

Open Letter and Demands to EU and Global Leaders

Written by Luisa Neubauer, Greta Thunberg, Anuna de Wever van der Heyden, and Adélaïde Charlier published on July 16, 2020

Here are our demands of this open letter:

These are some first steps, essential to our chance of avoiding a climate- and ecological disaster.

- Effective immediately, halt all investments in fossil fuel exploration and extraction, immediately end all fossil fuel subsidies and immediately and completely divest from fossil fuels.
- EU member states must advocate to make ecocide an international crime at the International Criminal Court.
- Include total emissions in all figures and targets, including consumption index, international aviation and shipping.
- Starting today – establish annual, binding carbon budgets based on the current best available science and the IPCC's budget which gives us a 66% chance of limiting the global temperature rise to below 1.5 °C. They need to include the global aspect of equity, tipping points and feedback loops and shouldn't depend on assumptions of possible future negative emissions technologies.
- Safeguard and protect democracy.
- Design climate policies that protect workers and the most vulnerable and reduce all forms of inequality: economic, racial and gender.
- Treat the climate- and ecological emergency like an emergency.

We understand and know very well that the world is complicated and that what we are asking for may not be easy. The changes necessary to safeguard humanity may seem very unrealistic. But it is much more unrealistic to believe that our society would be able to survive the global heating we're heading for, as well as other disastrous ecological consequences of today's business as usual

The last few months the world has watched with horror how the COVID-19 pandemic has hit people all over the globe. **During this tragedy, we are seeing how many – not all – world leaders and people around the world stepped up and acted for the greater good of society.**

It is now clearer than ever that the climate crisis has never once been treated as a crisis, neither from the politicians, media, business, nor finance. And the longer we keep pretending that we are on a reliable path to lower emissions and that the actions required to avoid a climate disaster are available within today's system – or for that matter that we can solve a crisis without treating it like one – the more precious time we will lose.

There is one other thing that has become clearer than ever: Climate and environmental justice can not be achieved as long as we continue to ignore and look away from the social and racial injustices and oppression that have laid the foundations of our modern world. The fight for justice and equity is universal. Whether it is the fight for social, racial, climate or environmental justice, gender equality, democracy, human-, indigenous peoples'- LGBTQ- and animal rights, freedom of speech and press, or the fight for a balanced, wellbeing, functioning life supporting system. If we don't have equality, we have nothing. We don't have to choose, and divide ourselves over which crisis or issue we should prioritize, because it is all interconnected.

When you signed the Paris Agreement the EU nations committed to leading the way. The EU has the economic and political possibility to do so, therefore it is our moral responsibility. And now you need to actually deliver on your promises.

Net zero emissions by 2050 for the EU – as well as for other financially fortunate parts of the world – equals surrender. This target is based on a carbon budget that only gives a 50 percent chance of limiting the global heating below 1,5°C. That is just a statistical flip of a coin which doesn't even include some of the key factors, such as the global aspect of equity, most

tipping points and feedback loops, as well as already built in additional warming hidden by toxic air pollution. So in reality it is much less than a 50% chance.

And distant emission targets will mean nothing if we just continue to ignore the carbon budget – which applies for today, not a faraway future.

Talking about a “Next Generation EU” investment program while continuing to ignore the climate crisis and the full scientific picture is a betrayal to all “next generations”.

Science doesn't tell us exactly what to do. But it provides us with information for us to study and evaluate. It's up to us to connect the dots. Well, we have done our homework and we will not accept your extremely irresponsible gamble. The insufficient 50% budget means giving up. And that is simply not an option to us.

Of course we welcome sustainable investments and policies, but you must not for one second believe that what you have discussed so far will be even close to enough. We need to face the full picture. We are facing an existential crisis, and this is a crisis that we can not buy, build, or invest our way out of. **Aiming to ‘recover’ an economic system that inherently fuels the climate crisis in order to finance climate action is just as absurd as it sounds.** Our current system is not ‘broken’ – the system is doing exactly what it's supposed and designed to be doing. It can no longer be ‘fixed’. We need a new system.

