



WWF European Policy Office
123 rue du Commerce
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Mobile:
Skype ID:
@WWFEU
www.wwf.eu

EU Transparency Register Nr:
1414929419-24
VAT: BE 0460057241

Reference: The EU's green and just recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic

Brussels, Belgium - 10 July 2020

Dear Heads of state and government, dear ministers of finance and environment,

The European Council will meet next 17th and 18th of July and will discuss, among others, the EU recovery package and the EU budget.

We would like to raise three critical issues:

- The need to significantly increase and broaden the 25% climate spending target of the EU budget as a whole (including Next Generation EU);
- The need to implement the 'do no harm' green oath of the European Green Deal in a concrete way in the EU budget and recovery package;
- The need for the Recovery and Resilience Plans of every Member State to systematically contribute to the green transition.

The European Commission framed the European Green Deal as the 'motor of Europe's recovery' and [at least 19 EU governments supported this ambition](#). Members of the European Parliament, the Club of Rome, scientists, NGOs, hundreds of representatives from business and politics, energy companies, financial institutions and many more supported it as well. It is critical to ensure a sustainable recovery and a more resilient Europe, able to tackle the twin challenge of climate change and biodiversity loss.

The negotiating box on the EU budget currently states that 25% of the EU budget and recovery package should be climate-friendly. This is not consistent with the European Green Deal, that requires a higher level of ambition and a broader environmental approach; it is also at odds with the forthcoming, higher EU climate target for 2030 and the EU net-zero emission goal by 2050.

We recommend that 50% of the EU budget and recovery package benefit both climate and environment, as the European Investment Bank already committed.

Complementarily, the 'do no harm' principle of the European Green Deal needs to be put into practice. The very first step is to ensure that the EU budget and recovery package will not support fossil fuels anymore. Renewable and energy efficiency alternatives are now competitive with gas and even cheaper in many regions; they are also available for development in every Member State. In addition, the Carbon Tracker Initiative analysis finds that 60% of gas assets in the EU will be stranded by 2030¹ because of falling costs from renewables and electricity storage,

¹ <https://carbontracker.org/reports/absolute-impact/>



as well as tightening climate policies, making such assets redundant and loss-making. **We recommend to explicitly exclude the fossil fuel sector from EU public financial support and, as a bare minimum, any potentially environmentally harmful projects supported by the EU budget and recovery package must comply with the EU taxonomy criteria.** This should start with the European Regional Development Fund that is already at trilogue stage.

Finally, the Recovery and Resilience Plans which are to be developed by Member States to access funds from the Recovery and Resilience Facility should systematically contribute to the green transition. The current Commission's proposal would allow Member States' plans to be approved even if they contribute significantly to the digital transition only not the green transition. **Each recovery plan should follow the do no harm approach, as set out above, and clearly plan for at least 50% of funds to benefit climate and environment.** To most effectively contribute to the green transition and a just recovery, the plans should be developed in full respect of the Partnership Principle and the drafts and final version should be published on a public platform to facilitate their rapid, but transparent and inclusive development.

We would be pleased to discuss our recommendations with you or your team in a call in the next days or weeks. Please do not hesitate to ask us if you have any questions.

With my best regards,

Ester Asin
Director
WWF European Policy Office