



Brussels, 31 May 2024

Dear Minister of Environment/Climate,

Ahead of the Bonn Climate Conference (3-13 June), the EU Environment Council (17 June) and the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) submission deadline (30 June), we are calling on you to demonstrate real commitment to limiting dangerous climate change by aligning national and EU level climate ambition - towards and post 2030 - to the Paris Agreement 1.5°C temperature goal and equity.

The European Green Deal is a historic framework achieved with cross-party consensus driven by sustained private sector and public support for climate action. It is the blueprint for modernising Europe's economy, ramping up competitiveness, and building energy and socio-economic security - including by expediting the move away from fossil fuels, ramping up renewables and energy savings measures. While delaying climate action will imply dramatic costs for society and the economy, as highlighted by the European Climate Risk Assessment (EUCRA), acting timely and decisively will bring a wide range of benefits. By following an ambitious decarbonisation pathway aligned with the 1.5°C temperature goal, the EU could gain at least €1 trillion already by 2030¹. **The EU and its Member States need to pursue and strengthen their commitment to climate, environmental and social protection by aligning climate targets and measures with the 1.5°C temperature goal and equity principles².**

In order to align with the Paris Agreement 1.5°C temperature goal and equity, **the EU should adopt immediate urgent actions additional to the Fit for 55 agreements** and move substantially beyond the inadequate -55-57% net EU emission reductions target for 2030, to achieve at least -76% net emission reductions by 2030, based on -65% gross emission reductions, compared to 1990 levels.

Member States need to step up national action towards 2030 in their final NECPs submissions due by 30 June. The emission reduction and energy transition pathways in the updated draft NECPs are currently neither in line with the Paris Agreement nor - in several cases - enough to meet the EU's 2030 climate and energy targets. These major gaps are highlighted by both NGOs and the European Commission assessments. Targets must be backed up by adequate additional measures and financing plans, also clearly outlined in the new NECPs which represent strategic planning tools to guide the decarbonisation path and provide investment clarity³.

EU policy-makers need to advance the discussion towards adopting 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

¹ CAN Europe & The Together For 1.5 project (2024). Paris Pact Payoff: Speeding up the green transition for socio-economic co-benefits.

https://caneurope.org/content/uploads/2024/01/CAN-Europe-co-benefits-of-climate-action_REPORT.pdf

² CAN Europe's position on EU climate targets and an equitable greenhouse gas emission budget for the EU <https://caneurope.org/content/uploads/2023/06/2024.02.02-Updated-Position-Paper-on-EU-climate-targets-and-equitable-GHG-budget.pdf>

³ CAN Europe & The Together For 1.5 project (2024). Urgent call to strengthen final NECPs update across 18 EU countries.

<https://1point5.caneurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/NECP-briefing-Urgent-call-to-strengthen-final-NECPs-updates-across-18-EU-countries-April2024.pdf>

the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC), which indicate that higher ambition levels are most beneficial and better reflect equity principles. To align with the 1.5°C temperature limit and equity, the EU should achieve domestic net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 at the latest, based on at least -92% gross emission reductions, compared to 1990 levels. This should be built on three separate and distinct 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. To align with the UNFCCC 5-year common time frames and article 4.7 of the European Climate Law, the EU should also adopt an ambitious 2035 target. CAN Europe calls for an EU 2035 climate target and NDC of between at least -90-94% net emission reductions by 2035, based on between at least -78-82% gross emission reductions, compared to 1990 levels. Reaching high-level agreements on such ambitious targets ahead of COP29/G20 (e.g. as part of the October ENVI conclusions and/or EUCO) would put the **EU in a strong position to contribute to driving an ambitious NDC cycle and diplomacy in cooperation with other key players.**

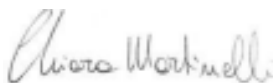
In the pursuit of achieving net zero by 2040, the EU needs to accelerate the deployment of existing solutions, instead of relying on costly and unproven technologies. The EU needs to develop plans to phase-out coal by 2030, fossil gas by 2035 and oil by 2040; integrating such targets into the upcoming EU NDC would also be a strong demonstration of responding to the COP28 Global Stocktake decision (para 28) regarding the transition away from fossil fuels. Simultaneously, the deployment of renewable energy needs to be accelerated to reach a fully renewables based energy system by 2040, with a primary focus on wind and solar. Efforts to curtail energy and material demand should be expanded and greater recognition given to the role of restoring nature to remove carbon. This means using already available techniques to reduce energy and material demand, instead of relying on expensive, unproven at scale and fossil-fuels based techno-solutions, such as carbon capture and storage (CCS, CCU). The EU must not bet on a revival of nuclear energy as this technology is too slow, too expensive and particularly exposed to risks from extreme weather events⁴.

We further call on you to now finally approve the Nature Restoration Law. This is a pivotal opportunity to act against the intertwined climate and biodiversity crises and, consequently, keep the European Union on track to reach the European Green Deal goals. Science has clearly demonstrated that it is not possible to meet EU climate goals without ramping up nature restoration, and there is renewed indication of wide public⁵ as well as business⁶ support for adopting this law.

Finally, in light of the upcoming UNFCCC session in Bonn, we would like to share that CAN Europe recently highlighted key demands for international climate finance in this critical year, which must conclude at COP29 with a significantly scaled-up New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), in a letter to EU finance ministers ahead of the ECOFIN in May.⁷

Being confident that you will take these urgent calls into due account, we count on you to secure the protection of our planet and the well-being of people in Europe and the rest of the world. We remain at your disposal to further discuss how to deliver an inclusive and sustainable transition in Europe.

Yours sincerely,



Chiara Martinelli
Director, Climate Action Network Europe

⁴ CAN Europe's position paper: The nuclear hurdle to a renewable future and fossil fuel phase-out <https://caneurope.org/position-paper-nuclear-energy/>

⁵ <https://wwwfeu.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/citizens-survey-nature-biodiversity-nrl-eu.pdf>

⁶ [Our nature, our business \(ournatureourbusiness.eu\)](https://ournatureourbusiness.eu)

⁷ [Letter to EU Economy and Finance Ministers ahead of Upcoming ECOFIN Council - CAN Europe](#)