

Dear Mr Weber,  
Dear Ms García Pérez,  
Dear Ms Hayer,  
Dear Mr Procaccini,  
Dear Ms Reintke and Mr Eickhout,  
Dear Ms Aubry and Mr Schirdewan,

18 June 2024

The European Parliament may have changed after these elections, but our planet has not.

As political groups in the Parliament are launching talks over future priorities and consider their approval of a European Commission President, we are making an urgent appeal to you: **continue to prioritise a green and just transition towards climate neutrality, zero pollution and thriving nature!**

The climate and nature crises are claiming lives and livelihoods every year, and the number of victims is only increasing. Many of the climate threats to Europe's energy and food security, water resources and financial stability have now reached critical levels. Whether it's because of floods and fires, or lack of clean water or air pollution – if the EU does not address the planetary emergency, it will crumble in front of any other challenge it will face.

The latest Eurobarometer shows that more than three-quarters of Europeans (78%) find that environmental issues have a direct effect on their daily lives and health. And more than four in five (84%) agree that EU legislation is necessary to protect the environment in their country.

**The talks across European political groups are a unique opportunity to move beyond electoral slogans, and bring back the much needed stability by staying on course with the European Green Deal.**

Welcomed by many as Europe's growth strategy, the Green Deal is crucial not only for nature and climate, but also for the financial security and social wellbeing of Europeans. Becoming greener lowers energy prices, increases public health and is a major job creator. More than 5.1 million Europeans now work in green jobs, and their number is growing year by year. Moreover, since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the deployment of renewable energy sources helped EU countries save 100 billion euros thanks to reduced electricity costs.

As you hold content-related talks, we appeal to you all to ensure a solid foundation between your political groups. More specifically, all partners should:

1. Commit to only form agreements with those Parliament groups or parties that have shown clear commitment to **uphold the rule of law and fundamental rights**, and

stand against any form of discrimination. Fighting disinformation, including on climate and environment, should be a priority for all.

2. Explicitly state their groups' **unequivocal and strong commitment to continue the European Green Deal as a political priority**. This means not only implementing the Green Deal, but also addressing its gaps and shortcomings.
3. **Reject any proposals for environmental deregulation**. Negotiations should be based on the principle of non-regression and groups must express continued support to implementing the existing legal framework on climate, nature and pollution. Instead of re-opening democratically made agreements (e.g. the 2035 phase-out of CO2-emitting cars) and create economic uncertainty, policymakers must invest their energy in achieving the commitments made.

**Further priorities that can help move towards a [social and green deal](#) are provided in annex below.** Assuming the above conditions are met, we urge you to seek consensus on these priorities ahead of the election of the European Commission President and their political programme.

Roughly 147 million European citizens used their vote in these EU elections. Now it's time you use your vote, and represent the interest of all Europeans, whilst keeping future generations safe. Our environment is not left or right, it is our shared home - needing to be protected by all of us.

Yours sincerely,



**The Green 10 is a coalition of ten of the largest environmental organisations and networks active on the European level.**

## **Annex: policy priorities for political group negotiations**

### **A clear vision for a prosperous and sustainable industry**

Industry plays a vital role in providing jobs, fostering personal and community pride, and generating income. However, it also carries environmental and health impacts. Europe can ensure its long-term competitiveness with a green industrial transformation of the EU's resource and energy intensive industries (like steel, cement and chemicals) that is fair for workers. In this transformation, climate and environmental objectives should not be secondary to the demands of industry - instead we must find ways to ensure both work in harmony. Parliament groups must call on the European Commission to develop new policy initiatives that promote green industrial transformation, with sufficiency and circularity at their core. The EU must differentiate between boosting our clean-tech industries through a common European approach, while on the other hand adopting clear transition pathways for resource and energy intensive industries. Any additional investments should have simple, strong climate, social and environmental conditionalities - while also putting a stop to the (in)direct subsidies to polluters that are harming the competitiveness of clean-tech industries.

### **Continue the shift to a carbon neutral, energy-secure economy**

To maintain its global commitments and further implement the EU Climate Law, the EU must adopt ambitious 2040 and 2035 climate targets with a view to submitting the next EU NDC no later than the first quarter in 2025, as agreed at COP28. The -90% net 2040 target proposed by the Commission in its Communication lags behind the ambition level recommended by both the Commission's own Impact Assessment and the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC), which indicate that higher ambition levels are most beneficial and better reflect equity principles. Parliament groups must agree to step up ambition and call for a higher target. Towards this aim, Groups must also support the introduction of three separate and distinct sub targets and policies for (a) gross emissions reduction, (b) net carbon dioxide sequestration in the land use (LULUCF) sector and (c) industrial carbon dioxide removals.

### **Transition to a 100% renewables-based and socially just energy system by 2040**

Renewable energy is the cheapest and cleanest form of energy available, saving Europeans billions of euros during the energy crisis, replacing price-volatile and polluting fossil fuels. We need to further accelerate the deployment of wind and solar energy, while also enhancing grids, increasing storage, demand-side flexibility and improving system flexibility. A steep and continued reduction of energy consumption is paramount and can bring multiple benefits, including lower infrastructure needs, saving costs and natural resources, job creation and lower energy bills. Energy savings and renewable energy need to go hand in hand to push fossil fuels out of the energy system and ensure a compatible pathway towards limiting global temperature increase to 1.5°C. Parliament groups must ensure that a post-2030 energy policy framework will continue to drive ambitious renewable infrastructure deployment across the EU, minimising any negative impacts on biodiversity, engaging citizens and local communities and avoiding false solutions. Parliament also needs to implement measures to cut energy demand in half by 2040, phase out coal by 2030, fossil gas by 2035 and oil by 2040.

