

**TO:**

Ursula Von der Leyen, President-elect of the European Commission  
Charles Michel, President-elect of the European Council  
David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament

**CC:**

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President  
Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner-designate for Environment and Oceans

**25 September 2019**

Dear Presidents,

**PROTECT OUR LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM**

The ocean plays a critical role in human health and the health of the planet. It buffers us against the worst impacts of climate breakdown, generates the oxygen we breathe, and provides sustenance and livelihoods for people across the world. The ocean protects and provides for us all.

The new Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere (IPCC SROC) sets out clear evidence that the ocean is bearing the brunt of the climate crisis. It offers a grim diagnosis of the state of our ocean, showing that our planet's life support system is under attack.

We all share the responsibility to pass a liveable planet on to our children and grandchildren. If the destruction of the ocean continues, this will not happen.

**The climate crisis is not limited to land.** There is much that can and must be done to protect the ocean, the largest habitat on Earth, so that it can continue to protect us. We urgently need to boost the ocean's chances of survival in the face of climate breakdown by removing the stressors that are within our reach.

To revive the ocean, we are calling for leadership to:

- **End overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.** All EU institutions and member states must implement and enforce in full the Common Fisheries Policy, specifically the deadline to end overfishing by 2020.
- **Put in place a robust High Seas Treaty by the end of 2020.**
- **Protect at least thirty percent of the ocean through implemented, highly and fully Protected Areas by the end of 2030**, with the remaining 70 percent of the ocean sustainably managed.
- **Protect the deep ocean**, through a precautionary pause on deep sea mining.

The scale of the pressure on the ocean is only matched by the size of the opportunity for leadership in restoring the planet's greatest source of life. As prime minister we are asking you to exercise that leadership.

Yours sincerely



CC:

Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister, Denmark	Dan Jørgensen, Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities Mogens Jensen, Minister for Food, Fisheries and Equal Opportunities and Minister for Nordic Cooperation Lea Wermelin, Minister for the Environment
Sauli Niinistö, Honorary President, Finland Antti Rinne, Honorary Prime Minister, Finland	Krista Mikkonen, Minister for the Environment and Climate Change Jari Leppä, Minister for Agriculture and Forestry
Emmanuel Macron, President, France Edouard Philippe, Prime Minister, France	Didier Guillaume, Minister for Agriculture Ms Élisabeth Borne, Minister for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition
Angela Merkel, Prime Minister, Germany	Julia Klöckner, Minister for Food and Agriculture Svenja Schulze, Minister for the Environment
Leo Varadkar, An Taoiseach, Ireland	Richard Bruton, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Michael Creed, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
António Costa, Prime Minister, Portugal	João Pedro Matos Fernandes, Minister for Environment and Energy Transition João Galamba, Secretary of State for Energy Ana Paula Vitorino, Minister for the Sea
Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, President of the Government, Spain	Luís Planas Puchades, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Teresa Ribera Rodríguez, Minister for the Ecological Transition
Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister, Sweden	Isabella Lövin, Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister Jennie Nilsson, Minister for Rural Affairs