

renew europe.

Mr Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels

Ms Kardi Simson
Commissioner for Energy
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels

Strasbourg, 10 February 2020

Dear Commissioner Timmermans,
Dear Commissioner Simson,

We are writing to you with regard to the fourth Union list of Projects of Common Interest (PCI) in order to express our concerns that the way European taxpayer's money is spent may not be in line with the Union climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.

As you are well aware, the Parliament will vote on the objection to the delegated act C(2019) 7772 which lays down the fourth Union list in Strasbourg on 12 February. While we fully recognise and welcome the work on the list carried out by the Commission services under the guidance of your predecessor as well as yourself, we feel we must underline that the sense of climate emergency and commitments made in the European Green Deal must propel us into new modes of action which are entirely future- and climate-proof.

First of all, we welcome the fact that the Commission has rightly laid more emphasis on electricity and smart grid projects in the fourth list than in the previous list published in October 2017. This is a positive sign that the Commission and Member States recognise the need to shift our spending priorities and ensure that billions of taxpayer's money will not end up as stranded assets in view of the transition away from fossil fuels.

Nevertheless, recently published studies¹ indicate that the transition from fossil fuel projects to fully renewable sources of energy and smart grids is not taking place fast enough. Will the 32 gas projects on the fourth PCI list be necessary from the point of view of the security of energy supply? We believe that renewable energy together with the deployment of smart grids are the key not only to the ongoing decarbonisation drive, but also to ensuring a genuine security of energy supply without any risks implied in the imports of fossil fuel gas. At the same time, we acknowledge that renewable green gas and hydrogen produced from RES electricity will play an important role in the energy transition of those sectors which are hard to electrify (aviation, shipping, heavy-industry). Thus, we underline that the Commission should take all the necessary steps to lay down a regulatory and spending framework reflecting the priorities already defined in the **new energy lending criteria by the European Investment Bank (EIB)**.

We would also hereby ask you to screen the fourth Union PCI list in light of the ambitious climate and environmental commitments under the European Green deal, in order to ensure that the Connecting Europe Facility funds are not spent on projects which are incompatible with these goals. We stress that there is an urgent need for **transitional measures** as the delegated act on the fourth PCI list is based on the TEN-E regulation which was adopted in 2013, well before the Union energy and climate objectives were adopted. We take this opportunity to urge you to ensure that the TEN-E regulation is revised as soon as feasible, that the future governance of identifying energy needs will be independent to ensure modern technologies (in particular on the demand side) are fully exploited, and that the upcoming fifth PCI list is entirely sound from the climate point of view.

Finally, there is a strong case for ensuring that all Union spending is climate-proof, not just the spending from the energy envelope of the Connecting Europe Facility. We stress thereby the importance of the prompt definition and adoption of the **climate proofing mechanism** already announced by the Commission. We strongly believe that the legal basis for this mechanism should be laid down in the Climate Law due to be published in March 2020.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to our cooperation on these challenges of utmost importance for the future of the Union.

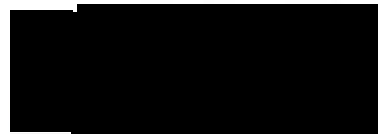
Yours sincerely,



Martina Dlabajová



Nils Torvalds



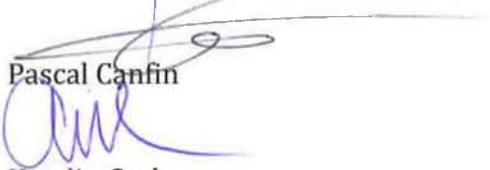
Morten Helveg Petersen

¹ Artelys report showing the 4th PCI list is setting the Union up for potentially EUR29 billion of new investments in stranded assets, supported by public EU funds.

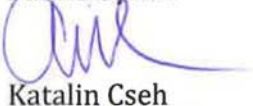
The Global Energy Monitor report revealed that Europe is planning to invest a combined public and private €117 billion in new fossil gas infrastructure, increasing Europe's import capacity of gas by 30 percent. The infrastructure is described as unnecessary because current EU gas import capacity is 1.8 times bigger than consumption.



Izaskun Bilbao Barandica



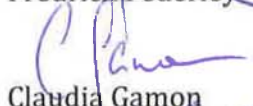
Pascal Canfin



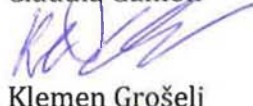
Katalin Cseh



Fredrick Federley



Claudia Gamon



Klemen Grošelj



Christophe Grudler



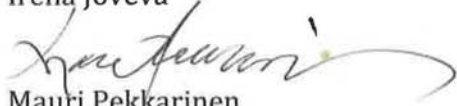
Martin Hojsík



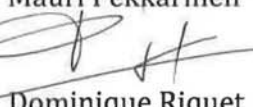
Ivars Ijabs



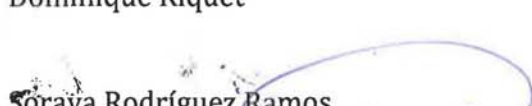
Irena Joveva



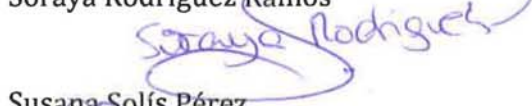
Mauri Pekkarinen



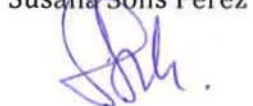
Dominique Riquet



Soraya Rodríguez Ramos



Susana Solís Pérez



CC: European Commissioner for Budget and Human Affairs Johannes Hahn