The race to safeguard future living conditions for life on Earth as we know it needs to start today. Not in a few years, but now. And this needs to include a science based pathway which gives us the best possible odds to limit the global average temperature rise to below 1.5 °C. **We need to end the ongoing wrecking, exploitation and destruction of our life supporting systems and move towards a fully decarbonised economy that centres around the wellbeing of all people as well as the natural world.**

If all countries were to actually go through with the emission reductions they have set as goals, we would still be heading for a catastrophic global temperature rise of at least 3-4°C. **The people in power today have so far practically already given up on the possibility of handing over a decent future for coming generations.** They have given up without even trying.

The world's planned fossil fuel production by the year 2030 accounts for 120% more than what would be consistent with the 1,5° target. It just doesn't add up. When you read the IPCC SR1.5 Report and the UNEP Production Gap Report, as well as what you have actually signed up for in the Paris Agreement, **even a child can see that the climate and ecological crisis cannot be solved within today's system.**

That's no longer an opinion, it's a fact based on the current best available science.

Because if we are to avoid a climate catastrophe we have to make it possible to tear up contracts and abandon existing deals and agreements, on a scale we can't even begin to imagine today. And those types of actions are not politically, economically or legally possible within today's system.

In order to limit global heating to 1,5 degrees, the upcoming months and years are crucial. The clock is ticking. Doing your best is no longer good enough. You must now do the seemingly impossible.

And even though you might have the option of ignoring the climate crisis, that is not an option for us – for your children. Right now, there is no place on earth where children face a future in a safe environment. This is and will be very much a reality for the rest of our lives. We ask you to face the climate emergency.

This letter has been signed by the following people, along with thousands of activists and citizens, and hundreds of scientists.

- **Malala Yousafzai**, Activist, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Founder Malala Fund
- **Billie Eilish**, Artist and Activist
- **Leonardo DiCaprio**, Actor
- **Priyanka Chopra Jonas**, Actor, Producer, Activist, Unicef Goodwill Ambassador
- **Opal Tometi**, Human Rights Activist, Writer and Co-Founder of Black Lives Matter
- **Shawn Mendes**, Artist
- **Michael Mann**, Distinguished Professor, Penn State University and Member of the National Academy of Sciences
- **Coldplay**

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- **Nadia Murad**, Nobel Peace Laureate and Human Rights Activist
- **Ben Stiller**, Actor, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador
- **Sônia Guajajara**, Indigenous leadership, Executive Coordinator of APIB (Brazil's Indigenous People Articulation)
- **Mark Ruffalo**, Actor, Justice Activist
- **Greenpeace**
- **Hans Joachim Schellnhuber**, Atmospheric Physicist and Founding Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research Scientist
- **Emma Thompson**, Actor
- **Naomi Klein**, Author, Rutgers University
- **Margaret Atwood**, Author
- **Jake Gyllenhaal**, Actor
- **Paul Rudd**, Actor
- **Chris Evans**, Actor
- **PETA**
- **Kevin Anderson**, Professor of Energy and Climate Change, University of Manchester
- **Annie Lennox** OBE, Singer, Songwriter, Activist
- **Ellie Goulding**, Artist
- **Baltasar Garzón**, lawyer (former Judge of the National Court of Spain). President of the International Baltasar Garzón Foundation, FIBGAR
- **Jojo Mehta**, Co-Founder, Stop Ecocide
- **Valérie Cabanes**, international law expert, End Ecocide on Earth
- **Carlos Nobre**, Earth System Scientist, University of São Paulo
- **Russel Crowe**, Actor
- **Kumi Naidoo**, Global Ambassador of Africans Rising for Justice, Peace & Dignity
- **Stefan Rahmstorf**, Professor of Physics of the Oceans at Potsdam University
- **Bill McKibben**, Author and Founder 350.org
- **Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim**, Indigenous Peoples representative and Coordinator of the Indigenous Women and Peoples' Association of Chad
- **Joaquin Phoenix**, Actor, Environmentalist, Animal Rights Activist, Producer
- **The 1975**
- **Daniel Ellsberg**, US Economist, Human Rights Activist and Right Livelihood Award Laureate

