

The role of cooperatives in mitigating the effects of the eco-climate crisis
Takis Nikolopoulos¹, Panagiota Vathi-Sarava²
rokmartino@gmail.com, pvathi@upatras.gr

¹ Professor Emeritus, University of Patras

² Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism Administration, University of Patras

In the context of this paper, the climate crisis will be treated first as a facet of the overall systemic biosphere crisis and second as a multiplier of existing crises, which are independent of each other, but which unfold in synergy, evolving together in interdependence.

In such a context, the report refers, at the first level, to the characteristics and causes of the ecological and climate crisis. Then, the dominant logic that runs through the “green” deal currently promoted by the EU, will be explored to address this crisis. In particular, we will examine it in its expression of “green” economy and growth or, in other words, as the green period of capitalism, which follows and complements that of green economy financial capitalism. Green economy capitalism, using as a technical as well as ideological vehicle tech innovation and the tech economy merely reproduces a different flavour of the eco-climate and eco-social problem of the globalised mega-system.

This dominant logic only prolongs ineffective symptomatic “treatments”, while leading, in the long run, to the reproduction of the same vicious circles that nurtured the growing crisis. We propose as a solution a Copernican revolution in our mindsets, which will allow us to see in a different light the ways of dealing with the consequences of the ecological climate crisis. This will mark a “tipping point” -a paradigm shift in a post-growth direction where the institutions of the social and solidarity economy (SSE), being exemplary, are called upon to provide a transformative contribution. Among these institutions, the cooperatives, which are governed by SSE's constituent principles, express a mild and “bottom-up” local and democratic economic activity, based on an economy of needs and not sizes.

Through a multidisciplinary and multifaceted literature approach, this paper seeks to highlight the role of the SSE and, in particular, of cooperatives in mitigating the effects of the eco-climate crisis and in formulating feasible proposals and solutions.

Key words: eco-climatic crisis, green economy, cooperatives economy of needs