

To:

Wopke Hoekstra, EU Commissioner for Climate Action
Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice President of the European Commission
Kurt Vandenberghe, Director-General, EC Directorate-General for Climate Action
European Commission B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

The Hague, 21 November 2023

Dear Mr. Hoekstra, dear Mr. Vandenberghe, dear Mr. Šefčovič,

We, the signing advisory councils on climate change, the environment and sustainable development, **commend the Commission for its work on implementing the European Green Deal and the *Fit for 55* package.** This substantial and comprehensive package of new and revised climate policies is leading Europe on its way to reaching EU's 2030 climate target.

It is crucial to follow through and deliver on the *Fit for 55* package and the emission cuts necessary to reach the 2030 targets. **But it is also the time to look beyond 2030.** In accordance with the European Climate Law the Commission is required to submit a proposal and accompanying impact assessment regarding an EU-wide climate target for 2040 and an indicative GHG budget (defined as the cumulative net emissions over the period) for 2030-2050.

Keeping the EU on track to climate neutrality is of utmost importance. We already see severe effects of climate change with increasing temperatures and more severe droughts and storms, among others. Thus, **the EU must continue to stay on track to climate neutrality and greater climate resilience.** This will provide long-term economic, societal, and environmental benefits for the people of Europe and pave the way for other countries to follow. Furthermore, a clear and realistic pathway to net-zero increases energy security and economic stability while also providing a low risk investment environment for business.

The European Climate Law mandates the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC) to provide independent scientific advice and produce reports inter alia on EU climate targets and indicative greenhouse gas budgets and their conformity with the EU's international commitments under the Paris Agreement. On June 15 2023, the ESABCC issued its proposal for the 2040 target and carbon budget 2030-2050: "Scientific advice for the determination of an EU-wide 2040 climate target and a greenhouse gas budget for 2030–2050". **The ESABCC proposes a 2040 target of 90-95 percent net reduction below 1990 greenhouse gas emissions for the EU as a whole and a carbon budget of 11-14 Gt for the period 2030-2050.** The 2040 target is a useful and timely stepping stone to becoming a climate neutral continent in 2050.

The ESABCC analysed over 1,000 EU emission pathways, and identified among them 36 feasible scenarios that align with the objective of limiting global warming to 1.5°C and the EU's goal to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Based on the advisory board's analysis we find the proposed target to be evidence based and scientifically well founded. **The proposed target is ambitious but feasible under the risk assumptions made by the ESABCC.** However, as stated in the report, none of the assessed pathways towards climate neutrality fully align with the fair share estimates referred to in the report. This stresses the need to aim for the fastest feasible reduction path, but also to complement domestic reductions with reliable and transparent measures outside the EU. Moreover, we also encourage the

Commission to consider effects on biodiversity, human right impacts, particularly on vulnerable communities and to consider synergies and trade-offs between mitigation and adaptation strategies, to limit CO2-leakage to countries outside the EU and, in general, to filter out scenarios with high risk and global sustainability concerns. Although we have not yet analysed the implications of the overall target for each of our member states, **we support the work of the ESABCC and urge the Commission to build on the analysis from the ESABCC in your work on proposing a target for 2040 and carbon budget for 2030-2050.**

Yours sincerely,

Arnau Queralt Bassa

Chair of the European Environmental and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils Network

Montserrat Termes Rifé

Committee of Experts on Climate Change of Catalonia

Markku Ollikainen

Chair of the Finnish Climate Change Panel

Andrew Ferrone

Chair of the Luxembourg Climate Policy Observatory

Peter Møllgaard

Chair of the Danish Council on Climate Change

Ramon Roca i Enrich

Chair of the Advisory council on Sustainable Development of Catalonia

Jan Willem Erisman

Chair of the Netherlands Scientific Climate Council

Claudia Hornberg

Chair of the German Advisory Council on the Environment

Romain Poules

Chair of the Luxembourgish High Council for Sustainable Development

Filipe Duarte Santos

Chair of the Portuguese National Council of the Environment and Sustainable Development



Klimarådet.



WKR Wetenschappelijke
Klimaatraad

SRU
Sachverständigenrat
für Umweltfragen

