

CALL FOR ENHANCED CLIMATE AMBITION

Joint letter to Mr. Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President-designate for the European Green Deal

CC: Ms. Kadri Simson

Dear Mr. Timmermans,

The 25th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in December is a crucial occasion for all actors, public and private, to demonstrate their determination to rapidly increase their efforts to tackle climate change. In order to be able to show leadership in this regard, respond to scientific evidence and to fulfil the legitimate demands of its citizens, the European Union needs to commit, before the end of the year, to substantially enhanced climate ambition. Both the longer-term strategic outlook, indispensable to guide our joint efforts over the coming decades, and short-term action are equally important.

We very much welcome that 24 Member States expressed a clear position at the European Council meeting in June with regard to **achieving climate neutrality (net zero GHG emissions) by 2050 at the latest** and we very much encourage, in line with the European Council Conclusions of June, consensus to be reached as soon as possible and before the end of this year. It is indeed absolutely vital that the EU commits to adopt a **long-term strategy as soon as possible in 2019**, to be submitted to the UNFCCC in early 2020. The strategy should be fully in line with the objective to keep global temperature increase below 1.5°C.

Further to the importance of setting ambitious, collective long-term strategies, it is needless to recall that all Parties to the UNFCCC, including the EU, as committed to in Paris, will have to rapidly and substantially **raise the level of ambition of their NDC**, to ensure that the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement will stay within reach.

The EU should, therefore, commit to **increase the EU GHG reduction target for 2030 to -55%** from 1990 levels and reach climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest, in line with the 1,5°C. A strong commitment by the European Commission on climate paves the way to underpin the European Green Deal to drive the in-depth transformation and bold measures needed across all sectors of the economy.

It is both a challenge and a major opportunity to set the EU on a course towards an ambitious, cost-effective and socially fair transition to a climate neutral economy that can bring benefits for economic growth, employment, quality of life, public health, biodiversity, etc.

In order to reap these benefits, a just transition for all and support for citizens, businesses and regions is needed. To achieve this goal, funding will be necessary to support the necessary investments, e.g. in infrastructure, agriculture and forestry, zero emission vehicles, buildings refurbishment, job training and the creation of new jobs, and to support innovation.

These objectives are within reach if a set of ambitious policies are implemented at the EU level. This requires appropriate measures that can drive the necessary change needed across all sectors of the economy, i.e. elements such as a strengthened ETS, increasing the European Investment Bank's (EIB) climate ambitions as a top priority to promote additional investments in the energy and climate transition, a significantly more ambitious share of the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for climate action in comparison to the current period, supplemented with improved tracking of these expenditures and an effective monitoring of effects and the achievement of the Climate Target set in the next MFF. These initiatives, among others, will be an opportunity to modernise our economy and to create growth and employment. To avoid these efforts being undermined, the EU must decide, as a general principle, that the EU budget should not finance any policy that is not consistent with the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest. We need to further analyse measures to avoid carbon leakage, such as a carbon border adjustment mechanism, and how they can be made compatible with WTO rules.

We, therefore, invite the Commission to identify areas where further legislative proposals, both strengthening existing instruments and covering possible gaps, could help Member States substantially lower their emissions beyond the baseline of -45% that we have already decided upon and to align all EU policies to the long-term objective of climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest, while ensuring a just transition for workers, communities and regions.

We count on the Commission to consider the above elements in the preparations of the important upcoming meetings and look forward to cooperating with the Commission, other institutions and all Member States to deliver together on the climate agenda Europe and the world need.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Jørgensen
Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities of Denmark

Élisabeth Borne
Minister for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition of France

Juris Pūce
Minister of environmental protection and regional development of Latvia

Carole Dieschbourg
Minister for the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development of Luxembourg

Eric Wiebes
Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Policy of the Netherlands

João Pedro Matos Fernandes

Minister of Environment and Energy Transition of Portugal

Teresa Ribera

Minister for the Ecological Transition of Spain

Isabella Lövin

Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden