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Press release | 16.09.2026

We cannot afford inaction - phase out climate killers now

State of the EU/heatwaves

In today's State of the EU (SOTEU) speech, the Commission President gave only half-hearted answers to this summer's deadly heatwaves and sky-rocketing temperatures. This summer, extreme heat killed over 35,000 people across our continent. Economic loss of extreme temperatures in 2026 alone amounts to an estimated €180 billion in the EU or roughly 1% of GDP, almost exactly the growth the bloc had been expecting for 2026. The Greens/EFA call for an Inquiry Committee into the weakening of the Green Deal.

Terry Reintke, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, urges for phasing out coal, gas and oil now, to save lives and boost the economy:

"We cannot afford the inaction any longer. Skyrocketing temperatures have wiped out the equivalent of entire European cities. The high death numbers represent real people, families, grandparents, elderly neighbours, road workers or roofers. Business as usual leads to deadly heatwaves and economic decline. That is why our Group calls for an Inquiry Committee into the weakening of the Green Deal.

"The costs of inaction will be much higher than acting now. We need to phase out all fossil fuel subsidies and we need an end to our dependency on oil, gas and coal. We urge for a fossil fuel windfall tax to pay people's energy bills when winter comes. We need better protection for workers and ambitious 2040 targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency.

"Our dependency on oil, gas and coal is costly, it turns homes into heat traps, dries our rivers and stops transports of goods. Dependency on fossil fuels leaves our economic prosperity to the good-will of autocrats, while competitors like China make their profits from selling e-cars.

"A renewable Europe is an economic powerhouse, creating jobs and affordable energy. A strong and independent Europe is an attractive partner around the world."

Please find more in the Greens/EFA Heatwave Action Plan

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Responsible MEPs



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