



Brussels, 1 August 2024

To: President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen

## Subject: High-level commitment to protecting people's health against climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), an alliance of over 80 member organisations working for better health through a healthier environment, congratulates you on your re-election as President of the European Commission.

Our alliance representing doctors, asthma, allergy and cancer patients, public health institutes and not-for-profit health insurers among others looks to your leadership over the next five years on protecting people's health against climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

The scientific evidence on how this triple crisis threatens and already impacts people's health across the European Union has steadily increased and underlines the need for urgent action to prevent further suffering. The health of children, the elderly, those living with disease, and those experiencing socio-economic hardships and health inequalities is particularly at risk. Swift, decisive EU measures over the next five years will also lead to reduced health economic cost, as the economic cost of inaction keeps growing.

The [Strategic Agenda 2024-2029](#) adopted by the Council on 27 June 2024 recognises the threat from the triple crisis. In your [Political Guidelines](#) from 18 July 2024, you showed continued commitment to the European Green Deal and you pledged to bold and ambitious action across a range of policy areas.

**HEAL calls on you to enshrine and deliver on the need to protect people's health from the triple crisis in the structure and initiatives of your new College. First, by anchoring health protection as well as EU climate, environmental action at the Executive Vice-Presidency level, and second, by adopting a disease preventative approach in all your upcoming legislative, budgetary and financial initiatives, including the Clean Industrial Deal, the Vision for Agriculture and Food, the Climate Adaptation Plan. We urge you to safeguard and strengthen the EU climate and**

environmental *acquis* for better health, and accelerate on the zero pollution path, including for the foreseen reform of the EU chemicals law REACH.

Such a health protective approach reflects Europeans' concerns, as more than four in five (84%) agree that EU legislation is necessary to protect the environment in their country.

HEAL has issued a [Prescription for the EU policy cycle 2024-2029: healthy people on a healthy planet](#), available in six languages to help reach out to people across the European Union, including through our membership.

We would be happy to provide further information on these public health policy recommendations.

Sincerely,



Genon K. Jensen  
Executive Director  
Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

**The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)** is the leading not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects human health in the European Union (EU) and beyond. HEAL works to shape laws and policies that promote planetary and human health and protect those most affected by pollution, and raise awareness on the benefits of environmental action for health.

HEAL's over 80 member organisations include international, European, national and local groups of health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, patients, citizens, women, youth, and environmental experts representing over 200 million people across the 53 countries of the WHO European Region.

As an alliance, HEAL brings independent and expert evidence from the health community to EU and global decision-making processes to inspire disease prevention and to promote a toxic-free, low-carbon, fair and healthy future.

HEAL's EU Transparency Register Number: 00723343929-96