

## **TIME TO INVEST IN A HEALTHY FUTURE: TIME FOR A GREEN & JUST RECOVERY**

We call upon EU and national leaders to tackle the unprecedented crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic with unity, courage and innovation.

During this time of crisis, which is taking the lives of many and putting people's livelihoods at risk, it is essential that our leaders issue a strong response. We therefore welcome the plans to make substantial funds available to fight the health emergency, tackle unemployment, and support Europe's small businesses, but more will be needed.

Millions of Europeans long for an end to the lockdown, to be reunited with our family and loved ones, and to get back to work. But we do not want a return to business as usual, to an economic model which has exacerbated social inequalities, jeopardised our health, and driven our planet's climate and nature to the brink of collapse. Instead, we believe that now is the time to radically and rapidly make our economies greener, fairer, and more resilient against future shocks.

While the immediate priority is to address the public health emergency, public stimulus packages will have to be developed to relaunch the economy, create millions of jobs and support people - especially the most vulnerable - through this difficult time. How we respond to the crisis will determine whether we succeed or fail in the fight against climate change, the loss of nature, widespread pollution and inequality, and create health benefits for all. The EU and its governments must therefore demonstrate leadership and foresight by directing all public stimulus investments at accelerating the transition to a just, resilient and sustainable economy, boosting the European Green Deal to deliver even more.

We call upon political leaders to develop comprehensive EU and national Sustainable Recovery Plans. In particular, this means:

- Step up policy action against climate change and biodiversity loss at EU, national and international level, by strengthening and continuing the implementation of the targets, strategies and laws announced in the European Green Deal;
- In high-carbon and other potentially polluting sectors such as intensive agriculture, make support to companies conditional on their alignment with environmental and climate objectives. No bailouts should be given to unviable or polluting industries that have no future in tomorrow's economy. State aid, loans, subsidies and other direct or indirect support to companies must come with strict conditions, monitored and enforced by the EU, and focus on sustainable initiatives and the creation of sustainable jobs;
- The establishment of a sizable green recovery fund backed up by all available EU financial tools (including the MFF and its spending programmes, new funds, the use of the European Stability Mechanism and exploring so-called 'eurobonds'), to finance the

green and just recovery. These interventions must be based on established principles such as transparency, accountability and community-driven solutions.

- Public and private investment throughout the recovery should be guided by the EU's taxonomy to accelerate the shift from polluting into green sectors; similarly the European Investment Bank should bring its lending policies in line with the European Green Deal objectives by end 2020; In addition, sustainable finance policies should be accelerated and a taxonomy of unsustainable practices to be excluded agreed.
- All recovery plans must put people's well-being at the heart of the crisis response and deliver social benefits and protect workers' rights through a 'just transition for all'.

We support the many appeals for green recovery that have blossomed across Europe: By 13 EU governments, Members of the European Parliament, the Club of Rome, scientists, NGOs, 200 representatives from business and politics, energy companies, and many more. The European Council had also called on the EU to prepare an economic recovery plan that would integrate the green transition. To these voices we add ours.

Please do not let these calls go unanswered.

Signatories:

WWF European Policy Office  
Transport & Environment  
Birdlife Europe  
Friends of the Earth Europe  
CAN Europe  
Naturefriends International  
European Environmental Bureau  
Greenpeace EU  
Bankwatch  
Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)