



April 10th 2020

Ten European Climate and Environment Ministers declare that « European Green Deal must be central to a resilient recovery after Covid-19 »:

A life or death moment for the European Union and our planet

We European NGOs, support EU Ministers' call to make EU's Recovery a Green Deal.

Rather than blindly rushing back to “business as usual” and abandoning the perspective of a better future for Europe, Ministers signing this letter chose to take stock of Covid-19's painful lessons.

To prevent the renewal of crisis and tragedy, any recovery must care to mitigate the risks and – human, social, economic and financial - costs of climate inaction.

Recovery should not aim at economic growth for its own sake, but should instead center on the health, safety and well-being of people and communities. To do so, all European governments and institutions must realize that building a strong and resilient economy, creating lasting jobs, reducing inequalities and accelerating the green transition go hand in hand.

Building on the Green Deal framework, and taking the path of a fossil fuel phase-out combined with a just transition for workers, the European Commission and each Member State can respond to the Covid crisis in a way that brings both short-term relief and longer-term resilience. There can be no sustainable prosperity for the European Union in the absence of a just and rapid exit from the fossil fuel era.

A green response to Covid-19 requires both prioritizing support to green sectors and activities using the Green Deal and conditioning support to coherent decarbonization targets and the phase out of fossil fuels. It is the only response that would increase health, economic and financial resilience. A recovery plan that is out of step with the Green Deal and heavily subsidizes fossil fuels would instead lock Europe in a fossil economy for decades to come, putting the objective of keeping global warming under 1.5 or even 2°C out of reach.

Winning the battle against climate change is a common European good. Public investments and incentives are needed in each and every corner of the European Union and beyond and require complementary financing under national and EU budgets. However, the COVID health crisis does not financially hit countries equally. An issuance of eurobonds to fund dedicated green investments and

strengthen the resilience of our societies on a scale commensurate with the current crisis will be an insurance against the risk of insufficient progress towards the common sustainability goals.

For the future of the European Union and its citizens, our planet and all living on it, EU and Member States must urgently align their recovery spending and regulatory tools with climate goals.

We expect signatories of this announcement to set the right example by ensuring that green criteria are used for domestic recovery as well. In addition, we urge countries that are notably absent from this letter, such as France and Germany, to rally behind this necessary call for a green recovery.

Let the European Union signal the World that, to deliver clean and lasting jobs, healthy communities and a sustainable and resilient economy, we must tackle Covid-19 and the climate crisis together.

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