



ENVIRONMENT

It's Up To All Of Us©

by Valentine Rinner

It's up to all of us. That's the message of Leonardo DiCaprio's feature film. "*Before the flood*" is not another action or drama movie - although the cinematography is impressively similar to that of Leo's blockbusters - it's a documentary about climate change. And the first week of its release, it was made available for free on National Geographic Channels - that's quite unusual too!

DiCaprio comments that for some reason "people tune out when we talk about climate change". Understandably - in the West it is rather schizophrenic to listen to apocalyptic scientific scenarios and take environmentally friendly action, while at the same time being immersed in the highest level of consumerism the earth has ever seen. We can have everything we need and everything we want, we don't have to worry. We don't even have to pay that much for it. This movie is said to be made for those of us who still have the power to consume differently: in what we buy, what we eat and how we get our power. Made for those of us who can vote for leaders who will fight climate change by ending fossil fuel subsidies, putting a price on carbon and investing in renewable energy. The only way to achieve important change is if it is propelled from below.

The call goes way beyond changing the kind of light bulbs you use. Indeed, the big names who made this movie - Fisher Stevens, Martin Scorsese and DiCaprio himself - support the idea that leaders are in reality public opinion *followers*. If the majority calls for its leaders to take action, they have no other choice but to act. This has historically been seen with respect to other societal debates such as gay marriage or women's votes.

The movie won't convince those who still think that climate change is a Chinese conspiracy against US industry, or the latest scientific joke since the evolution of species. However, it could have a considerable impact in terms of reaching out to non-partisan audiences on the topic. It doesn't question the whole system, it informs against its drifts. It doesn't put the responsibility on a single player, it lucidly calls for a collective consciousness and a search for more sustainable models free from corruption. It overlooks the questions of availability of alternative resources, growth led models and local powers yet it promotes the first urgent and realistic steps toward tackling climate

change as a global issue: “The only thing that we can do is to control what we do next, how we live our lives, what we consume, how we get involved and how we use our votes to tell our leaders that we know the truth about climate change. [...] We are the last best hope of the earth”.