### **A social and green investment plan for a prosperous and just transition**

The European Commission estimates that compared to the previous decade, additional investments of 1.7% to 2% of European GDP annually will be needed to meet the objectives of the Green Deal and the RepowerEU initiative. While significant, the costs of the transition are substantially lower than the costs of inaction. Private investment is expected to contribute significantly to the transition, but substantial public funding will be crucial to steering the economy - and competing globally with the United States and China. The EU needs a game-changing investment plan to give all Europeans a chance to be part of the green transition, realise our industrial and green ambitions, and boost EU strategic autonomy, energy security and resilience. Parliament groups must call on the Commission to put forward a European Social and Green Investment Plan that fosters a socially fair transition towards a more resilient and fully sustainable Europe, unlocking over €1 trillion by 2030 under a reformed EU budget (MFF) and a new fund via joint borrowing.

### **Implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Agreement and restore nature for climate safety and resilience**

The alarming loss of natural habitats, together with climate change, puts human livelihoods and the foundations for our economic activities at risk. More than 50% of the global economy or global GDP is highly or moderately dependent on nature. To bend the curve of biodiversity decline, protecting remaining natural places will not be sufficient – we need to invest in large-scale restoration as well. Citizens support has been resounding: three in four citizens have been in favour of the EU nature restoration law. Following the adoption of this law by member states on 17 June, Parliament groups must support the full implementation and enforcement of the nature restoration framework for Europe, and call on the Commission to allocate new and dedicated funds from the EU budget to nature restoration, among others to support farmers, fishers and landowners contributing to large-scale nature restoration.

### **A Just and Sustainable Transition for Farmers**

In its 2024 European Climate Risk Assessment report, the European Environment Agency singled out agriculture as a sector where urgent action is needed. It concluded that more frequent droughts and decreasing water resources may drive farmers out of business unless they can adapt significantly. This comes on top of farmers' struggles related to insufficient incomes, abusive practices in the supply chain, unfair competition and perceived administrative burden. Parliament groups must recognise that economic prosperity and environmental stewardship go hand-in-hand. They must call on the next Commission to bring forward a long-term vision and legal framework for sustainable food systems that, among others, prioritises climate resilience through nature-based solutions. Groups must agree to halt any further environmental deregulation of the EU's agricultural policies and ensure effective and efficient controls on how taxpayers' money is spent.

### **An Ocean Deal that places its health and resilience at the centre**

The ocean is Earth's largest carbon sink, absorbing more than 90% of the excess heat generated to date. Europe governs the largest maritime area in the world, thus making it a maritime power. Yet, the EU's approach to ocean governance remains too piecemeal.

Europe's seas are among the most overexploited in the world and marine nature is in a poor state. Man-made disruptions affect not only the livelihoods of fishers and coastal communities, but everyone - as we all rely on the Ocean for a stable climate and for our very existence. This is why we need an urgent, fair and just transition to a low-impact blue economy that leaves no one behind. Political groups must demand for the next Commission to adopt an overarching and ambitious EU Ocean Deal to integrate existing and potential new legislation related to the marine environment and assure coherence between different sectoral policies, while making them fit for preserving and protecting our ocean, for the benefit of people and planet alike. Its delivery should be supported by an EU Ocean Fund, to provide an adequate budget to deliver on the Ocean Deal's objectives.

### **Protecting people's health by accelerating the transition to zero-pollution**

Industry is a key source of jobs, products, and income, but also pollution, toxic chemicals and resource impacts. The human health cost of air, water and soil pollution is measured in billions of euros each year, with toxic emissions and hazardous chemicals causing illness, infertility, cognitive impairment, and premature death, and with disproportionate impacts on women, children, and future generations. Chemical pollution is a profound health crisis infringing on the fundamental human right to a safe and healthy environment. The EU must commit to a toxic-free and socially just green transition and support European industry in leading the way in the innovation of safe and non-toxic chemicals, products, and practices. To attain these objectives, political groups must call on the Commission to complete the commitments of the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, in particular by accelerating the identification and phase out of harmful chemicals by reforming REACH and banning all non-essential uses of PFAS. They must also call on the European Commission to propose more ambitious air quality standards and national emission reduction targets, accompanied by effective laws and policies to cut pollution at source.

### **Stepping up implementation and enforcement**

Environmental, health and social regulations, rules and standards are essential to protecting people and planet. They are an integral part of our European Single Market, avoid fragmented national rules and create a level playing field and investment certainty for businesses. For decades however, implementation of common EU environmental rules has been underperforming. Countless reviews of environmental legislation have all pointed to poor national implementation as one of the key barriers. Political debate on administrative burdens require a holistic approach, and not overly simplistic fake solutions such as the arbitrary "one-in-two out", which are a direct copy of the deregulatory playbook from the Trump Administration in the US. Parliament groups must task the next Commission to set up an Implementation and Enforcement Action Plan. This plan must help strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of EU and national public administrations to promote the green and social transition, and maintain the polluter pays principle and precautionary principle as the bedrock of EU law.