

Statement from the Coalition for Higher Ambition urging to support an ambitious EU 2040 domestic emission reduction target ahead of COP30

To: President of the European Council, António Costa

Heads of State and Government of the EU Member States

Ahead of the 23-24th October European Council meeting, we, as members of the **Coalition for Higher Ambition**, ask you to support a **domestic 2040 net emission reduction target of at least 90%**, to finally confirm the EU's commitment to the Paris Agreement ahead of COP30.

This summer's record heatwaves and devastating wildfires that Europe has been witnessing are yet another reminder of the immense costs of the climate crisis, and of the imperative for the EU to act urgently and decisively in line with its responsibilities as a historic emitter and affluent region. The recent report¹ by the European Environment Agency (EEA) indicates that between 1980 and 2023 weather- and climate-related extreme events caused over 240,000 fatalities and cost EUR2023 738 billion in the EU-27, with over EUR2023 162 billion between 2021 and 2023 alone. While delaying climate action will imply dramatic costs for society and the economy, undertaking an accelerated, ambitious and just green transition will bring a wide range of benefits.

² These include the creation of jobs and economic opportunities, improving people's health and well-being, combatting poverty and ensuring social protection, safeguarding natural resources, achieving the Union's energy security, increasing competitiveness and resilience, and strengthening the EU's role as a global frontrunner.

As an alliance of European businesses, major city networks, regional governments, and civil society organisations, who are key actors in driving ambitious climate action and implementing policies on the ground, **we urge you to agree on ambitious guidance for the revision of the European Climate Law**. It should reflect a science-based EU 2040 climate target that is aligned with the recommendations of the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change of **at least 90% net domestic emission reductions by 2040** (relative to 1990 levels). Ahead of COP30, the EU needs to submit a 2035 NDC target derived from this ambition level for 2040.³ Some members of the Coalition, in line with what was highlighted by the latest IPCC

¹ EEA (2025). Europe's environment 2025.

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/europe-environment-2025/main-report>

² CAN Europe & The Together For 1.5 project (2024). Paris Pact Payoff: Speeding up the green transition for socio-economic co-benefits.

³ The Coalition calls for a 2035 NDC target no lower than **at least 72.5%%** net domestic emission reductions. This value is derived from a linear decarbonisation pathway linking the EU 2030 55% net emission reductions target and a 2040 90% net emission reduction target.

synthesis report and the UN Secretary General António Guterres, support efforts for the EU achieving domestic net zero emissions by 2040 at the latest and a higher 2035 target.⁴

Full implementation of the European Green Deal, preferably leading to overachievement of the EU 2030 climate target, will be critical to this pathway. An ambitious and stable EU framework is essential to empower local authorities and businesses to go further and faster. Cities, regions and forward-looking companies are already investing in decarbonisation and resilience, but their efforts require long-term certainty and coherent EU policies that reinforce market signals, unlock investment, and ensure that ambition at all levels works in synergy. For this reason, **we call on the EU and Member States to ensure the full implementation of the Fit for 55 package** as a key milestone towards a climate neutral EU economy. We urge you to not support attempts to weaken elements of the agreed 2030 climate and energy framework, as we are currently observing around the ETS2 for example, nor lower social and environmental protection under a simplification agenda.

Considering the European Climate Law amendment texts currently under discussions, we would like to also highlight the following points:

- The proposed **integration of international carbon credits** (Article 6 of the Paris Agreement) within the 2040 climate target **would undermine the ambition and environmental integrity of the EU contribution**. It would only delay and increase the costs of the transition of the EU economy, weakening investment certainty and competitiveness, with far-reaching financial implications for the EU and Member States. These financial risks would even be exacerbated if Article 6 credits were to be integrated into the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). While we overall disapprove of the inclusion of credits in the EU target, **we stress the importance of not integrating them into the ETS in particular**.
- **Allowing more flexibility for Member States to meet sectoral targets must not weaken incentives for mid-term progress in key sectors** like transport, buildings, or agriculture, in order to not undermine the core logic of economy-wide and structural decarbonisation. This would risk the achievement of the climate neutrality goal and make long-term planning more difficult for EU businesses. National-level binding targets must continue to play a key role.

Exactly ten years after the historical adoption of the Paris Agreement, the EU's next steps in tackling the climate crisis are being scrutinised globally. **We ask you to confirm your participation at the COP30 leaders' summit on 6-7 November in Brazil** in order to announce new pledges demonstrating your commitment to the Paris Agreement, to progress just transitions and unlock benefits for people and planet, and advance alliances and partnerships for collaborative climate action.

We are confident that you will act on this urgent call and 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

⁴<https://caneurope.org/content/uploads/2024/02/2024.09.24-Updated-Position-Paper-on-EU-climate-targets-and-equitable-GHG-budget.docx.pdf>

disposal to further discuss ways to deliver together an inclusive and sustainable climate transition in Europe.

SIGNATORIES

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European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

European Industrial Insulation Foundation (EiiF)

European Heat Pump Association (EHPA)

ICLEI Europe

Naturefriends International

RECS Energy Certificate Association

Solar Heat Europe (SHE)

Transport & Environment (T&E)