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Sent: mardi 23 mars 2021 18:56

To: EC PRESIDENT VDL

Cc: [REDACTED] (CAB-VON DER LEYEN); [REDACTED]
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LEYEN); [REDACTED]

Subject: EU Taxonomy - Statement by 226 Scientists, Financial
Institutions, NGOs Statement Against Gas Loophole

Attachments: 225+ Scientists, Financials, CSO Open Letter - Gas Attack in EU
Taxonomy - March21.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up

Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Pool

Dear President von der Leyen,

Please find enclosed an open letter from 226 scientists, financial institutions, and civil society organisations expressing their alarm about the attack against the European Taxonomy by fossil fuel lobbies and Member States.

We criticise the European Commission's proposal to classify fossil fuels as environmentally sustainable. This directly contradicts all recommendations made by climate science and by the Commission's Technical Expert Group and will turn the EU Taxonomy into a greenwashing tool.

We have no time for false solutions. This is why neither coal-to-gas nor cogeneration (CHP) should be included in the Taxonomy.

Furthermore, this move will undermine and discredit the European Green Deal and the EU's global climate leadership. With countries across the globe developing similar taxonomies, this precedent could also lower global ambition, resulting in countries labelling a broad range of fossil fuel investments as sustainable.

We hope you will listen to this urgent call from scientists, financial institutions, and civil society, reject the proposal to classify fossil gas as sustainable, and produce a taxonomy that truly sets the EU on course to meet its Green Deal targets.

WWF would be happy to exchange with you and your staff on this pressing issue.

Kind regards,



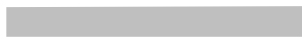
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EU Transparency Register Nr: 1414929419-24 |



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Open Letter - Gas Attack in Taxonomy

Dear President von der Leyen,
Vice-President Timmermans and Dombrovskis,
Commissioner McGuinness,

We are alarmed by a new proposal allowing fossil fuels into the EU taxonomy.

This new proposal drafted by the European Commission suggests that fossil gas does no harm to the environment, and therefore could be included as Sustainable for Finance under the EU Taxonomy. These are baseless claims and are opposed to climate science. Introducing fossil gas in the EU taxonomy is firmly against the recommendations of the Commission's Technical Expert Group and caves in to the demands of the gas lobby.

The EU taxonomy was conceived as a science-based gold standard to avoid greenwashing. With such a proposal the taxonomy itself would become a greenwashing tool.

Energy security, just transition, and grid reliability are critical for Europe, but are also fully addressed by other EU policies, funds, and regulations. The purpose of the EU Taxonomy is to correctly label green finance: this means following the best scientific evidence on an activity's environmental impact.

Counting gas as green ignores the significant environmental effects of methane, whose impact on climate change is up to 84 times greater than CO₂ in a 20-year timeframe. This means if only 3% of the gas leaks, it can cause more warming than coal.¹ Furthermore, many European gas companies do not properly measure methane emissions in their supply chain and are not seizing the available opportunities to reduce these emissions.² We have no time for false solutions. This is why neither coal-to-gas nor cogeneration (CHP) should be included in the Taxonomy.

These unwarranted proposals are in direct contradiction with President von der Leyen's Green Deal and the EU ambition for higher climate targets. They would also undermine and discredit the EU's global climate leadership.

With other countries developing competing taxonomies for sustainable investments, the EU Taxonomy can be a global gold standard, but including fossil gas in the EU Taxonomy will lower global ambition and set a precedent that could result in other countries labelling a broad range of fossil fuel investments as sustainable.

¹ Climate Bonds Initiative, (2021), *The Hidden Emissions from Gas-Fired Power*. Available [here](#).

² Dezem, V., (2021), *European Gas Is a Long Way From Tackling Methane Leaks*. Available [here](#). Research by Deutsche Umwelthilfe, urgewald (2021), *Market survey: methane emissions from natural gas companies*. Available [here](#).

For all of the above reasons, these gas lobby-promoted proposals must not be countenanced. For the EU Taxonomy to have any sustainable value, the Commission's Delegated Act must be consistent with the independent Technical Expert Group's science-based recommendations.

We urge you to reconsider this change in direction and reject the proposal. The undersigned remain ready to urgently exchange with you on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Scientists:

[REDACTED], Queen's University Belfast (GB) and University College Dublin,

[REDACTED], University College Dublin (IE),

[REDACTED], Imperial College London (GB) and International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (AT),

[REDACTED], University College Dublin (IE),

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[REDACTED], IESE Business School (ES),

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[REDACTED], Cracow University of Economics (PL),

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[REDACTED], University of Bristol (GB),

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[REDACTED], Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LU),

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Financial Institutions/Associations

Folkesparekassen,

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Merkur Cooperative Bank, Denmark,

[REDACTED]

Association of Ethical Shareholders Germany

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Triodos Bank,

[REDACTED]

Triodos Investment Management,

[REDACTED]

ASN Bank

[REDACTED]

ASN Beleggingsfondsen

[REDACTED]

Eurosif - the European Sustainable Investment Forum,

[Redacted]

Civil Society

WWF European Policy Office,

[Redacted]

Climate Bonds Initiative,

[Redacted]

Climate Strategy & Partners,

[Redacted]

Transport & Environment,

[Redacted]

BirdLife Europe and Central Asia,

[Redacted]

E3G - Third Generation Environmentalism,

[Redacted]

Greenpeace European Unit,

[Redacted] ctor

European Environmental Bureau,

[Redacted]

