



In support of a dedicated ‘Area of Intervention’ for renewable energy, within the ‘Climate, Energy & Mobility’ cluster of *Horizon Europe*

Dear Vice President Šefčovič,

We wish to emphasize the importance of maintaining a dedicated area for renewable energy technology, in the Commission’s post-2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation: Horizon Europe.

We welcome the European Commission’s initiative to focus 25% of the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework on climate actions. This is a step in the right direction to support Europe’s ambitions to become a global leader in renewable energy and achieve a fully decarbonized energy system by 2050.

It is essential however, that this feeds through to complementary research and innovation policies for renewable energy.

The emergence of a European renewable energy sector is clearly delivering in terms of decarbonization. It is also delivering much wider benefits to EU citizens: Security of supply has been strengthened, and a multi-billion-euro industry has been established, creating more than one million jobs. The replacement of fossil fuels significantly decreases air pollution. Perhaps most tangibly, renewable energy is being supplied to European citizens at unprecedented low prices.

Past investment into research and innovation in the field of renewable energy technology has been crucial to deliver these benefits. However, important progress needs to be made:

- The renewable sector has made huge progress, with significant cost abatement and technology improvements delivered in record time. However, the historical weight of conventional power generation remains considerable. In 2017 solar and wind power still represented just 15.6% of total gross EU electricity generation¹ – a fraction of their full potential;

¹ ‘Electricity generation statistics – first results’, Eurostat, April 2018 – see http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Electricity_generation_statistics_%E2%80%93_first_results

- Progress remains extremely uneven in Europe, with the UK and Germany accounting for 56% of all growth of renewables over the past three years;²
- 81% of the EU's heating and cooling is still supplied by fossil fuels;³ -and-
- To genuinely contribute to decarbonisation efforts, innovations in transport must be powered by renewable energy.

The EU will need to promote all renewable energy technologies to achieve a decarbonised and sustainable energy system by 2050, across all sectors. Promising technologies must be helped towards commercial deployment, and mature technologies need to have the right investment framework to retain their competitive edge.

Horizon Europe is a central tool to support cutting-edge innovation and strengthen the EU's climate and industrial leadership in the long term. It is therefore extremely important to maintain a focus on renewable energy technology in the proposal.

Ahead of the publication of the Horizon Europe proposal on June 6th, we therefore urge you to:

- **Ensure that renewable energy is the exclusive focus of a dedicated 'Area of Intervention', within the wider 'Climate, Energy & Mobility' cluster;**
- **Increase financial support in renewable energy research, to match European ambition in renewable and clean technologies development;**
- **Streamline financing and project development pipelines for the uptake of emerging technologies, bridging the gap from R&D and demonstration up to market outreach;**
- **Support incremental innovation for mature technologies, to retain their competitive edge at global level.**

² Agora Energiewende and Sandbag (2018): The European Power Sector in 2017. State of Affairs and Review of Current Developments.

³ Eurostat, SHARES 2016