



Mission statement

Facing the climate emergency: transforming research collectively

After several decades of thorough scientific research, the link between human activity, climate change and the degradation of the biosphere is now clearly established and documented. If we continue on the current trajectory, there is a very real risk that the consequences will be irreversible for many species and socio-ecosystems, at least in the medium term. Faced with this environmental emergency, we cannot continue to produce, consume and travel as before. We must rethink the way we work, the way we relax, the way we live.

It is our belief that the research community — beyond its role in producing, synthesizing, and transmitting knowledge — must contribute actively to this transformation. A growing number of researchers think that 1) we need to align our work practices with the goal of reducing the human footprint on the environment, and that 2) this alignment is a key element for building trust between society and science. What meaning would scientific research have if this link were lost? Around the world, young people are expressing a profound desire for change. To ignore them and persist with a “business as usual” attitude to research will only deter young people from a career in science.

Given these findings, we decided to set ourselves a simple goal: to start (or continue) transforming our professional practices in order to rapidly reduce our impact on the environment and adhere to the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

While some fear that this process might limit our individual liberty or reduce the quality of our research, we think the opposite. Instead, this historic moment is an opportunity for a positive and profound transformation of our daily

practices, of our collaborations and data-sharing, and of the methods used to evaluate our work. This transformation cannot take place without breaking down the current model of production and dissemination of academic knowledge, with all its known flaws. The time has come to construct a new research ethics, leading to scientific activities that are just as productive, while also being more thoughtful and more respectful of the environment. In short, the present moment presents an opportunity to create a more humane, a more mindful academic world.

The approach we are calling for can have an inspirational effect on society as a whole, particularly through the existing connections between higher education and research, and through contact with the growing number of students that we encounter each year. The model we are proposing could also be adopted by other professional, associative or even political realms.

Conscious of the need to act collectively to achieve these objectives, and taking advantage of the professional freedom that the academic research community still enjoys, we have created the collective *Labos 1point5*. The name of the collective is a direct reference to the objectives of the Paris Agreement “to pursue actions to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C from pre-industrial levels”.

The *Labos 1point5* collective is taking immediate action to initiate and promote the measurement of the environmental footprint of our research structures, from the level of laboratories and research units down to the level of individual research projects. We will also build on the many initiatives already underway in our community, which naturally have frameworks and specificities that depend on the research discipline. These primarily concern the carbon footprint of aviation travel to conferences and work meetings, but also of greenhouse gas emissions related to the operations, equipment - including numerical calculations - and field work associated with research. Some initiatives cover the use of resources (e.g. water, paper) and waste management. An important objective of our collective is to encourage and facilitate these initiatives by sharing information, tools and results. We will also remind our institutions of their legal obligations in this area, such as conducting a comprehensive carbon assessment.

This inventory of initiatives will, in a second phase, identify the levers by which we can and must act to promote the emergence of more sober research practices. We will then work on their implementation. We realize that this can only be done with the support and active engagement of government, research institutions, universities and colleges, as well as national and international funding agencies. We will therefore call on the administrators, representatives and managers of research, at all levels of the system from research unit directors to cabinet ministers, so that the ecological and social transition becomes a tangible, urgent priority of the academic community, in actions and not only in words.

We invite our colleagues, in France and elsewhere, to join and participate in the *Labos 1point5* collective: www.labos1point5.org.

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TRIBUNE
Collectif

« Face à l'urgence climatique, les scientifiques doivent réduire leur impact sur l'environnement »

Un collectif de chercheurs de diverses disciplines, Labos 1point5, s'est créé pour promouvoir des pratiques de recherche plus sobres et construire une autre éthique de la recherche.

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