Friends of the Earth Europe

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ClientEarth,

[Redacted]

Reclaim Finance,

[Redacted]

Bellona Europa,

[Redacted]

Climate & Company,

[Redacted]

Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe,

[Redacted]

Oil Change International,

[Redacted]

WeMove Europe,

[Redacted]

Avaaz,

[Redacted]

Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility,

[Redacted]

ActionAid International,

[Redacted]

NABU,

[Redacted]

ECOS,

[Redacted]

Alliance of Associations Polish Green

[Redacted]

Zelena akcija, Croatia,

[Redacted]

Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczne EKO-UNIA (Ecological Association EKO-UNIA),

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Environmental Planning and Education Network,

[Redacted]

Fundacja “Rozwój TAK - Odkrywki NIE”, Poland

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Pasaules Dabas Fonds,

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Institute for Circular Economy - Bulgaria,

[Redacted]

Humusz Szövetség,

[Redacted] r

Fondation Nicolas Hulot,

[Redacted]

Swedwatch,

Food & Water Action Europe,

Re-set: platform for socio-ecological transformation,

Umanotera, Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development,

BankTrack,

Bankwatch Romania,

Andy Gheorghiu Consulting,

Green Liberty,

Stowarzyszenie Pracownia na rzecz Wszystkich Istot,

Clean Air Action Group (Hungary),

Society for Sustainable Living (STUŽ),

Éghajlatvédelmi Szövetség / Hungarian Climate Alliance,

Reflex Környezetvédő Egyesület,

Foundation for Environment and Agriculture, Bulgaria,

Climate Action Coalition, Bulgaria,

Environmental Association “Za Zemiata”, Bulgaria

Institute for Circular Economy - Bulgaria,

Bluelink Foundation,

Socio-Ecological Union international,

350 Denmark,

ASUFIN - Asociación de Usuarios Financieros

CEE Bankwatch Network,

Deutsche Umwelthilfe

Fair Finance International,

Veblen Institute for Economic Reforms,

Centre for Transport and Energy,

VedvarendeEnergi,

Association of European Energy Research Centres (EUREC)

Global Witness

National Ecological Center of Ukraine,

Fair Finance Guide Netherlands (Eerlijke Geldwijzer),

Estonian Green Movement,

Energiaklub,



The Common Good,



Abibinsroma Foundation,



Debt Observatory in Globalisation (ODG),



Treeunion Netherlands,



Energy Watch Group,



Focus Association for Sustainable Development,



ShareAction,



Ocean Energy Europe,



Re:Common,



EKOenergy Ecolabel,



ZERO - Association for the Sustainability of the Earth System,



Réseau Action Climat France



Cittadini per l'Aria Onlus, Italy



Transport & Environment France,



Transport & Environment Italy,



Redazione emergenzaclimatica.it,

[Redacted]

Legambiente,

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SDGLabs.ai

[Redacted] n

Sciaena - Oceans Conservation Awareness,

[Redacted]

FairFin,

[Redacted]

Urgewald,

[Redacted] r

SumOfUs,

[Redacted]

50by40,

[Redacted]

Climate Safe Lending Network,

[Redacted]

Limity Jsme My,

[Redacted]

Ecologistas en Acción,

[Redacted]

Citizens' Climate Europe,

[Redacted]

Deutscher Naturschutzring - German League for Nature, Animal Protection and Environment,

[Redacted]

Climáximo,

[Redacted]

Ecologistes n'Aición d'Asturies,

[Redacted]

Rifondazione Comunista,

[Redacted]

Both ENDS,

Nodo Cantabria Plataforma por un Nuevo Modelo Energético,

Legalità per il clima,

Carbon Market Watch,

Climateka,

ECODES - Fundación Ecología y Desarrollo,

ActionAid Denmark,

Nesehnuti,

VCOE,

National Society of Conservationists, Hungary,

AnsvarligFremtid,

Rivers without Boundaries,

VšĮ "Žiedinė ekonomika"

Stop Waste Incineration, Protect the Environment,

Natuur & Milieu

Divestera AP-fonderna,

Biodiversity Conservation Center,

[REDACTED]

Défense Des Milieux Aquatiques,

[REDACTED]

Baltic Pipe Nej Tak (Block Baltic Pipe),

[REDACTED]

Limity Jsme My,

[REDACTED]

CSOP Veronica (Ecological Institute),

[REDACTED]

Pensioen Vergroeners (the Netherlands),

[REDACTED]

Negative Emissions Platform asbl,

[REDACTED]

Milieudefensie - Friends of the Earth Netherlands

[REDACTED]

Partnership for Policy Integrity,

[REDACTED]

Sí Se Puede Canarias,

[REDACTED]

Red Tree Heritage Institute,

[REDACTED]

Eco-Union,

[REDACTED]

Forum Ökologie & Papier,

[REDACTED]

Etika,

[REDACTED]

Terra Cypria - the Cyprus Conservation Foundation,

[REDACTED]

Crimean Republican Association Ekologiya i Mir,

[REDACTED]

GLOBAL 2000, Austria



BirdWatch Ireland



France Nature Environnement



International Rivers,



Crimean Republican Association Ekologiya i Mir,



2Celsius,



Naturfreunde Internationale,



Coastwatch,



CEPA, Slovakia,



The United Reformed Church Bellingham Catford & Lee Green,



Lithuanian Consumers Alliance,



South Worcestershire Methodist Church, UK,



Czech Climate Coalition,



Signatories: 226