

OPEN LETTER:

# Joint CSO and business demand A “Clean” Industrial Deal that works for the planet and its people

To:  
The President of the European Commission  
Director-Generals of DG GROW, ENV, ENER, CLIMA, TRADE.  
Mr. Vesa Terävä, SecGen D.2, European Green Deal  
Chairs of ENVI and ITRE Committees, European Parliament

Brussels,  
6 November 2024

Dear President von der Leyen, Dear Director-Generals of the European Commission,  
Dear Honorable Member of European Parliament,

We, businesses and civil society organisations signatories of the [Industrial Blueprint](#), urge you to adopt a coherent Clean Industrial Deal that works for the planet and its people. Europe is threatened by a triple climate, biodiversity and pollution crisis. Industry’s sustainability and competitiveness cannot be secured by degrading further our climate, environment, health and society or disregarding public acceptance. We must therefore harness climate positive sustainable frontrunner solutions and raise the regulatory bar for industry to make the Clean Industrial Deal underpin the Green Deal.

As a coalition, we believe that the EU can be a global frontrunner in detoxification, de-pollution, decarbonization and restoration while keeping a thriving industry. We reaffirm that the EU should strive for competitiveness as a tool for protecting the planet and its people, not at the expense of human health or the environment.

**The new mandate of the European Commission should reaffirm the commitment to walking the talk of the Green Deal. The time has come for the EU to accelerate its transition to a climate-neutral, zero-pollution and nature-positive future for the benefit of planet, people and the economy.**

We believe in the power of partnership to foster innovation and drive positive change. The following key expectations for a successful and credible “Clean Industrial Deal” are highlighted as follows:

## **A holistic, zero-pollution aligned ambition. “Clean” is more than climate neutral**

- Recognise the strategic value of pollution prevention and remediation. The Clean Industrial Deal can live up to its name only if it embeds the Zero Pollution objective in its priorities, alongside climate goals. The definition of “strategic sectors” or “clean tech” should be aligned with planetary boundaries, meet sustainable production and consumption objectives and respect EU Pillars for Social Rights and just transition principles
- Prioritise the implementation of circular economy strategies aiming at chemical, material and energy sufficiency and efficiency, substitution of critical or carbon-intensive materials with low-carbon and natural alternatives, measures to lower the need for raw materials, energy and other feedstocks and ensure detoxified material cycles especially for PFAS-free solutions.
- Implement a “Toxic-Free and Zero-Pollution Compatibility Check” for new or revised pieces of legislation, state aids and subsidies. The focus shall remain on the prevention of harmful consequences of industrial activities and the restoration of inherited environmental damages.
- Ensure policy coherence with the upcoming Water Resilience Strategy by incorporating water resilience checks into all support schemes and into industrial planning. An economic activity that depletes water resources today risks becoming a stranded asset tomorrow.

**Focus on just and fair transition in the wider public interest**

- Strong social and environmental conditionalities on all support schemes, incl. financial support schemes.
- Keep workers and local communities at the centre of industrial transformation processes.
- Accelerate the phase out of fossil fuels and the most harmful chemicals, particularly all forms of subsidies not aimed at their phase out, and in return accelerate the phase in of nature positive renewable energies and non-harmful chemical alternatives to improve air, soil and water quality and tackle the climate, pollution and biodiversity crises at once.
- Polluting companies should be held accountable for the costs of pollution prevention at source and compensation, exhaust polluter pays type funds e.g. EU ETS innovation fund.
- Establish a long-term EU public investment fund to support a green and socially just industrial transformation, using a science and evidence-based approach, to boost confidence in the transition and strengthen economic and social cohesion by ensuring that governments can make long-term investments.

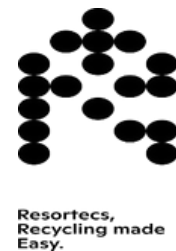
**User-friendly tools to enable tracking of progress delivery. Public accountability.**

Transparency, public participation, civil and social dialogue are key to strengthening social acceptance and justice. Fair and science-based rules are pivotal to guide investments and ensure predictability, while transparency and public participation are at the basis of public acceptance and buy-in of any industrial operation.

- Make digital safety information, permitting and digital reporting the norm; provide for public, user friendly tools to enable tracking of progress to deliver on the climate neutrality, toxic-free and zero-pollution ambitions by all actors.
- Ensure efficient permitting and authorisation procedures through a substantial increase of dedicated staff in the relevant public authorities and pre-permitting consultations and deliberations.
- Use robust data and scientific evidence for effective policymaking to ensure that information on potential hazards and substances of concern are made available to value chains.

We look forward to exchange further with you on the above stated key expectations on the upcoming “Clean Industrial Deal” as well as on concrete policy solutions. Contact: [sustainableindustry@eeb.org](mailto:sustainableindustry@eeb.org)

Signed,



Discover our vision for a prosperous and sustainable industrial future.  
Explore our blueprint here:

