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Letter | 29.09.2023

Greens-EFA letter to Vice-President Sefcovic and Commissioner-designate Hoekstra on the Green Deal

Brussels, 29th of September 2023

To:

Vice-President designate for the European Green Deal, Mr Sefcovic,

Commissioner-designate for climate action, Mr Hoekstra,

Ahead of your hearings in the European Parliament on Monday 2nd October and Tuesday 3rd October, we wanted, on behalf of the Greens/EFA group, to highlight again the climate and biodiversity crisis we are in and the emergency to act and fully deliver on the transformative EU Green Deal agenda in the months to come. Summer 2023 has been the hottest summer ever recorded. The door to keep 1.5°C alive is closing at an alarming pace and the biodiversity collapse poses a fundamental risk to society.

Here are five fundamental commitments for our group to keep the European Green Deal on track:

- 1. Accelerating the Green Deal agenda.** Faced with the acceleration of global warming and related extreme weather events, there is no time to waste. We are only at the beginning of the European Green Deal with a lot of action still needed to realise this “Man on the Moon” project. If we are serious in changing how we eat, how we travel, how we produce and consume, as promised by President von der Leyen in 2019, there is still work to do. We expect the current Commission to quickly deliver on the remaining elements of the European Green Deal, in particular **the Forest Monitoring Law, the Animal Welfare Package** and binding EU measures to prevent the release of **micro-plastics** in the environment. In addition, attaining our climate and energy objectives by

2030 will require around €1000 billion per year in public and private **green investments**. We need to move away from a narrow vision of EU economic governance to a new framework enabling the frontloading of massive investments both via the EU and national budgets for the next decade at least. The current Stability and Growth Pact rules are currently not fit for purpose to deliver on the Green Deal and environmental sustainability. In the longer-term, beyond next year, we need to **deepen the EU fiscal Union** and create a follow-up instrument to the Recovery and Resilience Facility, funded via **joint EU debt-issuance** so that all European Member States can act against climate change, regardless of their national fiscal space.

- 2. Science-based post-2030 climate targets.** The European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change acknowledged that the Union has already exhausted its fair share of the global GHG budget to keep global warming to under 1.5°C and recommended reducing the Union's net GHG emissions by at least 90-95% by 2040, compared to 1990 levels. The upcoming proposal for the EU post-2030 targets and its accompanying impact assessment should assess scenarios in line with these scientific recommendations, as well as **a scenario reaching climate-neutrality by 2040**. The impact of sufficiency measures and life-style changes should also be assessed by the European Commission. In addition, this assessment should include an ambitious 2035 target to speed up early action.
- 3. International & EU measures to phase out fossil fuels.** Phasing out fossil fuels will be a central debate at COP28. We expect the Commission to defend ambitious **targets for the global phase out of fossil fuels** at the international level, in line with the latest recommendations of the International Energy Agency. We also expect the Commission to **assess and publish, for each Member State, the amount of fossil fuel subsidies** provided and to put forward a **deadline for the phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies** consistent with the ambition of limiting global warming to 1,5°C, as foreseen in the 8th Environmental Action Programme.
- 4. Delivering on Europe's responsibility to address Loss & Damage.** Vulnerable nations are facing the dramatic consequences of climate change. The EU has a historical responsibility to support those countries both by helping them addressing the economic cost of loss and damage and by investing in adaptation. The European Parliament has repeatedly called for the establishment of **a dedicated EU public finance mechanism for international climate finance**. This new instrument could be created on the basis of revenues from additional fossil fuel taxation, aviation & maritime taxation, an EU financial transaction tax and an EU wealth tax. This would contribute to Europe's credibility and willingness to deliver on making a Loss & Damage Fund at COP28.
- 5. Bring back nature & build resilient ecosystems.** Nature & healthy ecosystems are the backbone of our societies. Nature and biodiversity are key to ensure we can continue producing sustainable food in Europe. Healthy and resilient ecosystems protect us from the impacts of droughts, floods and wildfires caused by climate change. Urban green infrastructures contribute to cooling temperatures and benefit the health of those living in cities. We expect the Commission to support **a strong agreement on the Nature Restoration Law by the end of this mandate**.

We hope that these fundamental requirements will be addressed in your hearings to ensure that this European Commission fully delivers on the European Green Deal, a much-needed transformative agenda as a response to the unprecedented crisis humanity is currently facing.

Sincerely yours,

***Terry Reintke**, Co-President of the Greens/EFA group*

***Philippe Lamberts**, Co-President of the Greens/EFA group*

***Bas Eickhout**, Vice-President of the Greens/EFA group*

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