

Brussels, 11/05/20

To the President of the European Commission
Mrs Ursula von der Leyen
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat
170. B-1049 Bruxelles/Brussel

To the Executive Vice-President for the European
Commission in charge of the European Green Deal
Mr Frans Timmermans
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat
170. B-1049 Bruxelles/Brussel

Dear Commission President von der Leyen,

Dear Vice-President Frans Timmermans,

As members of the European Parliament and the Green New Deal Intergroup, we want to express our great concern as regards the future of the European Green Deal.

We fear that, with the severity of the ongoing crisis, voices will be raised to advocate that we must give ecological and social goals less priority, in order to ensure economic recovery. We fear that this crisis will be used as an opportunity for those who want to make sure the « world after » remains the same as the world before the coronavirus.

This kind of communication has already started: we hear representatives of industry and private companies asking national governments and European institutions to amend, or postpone new legislative requirements on ecological matters, such as the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions or the protection of biodiversity. These voices also ask for a greater flexibility on the implementation of existing rules.

In addition, we note with great concern, that despite the Commission having ensured that gender equality is a priority, the Commission's work on the matter has been put on the backburner. This is alarming and of outmost concern since we know that gender equality is a prerequisite for sustainable development and the efficient management of climate change. In addition, the financial crisis caused by COVID-19 will in a socio-economic perspective disproportionately impact women more severely than men. This is a fact that further stresses the need for the Commission to take action in order to ensure a green and fair transition that leaves no woman behind.

We cannot repeat the mistakes that led us to this crisis in the first place. We now know there is a clear connection between the protection of wildlife habitats and the fight against the spread of epidemics. Moreover, reducing our efforts in the fight against climate change, inequality and environmental degradation would condemn us to face

a multiplication of dramatic episodes, of even greater magnitude than the one we are facing today.

For all these reasons, we cannot postpone or lower our objectives and ambitions for the European Green Deal. The current crisis demonstrates and reinforces the need for exactly such transformative initiatives. We are deeply concerned that these dimensions, which are essential to ensure a fair and sustainable future for all of us, are missing in the recovery plan.

As the highest-ranking Commission members, you have both stated, very clearly, that the implementation of the Green Deal would not be postponed. We, as Members of the European Parliament, will be vigilant to ensure that the Green Deal, and thereby our progress towards a fair and just transition, is not undermined by short-term economic thinking. We therefore urge you to ensure that the recovery plan is in line with and support the objectives of the European Green Deal.

Best Regards,