

Public hearing on landmark climate case at European Court of Human Rights

Zurich, 5. Dezember 2022. From 29 March 2023, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg will hold a public hearing on the complaint of the Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland and four individual plaintiffs. These days their legal team handed in their Observations on the facts, admissibility and the merits to the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR. The Senior Women for Climate Protection call on the court to order Switzerland to urgently do more in the fight against climate change.

In November 2020, the Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland (KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz) and four individual plaintiffs sued Switzerland before the ECtHR because the federal government is not doing enough to prevent catastrophic climate change. Climate change dangerously aggravates heatwaves, posing a threat to the rights of elderly women to life and health. At the ECtHR the case «Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland» (no. 53600/20) has been [prioritised](#) and [relinquished to the Grand Chamber](#). The judgement could have far-reaching consequences, not only in Europe, but worldwide by setting a legal precedent regarding human rights obligations of states in the context of climate change. The public hearing before the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR is scheduled to commence on 29 March 2023 (see below).

Increasing temperatures and heatwaves due to climate change entail increased mortality and pose serious health risks, particularly to older women. Of all climate hazards, heat-related mortality in Europe, for people over 65, is by far the most significant cause of death. From 1991 to 2018, of warm-season heat-related deaths in Switzerland, around 30% could be attributed to climate change. The consensus is that global temperature rise should be limited to below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The higher the levels of warming, the more unbearable are the risks to life and wellbeing. There is an exponential increase in mortality with increasing temperatures.

However, Switzerland's climate strategy falls far short of what is necessary. Notably, its commitment to reduce domestic emissions to 34% below its 1990 emission levels by 2030 is clearly inadequate to keep the 1.5°C-Limit. Moreover it is significantly lower than the EU's commitment to 55%, let alone Denmark's (70%); Finland's (60% with carbon-neutrality by 2035); and Germany's (65%).

Given the urgent need for action to mitigate risk, the Senior Women for Climate Protection ask the Court to order Switzerland urgently to adopt legislative and administrative measure to do its share to prevent a global temperature increase of more than 1.5°C, including concrete emission reduction targets (see [Requests to the Court](#)) and preventing and reducing emissions occurring abroad that are attributable to Switzerland, particularly consumption-based and emissions in connection with finance flows.

[Observations on the facts, admissibility and the merits](#)

Photographs available in the [Greenpeace Media Library](#)

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- **What:** Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland (no. 53600/20)
 - **When:** from Wednesday, 29 of March 2023, more details to follow
 - **Where:** European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg, France
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Contacts

Cordelia Bähr, Lawyer of Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland:
baehr@ettwein.ch, +41 78 801 70 34

Rosmarie Wydler-Wälti, co-president of Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland:
rosmariewydler@sunrise.ch, +41 61 302 96 35 (for interviews in German)

Anne Mahrer, co-president of Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland:
anne.mahrer@bluewin.ch, +41 79 249 72 17 (for interviews in French)

Pia Hollenstein, member of the board of Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland:
mail@piahollenstein.ch, +41 79 740 04 50 (for interviews in English)

Norma Bargetzi, member of the board of Senior Women for Climate Protection Switzerland:
normaba@bluewin.ch, +41 79 352 98 89 (for interviews in Italian)

Georg Klingler, Project Coordinator and Climate Campaigner Greenpeace Switzerland:
gklinge@greenpeace.org, +41 79 785 07 38