

OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The Just Transition has to be fossil fuel-free

14th September 2020

Dear Member of the European Parliament

On 15 September 2020 the European Parliament will vote its position on the Just Transition Fund. The REGI Committee has failed to adopt a position on the Regulation that would enable communities to rapidly decarbonise, leaving the door wide open to new fossil gas investments. The REGI position is surprising: it chooses to weaken the Commission's Proposal on climate action and is less progressive than that of the Council. This vote is therefore an important test for the European Parliament to send a clear signal as well as to put into practice its declaration of a climate emergency and to support a just transition to a better future for communities.

In your vote on 15 September, we ask you to exclude investments in fossil fuels – including fossil gas – from financing by the Just Transition Fund and support a just transition for all.

Fossil gas produces substantial carbon dioxide and methane emissions contributing to climate change and its catastrophic impacts on people and biodiversity. Methane has potent warming effects, making it the second most damaging greenhouse gas, contributing to 25% of warming experienced today¹. Fossil gas infrastructure is also not compatible with most renewable gases, and almost certainly not with renewable gases at scale. Moreover, the European Commission and the IEA have successively scaled down gas demand projections for 2030².

The EU's Just Transition Fund is an integral part of the EU Green Deal. It has the potential to ensure Europe's transition to a climate neutral, resilient and healthy future that leaves no region and no person behind. But this requires a strong commitment to actually phasing out fossil fuels in order to achieve a climate-neutrality goal that would limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C.

¹ See Energy Watch Group (2019), "Natural gas makes no contribution to climate protection". Available at: <http://energywatchgroup.org/natural-gas-makes-no-contribution-to-climate-protection>

² See Stern (2017a), p. 7-8. IEA decreased its 2030 yearly gas demand projection for the EU in its World Energy Outlook from 684bcm in 2008 to 521bcm in 2016.

Investing in more fossil gas comes with huge costs to the climate, Europe's competitiveness and European societies. Meanwhile, renewable energy investments bring up to three times more jobs³ per euro invested than the same invested in fossil fuels - and renewable jobs are more likely to be local than those in fossil gas. Communities have an opportunity to leap forward to a more sustainable, more resilient and healthier future away from high-carbon industries. The Just Transition Fund must help them build a better tomorrow, not lock them in the past.

It's time to face the truth: Fossil gas has no place in EU Funds. Fossil gas has no place in the Just Transition Fund. The Council realised this. It is time for the European Parliament to face the truth: will you?

Signatories:

Asociación de Cultura Popular Alborada (Gallur)	Ember	Plataforma Ciudadana Zaragoza sin Fractura
Attac France	Energy Cities	Plataforma por un Nuevo Modelo Energético (Spain)
BBLM	Energy Watch Group	Polish Green Network
Bo Miasto Association	European Environmental Bureau (EEB)	POW
Both Ends	Europe Beyond Coal (EBC)	RAC France
Carbon Market Watch	E3G	Reclaim Finance
CAN	FoE Europe	Fundación Renovables
CDE	FoE Finland	RT-ON
CEE Bankwatch Network	Foe Hungary	Sandbag
Center for Ecology and Energy	Friends of the Earth Ireland	See Change Net
Client Earth	Federation of Young European Greens	The Ecological Association EKO-UNIA, Poland
Climate Strategy and Partners	Focus	The Gastivists
Citizens Climate Lobby Europe	Food and Water Action Europe	The Green Tank
Counter Balance	Greenpeace	Transport and Environment
Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR)	Global Withness	Umanotera, The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable development
Door	HEAL	Urgewald
EkoEnergy	Legambiente ONLUS	WWF
Eco-Lise	Levegő Munkacsoport (FoE Lux)	Za Zemiata
Ecologists in Action	Nas Jadran	Zero waste Europe
ECOS	Nature Friends International / amis de la Terre	
ECOunion		
EGEC	Oil Change International	
EJF		

³ IRENA, June 2020, "[Post-COVID recovery: An agenda for resilience, development and equality](https://www.iea.org/reports/sustainable-recovery)" and <https://www.iea.org/reports/sustainable-recovery>



Citizens' Climate Europe



