

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

Commission Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans

Commission Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager

Commission Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis

09.12.2019

Letter from the Coalition for Higher Ambition to the New Commissioners

We are writing to you on behalf of an alliance of European cities, local and regional authorities, business associations, investor groups, trade unions, and civil society organisations.

We strongly welcome your decision to put the fight against climate change at the heart of the European Union's action for the years to come. This is indeed urgently needed as the climate breakdown already has severe impacts on ecosystems, the economy, human health and well-being of people around the world, including in Europe. [Europeans](#) are increasingly exposed to severe heat waves, droughts, water shortages, floods and forest fires. Lives and livelihoods are lost in climate change induced disasters.

The science is clear: while the global effort of limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C instead of 2°C is feasible both technically and economically, it requires unprecedented changes in current policies and measures.

The EU should therefore take the lead in demonstrating that increasing immediate term climate action is an opportunity and provides numerous social, environmental and economic co-benefits, while protecting millions of people from the devastating consequences of climate change.

European companies are committed to increase global climate action. For example, the Science Based [Target Initiatives](#) has approved 285 science-based targets set by companies of which 146 are European. Cities and regions are increasing their mitigation and adaptation efforts. Investors are channelling more capital into low-carbon and resilient projects. As members of the Coalition for Higher Ambition, representing stakeholders across different sectors from around Europe, we strongly support your intention to ramp up the EU's climate ambition and to increase the Union's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) next year.

We urge you to come forward with a proposal to increase the EU's NDC to at least 55% of GHG emissions reductions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels within the first 100 days of your mandate.

The window to agree on an increased target is rapidly closing. The Paris Agreement foresees all countries to communicate their updated NDCs by 2020 and at the latest at COP26 in Glasgow. Postponing the increase target to 55% in 2021 would mean missing the deadline set by the UNFCCC and would undermine the EU's leadership in international climate diplomacy.

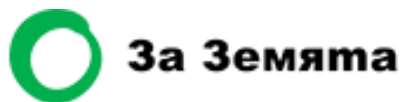
Any target needs to go hand in hand with concrete policy measures and adequate financial means to ensure their implementation. Increased targets must be accompanied by effective policies and measures for energy efficiency, energy demand reduction and renewable energy for smart sector integration through clean electricity of heating, cooling, transport and industry, as well in the industrial, agriculture and land use sectors. Such implementation needs to ensure the transition is just and fair. It needs to provide support for regions highly affected both by climate change and by decarbonization measures to reduce emissions, such as the peripheral and maritime regions and regions depending on coal mining.

In order to achieve the just and fair transition towards a net zero GHG emissions society, any policy or measure should be accompanied by a solidarity mechanism to support most vulnerable sectors and regions. It should provide adequate social protection and training programmes to accompany communities and workers in their transition and should involve local communities and social partners in the policy process. Transition measures should also be territorially balanced, adequately funded and based on the efficient use of local renewable sources.

We are confident you will take these urgent calls into due account and count on you to secure the protection of our planet, the well-being of Europe's citizens and the competitiveness of our innovative industries.

We remain at your disposal to further discuss ways to deliver an inclusive and sustainable climate transition in Europe.





Signatories

Carbon Market Watch

CAN Europe

CCL - Citizens' Climate Lobby Europe

CLG Europe – Corporate Leaders Group Europe

CPMR - Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions

Eceee - European Council for an Energy Efficient Economy

eco-union

EEB - European Environment Bureau

EGEC - European Geothermal Energy Council

EHPA - European Heat Pump Association

EiiF - European Industrial Insulation Foundation

EKOenergy

Energy Cities

Environmental Association “Za Zemiata” / FoE Bulgaria

Environmental Justice Foundation

EU-ASE - European Alliance to Save Energy

EUROHEAT& POWER

EuropeOn - European Electrical Contractors' Association

ETUC - European Trade Union Confederation

FEDARENE – European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and the Environment

Haga Initiative

Iceland Nature Conservation Association

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

IIGCC - Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change

Legambiente

Joule Assets

Mouvement Ecologique (FoE Lux)

NAPE National Energy Conservation Agency -Poland

RECS International

Plan B for Slovenia

Sandbag

SmartEn

SolarHeat Europe

The Climate Group

The Under2 Coalition

WMB - We Mean Business coalition

ZERO - Association for the Sustainability of the Earth System