and "at the same time" Europacity and the artificialisation of agricultural land, support the necessary preservation of biodiversity and "at the same time" cheaper hunting licenses, support the implementation of COP21 and "at the same time" the multiplication of motorway projects, support factory farming and "at the same time" peasant agriculture, support liberalism and "at the same time" ecology.

The resignation of Nicolas Hulot is an invitation to change our objectives while daring to break with the easy living of the the "thirty glorious years" before 1975 and the "fifty wasteful years" before 2000. In the face of conservative voices shouting at all levels of the State, Hulot's resignation calls for a jump forward. There is no doubt that after the many words provoked by this resignation Emmanuel Macron will have to adopt the aphorism of Pierre Mendès-France, "to govern is to choose".

*** The signatory organisations are :**

La Fondation pour la Nature et l'Homme (Foundation for Nature and Man)
Agir pour l'environnement (Act for the Environment)
France nature environnement
Génération futures (Future Generations)

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Les Amis de la Terre (Friends of the Earth)

Réseau sortir du nucléaire (Nuclear Phase-out Network)

Action des citoyens pour le désarmement nucléaire (Citizens' Action for Nuclear Disarmament)

Association pour la protection des animaux sauvages (Protection of Wild Animals)

Virage énergies (Energy Change Direction)

Société nationale de protection de la nature (National Society to Protect Nature)

[Source: franceinfo](#)