

20 June 2022

To: Energy Ministers of EU Member States

Cc: Commission President, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, Commissioners for Environment, Energy, and the Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

We want you to be a champion advocate for decarbonising European buildings and bolstering the 2050 climate objectives. **Ahead of the Energy Council meeting on 27 June, the signatories of this letter ask you to stand up and support ambitious building requirements under the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).** We strongly believe your support can make a difference on energy savings and decarbonisation, both key requirements for achieving the aims of the European Green Deal, the Fit for 55 package, and the objectives of the REPower EU and EU Save Energy plans.

Buildings account for almost 40% of both the EU's annual energy consumption and carbon emissions. Energy and emissions go hand in hand, and both must decrease by at least 50% by 2030 to meet climate targets. Unfortunately, the current EPBD recast and national positions do not reflect this.

The recently announced REPower and EU Save plans rightly highlighted the need for “measures to boost building renovation” to accelerate the rollout of solutions. However, despite the recognised crucial role of renovation, little mention is made in the ongoing recast of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). **The EPBD, as the only EU regulation centred on building sustainability, should be a major driver for energy savings and decarbonisation.** Without your support, this will be a **missed opportunity for national built environments, economy, and climate.**

Requirements, standards, and incentives for low-carbon energy renovation must all increase in commitments, and Member State support for a common and ambitious set of measures will be crucial. The upcoming European Council Energy Working Party meeting on 28 June is set to be crucial in defining the role that energy renovation and Whole Life Carbon (WLC) will play in this decade and beyond. **XX organisations call for your support for the following priority measures in the revision of the EPBD and National Building Renovation Plans:**

1. **Common requirements for improving the energy performance of new and existing buildings** based on Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) and requirements for buildings operating with ‘zero emissions. A blueprint for MEPS rollout for the entire building stock coupled with a baseline ZEB energy consumption limits for Member States to build on and implement will require a combination of leadership at both the EU and member state levels to deliver marked progress by 2030.
2. **Fossil fuel phase-out.** The EPBD proposal should mirror proposals made by the REPower EU and EU Save plans regarding the phase-out of fossil fuel boilers in Europe. The EPBD should align regarding the phase-out of financial support to boilers, and go further by preventing the replacement of purely fossil fuel heating systems as part of energy renovations beyond 2025.
3. **Measuring decarbonisation and climate progress.** Tracking and limiting WLC or lifecycle GHG emissions as soon as possible is essential to understanding and limiting the carbon

emissions of buildings contributing to climate change. By encompassing operational and embodied emissions, WLC is relevant for new and existing buildings. Member States must therefore support requirements for harmonised measurement and reporting of WLC, at least, on new buildings by 2025 to enable setting up a building carbon budget, benchmarks and limits by 2030 towards climate neutral buildings before 2040.

4. **Promotion of levers for lifecycle decarbonisation.** Member States should support EU-level promotion of key levers for lifecycle decarbonisation. Therefore, in addition to targets and measures promoting the energy-efficiency first principle and low-carbon building systems (e.g., heat pumps), direct reference should be made to sufficiency, circularity, and the use of low carbon building and renovation solutions, including bio-based materials.

We hope to find your support in building a better, more sustainable future.

Yours sincerely,

Signatory organisations



Deutsche Umwelthilfe



Quercus
Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza



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