

**Joint letter to the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European  
Commission and the European Parliament**

**Mandate, tasks, composition and governance of a future ECCC**

Dear President of the European Council Michel, Dear Minister Matos Fernandes, Dear Executive Vice-President Timmermans, Dear Members of Parliament: Guteland, Canfin, Bloss, Krasnodębski, Liese, Limmer, Modig, Torvalds and Zalewska,

On 9 March 2021, a consortium of governmental and parliamentary advisory councils on climate change, the environment and sustainable development, all members and partners of the EEAC Network, sent you a joint letter supporting the establishment of a European Climate Change Council (ECCC) in the framework of the new European Climate Law. Following the invitation by EU institutions to share our further views in the context of the ongoing negotiations, we are pleased to send you an addendum to our previous letter with our insights on the mandate, tasks, composition and governance of a future ECCC .

**Mandate and tasks: Ensure added value from integrated evidence-based scientific knowledge**

We reiterate that a European Climate Change Council (ECCC) – supported by existing institutions and agencies – should be mandated to provide evidence-based and integrated policy advice based on the best available scientific knowledge. In this role, a future ECCC would operate independently and in addition to existing institutions and agencies, such as the IPCC, EEA and JRC.

This mandate may include the following tasks:

- Providing evidence-based policy advice that supports sufficient and coherent climate mitigation policies at European level, in order to ensure that the Union delivers on both its own and its international climate ambitions. When providing advice, a future ECCC should take into account a variety of priorities, including socio-economic impacts and the ambitions as formulated in the EU Green Deal. By doing so, integrated policy advice with a whole-of-society approach would be strengthened.
- Ensuring that the latest scientific findings of the IPCC and relevant European institutions and agencies are used for evidence-based policy making. We therefore emphasise that it should be possible for a future ECCC to make optimal use of the insights from institutions that provide data, knowledge and emission reduction trajectory models specific to the European area. Only if the ECCC has a complete, accurate and Europe-specific picture at its disposal, can it provide valuable policy advice.
- Providing European institutions with a regular and independent assessment of progress on the achievement of GHG emission reduction targets at EU level. Based on this assessment,

the ECCC should be tasked to deliver a set of recommendations to accelerate the transition to a climate-neutral Union by 2050. In this context, we would particularly like to underline the added value of a future ECCC in providing advice to inform decisions on the level of future emission reduction targets and the pathways leading to achieving such targets.

- Providing the EU institutions with a regular and independent assessment of the progress made on the implementation of the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change. Based on this assessment, the ECCC should be tasked to deliver a set of recommendations to increase resilience to climate change.
- Organising hearings and workshops, in order to ensure that views of relevant experts, stakeholders and institutions are included. Such an inclusive approach would support both the availability of insights as well as the legitimacy of an ECCC and its advice.

### **Composition: Multidisciplinary and fit for purpose**

- Given that the challenges we face are cross-sectoral and systemic in nature, the mandate and tasks of a future ECCC call for a body that is interdisciplinary in terms of its composition. In addition, the composition must ensure a wide and diverse European representation in order to ensure deep knowledge of the different environmental, climatic, social and economic realities within the European geography. Gender balance must also be taken in account.
- In order to allow consensus building and promote efficient operations, a future ECCC should however include less than fifteen scientific experts. These experts should be appointed following a fully transparent selection process, underpinned by clear (scientific) criteria. In this context, we argue that it is important to leave the nomination of experts to Member States<sup>1</sup> (with a maximum of two nominees per Member State), while final selection should be made by the institutions that a future ECCC will advise.
- To ensure that the valuable scientific knowledge of all nominees will be used, we call upon EU institutions to develop a set-up that allows for the consultation of all nominees by the members of a future ECCC.

### **Governance: Independency and transparency**

- To further enhance legitimacy, a future ECCC and its members must be completely independent of the institutions they advise. This independence must be enshrined in law upon the establishment of a future ECCC. In practice, independency includes the ability to set up a work programme independently, the freedom to provide both solicited and unsolicited advice, and the ability to have the necessary resources to perform its duties, including having its own independent secretariat.

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<sup>1</sup>To ensure the independency of a future ECCC and its members, there should be a legal requirement for experts to operate completely independently of their country of origin.

- Furthermore, we would like to underline the usefulness of an obligation for EU institutions to share an official response to the advice provided by a future ECCC. Such a response should include an explanation if objectives are not met, and should also include the actions that should be taken to ensure that the objectives will be met in the near future. In addition, it should be noted that such a response must follow within a certain period of time, and that the response should be publicly disclosed. These requirements should be enshrined in the law that will establish a future ECCC.

To conclude, we wish to reiterate our willingness to cooperate with colleagues at EU level when this is of mutual benefit to the work of a future ECCC and the national advisory councils.

In the light of the upcoming negotiation rounds, we express our sincere hope that these negotiations will provide our Union with both truly ambitious climate policies and targets, and the institutions to support these policies and targets.

Sincerely yours,

*Arnau Queralt-Bassa, Chairman of the  
EEAC Network*

*Peter Møllgaard, Chair of the  
Danish Council on Climate Change*

*Markku Ollikainen, Chair of the  
Finnish Climate Change Panel*

*Corinne Le Quere, Chair of the  
French High Council on Climate*

*Dr. Julia Hertin, Managing Director in the  
German Advisory Council on the Environment*

*Sabine Schlacke, Chair of the  
German Advisory Council on Global Change*

*Gábor Bartus, Secretary General of the  
Hungarian Council for Sustainable Development*

*Romain Poulles, President of the  
High Council for Sustainable Development,  
Luxembourg*

*Jan Jaap de Graeff, Chair of the  
Council for the Environment and Infrastructure  
The Netherlands*

*Filipe Duarte Santos, Chairman of the  
Portuguese National Council on the  
Environment and Sustainable Development*

*Ramon Roca, Chair of the  
Advisory Council for Sustainable Development  
Of Catalonia*

*Johan Kuylenstierna, Chair of the  
Swedish Climate Policy Council*

*Folmer de Haan, Chair of the  
EEAC Working Group on Climate and Energy*