

Brussels, 25 Sept 2019

Deputy Permanent Representative (Italy)

Dear Mr Quaroni,

27 September Council: our view on how EU's research policy should support climate policy

On 27 September the EU's Research Ministers meet for the second day of a Competitiveness Council where, over lunch, ministers will discuss the role of research and innovation in achieving climate targets.

Citizens and industry are calling for immediate climate action. They are aware of the serious implications of climate change and that while Europe has the tools to tackle this challenge, deployment has not been fast enough.

The EU's research policy can be fine-tuned to provide more support. European Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen has pledged to push the carbon reduction target from -40% to -50% or -55% by 2030, which will raise the carbon price and create more demand for innovative green technology. New solutions must come to the market faster and in larger volumes.

Here are four things we'd like the Council of Ministers to agree:

- 1) The Commission should use its announced "plan for a future-ready economy, our new industrial strategy"¹ to remove doubt around the intention to reach the 35% target. The plan should declare that in view of political and popular support it *is* appropriate to spend 35% on climate action.
- 2) Increase funding to the Climate, Energy and Mobility Cluster in Horizon Europe. EU climate ambition depends on a just and sustainable energy transition. This requires more innovation in the energy and transport sectors. The Cluster accounts for roughly 15% of the budget under the Commission's proposal. To realistically reach the overall climate target of 35%, the share for Climate, Energy and Mobility needs to be higher.
- 3) The Commission should set up a mechanism to keep climate-relevant spending on track throughout the Horizon Europe programme. The mechanism should include the possibility to increase funding to the Climate, Mobility and Energy cluster when climate spending is below a plausible trajectory.
- 4) Far greater transparency is needed in the way the Commission classifies climate-related work in its work programmes and the topics or projects funded under them. The European Court of Auditors criticised the Commission² for not respecting the regulatory requirement for the Horizon 2020 multiannual work programme to include an indication of the amount of climate-related expenditure in either 2014-2015 or 2016-2017. Nor was this done for the work programme 2018-2020.

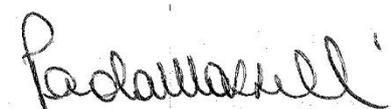
¹ [My agenda for Europe](#), Ursula von der Leyen 2019

² [Special Report #31 Spending at least one euro in every five from the EU budget on climate action: ambitious work underway, but at serious risk of falling short](#) §60-64 (European Court of Auditors, 2016)

The Commission indicated it will not introduce any “new administrative measures” to reach the 35% climate target³. This attitude undermines Horizon Europe’s capacity to satisfy overwhelming popular demand for robust, pro-climate policy and must be challenged.

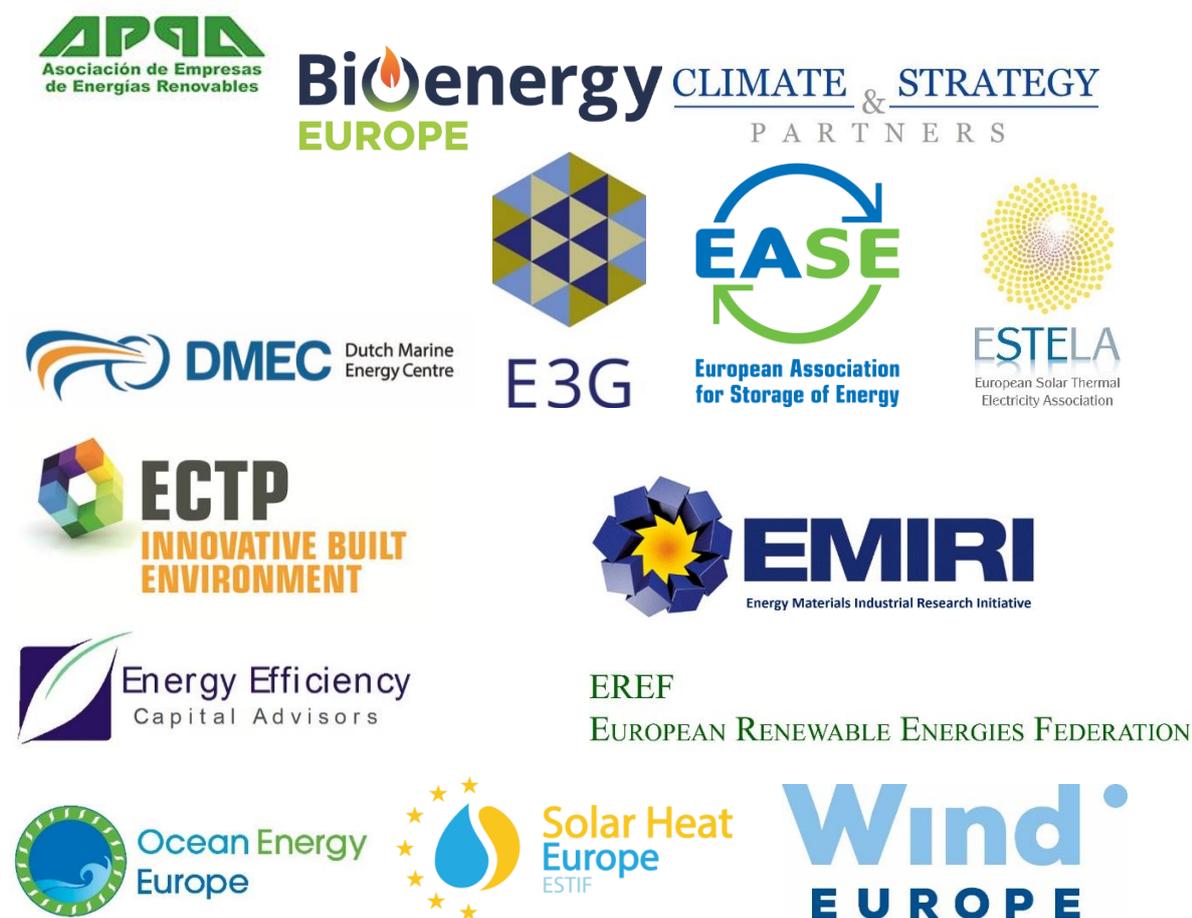
We hope you can make the points above during your lunch on 27 September and in the final negotiations on Horizon Europe.

Yours sincerely,



Secretary General, EUREC

With the support of



³ Statement to ITRE Committee by Director General Jean-Eric Paquet on 3 Sept 2019 (Video: [12:33:35](#))