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- **Björk**, Artist
- **Prof. Dr. Maja Göpel**, Secretary General German Advisory Council Global Change
- **Juliette Binoche**, Actor
- **350.org**
- **Jameela Jamil**, Actor, Founder of I Weigh
- **David Hogg**, Co-Founder of March For Our Lives
- **George Monbiot**, Writer and Activist
- **Maggie Gyllenhaal**, Actor
- **Susan Sarandon**, Actor
- **Nicolas Hulot**, Author and Former Minister for the Ecological and Solidary Transition of France
- **Sandrine Dixon-Declève**, Co-President The Club of Rome
- **Simon McBurney OBE**, Director
- **Dr. Vandana Shiva**, Indian Scholar and environmental activist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Jennifer Morgan**, Executive Director Greenpeace International
- **Beatrice Fihn**, Executive Director of International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- **Chrissy Hynde**, Artist
- **Tasneem Essop**, Executive Director of CAN International
- **Varshini Prakash**, Cofounder and Executive Director, Sunrise Movement
- **Dallas Goldtooth**, Keep it in the Ground Campaigner, Indigenous Environmental Network
- **Sabine Gabrysch**, Professor of Climate and Health at Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
- **Professor Gail Whiteman**, Executive Director, Arctic Basecamp
- **Winona LaDuke**, Economist, Author and Co-Founder of Honor the Earth
- **Lily Cole**, human being
- **Rajiv Joshi**, Community Organiser & Founder, Bridging Ventures
- **David Suzuki**, Academic and Activist
- **Isak Stoddard**, CEMUS Uppsala University
- **Alyn Ware**, Peace Activist and Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Mercy For Animals**
- **Farhana Yamin**, lawyer and climate activist, Think & Do Camden

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- **Peter Kalmus**, Data Scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory
- **Sofia Sprechmann Sineiro**, Secretary General of CARE International
- **Dr. Ruchama Marton**, Founder and President of Physicians for Human Rights, Right Livelihood Laureate
- **Raoul Martínez**, Author
- **János Vargha**, Hungarian Biologist and Photographer, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Roger Waters**, Artist
- **Jane Fonda**, Academy Award-winning actor, founder of Fire Drill Fridays
- **Prof. Dr. Raúl A. Montenegro**, President of Fundación para la defensa del ambiente, Argentina, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Kate Raworth**, Author Doughnut Economics, University of Oxford
- **Stella McCartney**, Designer
- **Prof. Dr. Anwar Fazal**, Director of the Right Livelihood College, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Peter Sarsgaard**, Actor
- **Igor Levit**, Pianist
- **Sigrid**, Artist
- **András Biró**, Hungarian Journalist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Francesca Martinez**, Comedian
- **Nnimmo Bassey**, Nigerian Architect, Health of Mother Earth Foundation and Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Rina Sawayama**, Artist
- **Angie Zelter**, Trident Ploughshares, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Volker Quaschnig**, Engineer and Professor on Renewable Energy, Co-Founder of Scientist for Future
- **Beabadoobee**, Artist
- **Dr. Monika Hauser**, Founder of Medica Mondiale, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Tokatawin Iron Eyes**, Earth Guardians, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation
- **Rajiv Joshi**, Founder Bridging Ventures
- **Dr. Sima Samar**, Chairperson Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Laurie Anderson**, Artist

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- **Mike Skinner**, Artist
- **Basil Fernando**, Asian Human Rights Commission, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Jon Hopkins**, Artist
- **Martín von Hildebrand**, Founder and Director of Fundación GAIA Amazonas, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Brian Eno**, Music Producer
- **Frances Moore Lappé**, Co-Founder Small Planet Institute, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **March For Science**
- **Arizona Muse**, model
- **Sarah Shanley Hope**, Executive Director The Solutions Project
- **Tony Rinaudo**, Agronomist, World Vision, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Rania Batrice**, March For Science, Interim Executive Director
- **Dr. Lucky Tran**, March For Science, Managing Director
- **Sinéad Gleeson**, Author
- **Hunter Lovins**, Natural Capitalism Solutions, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Alejandro Sanz**, musician, singer and composer, Spain
- **Dr. Paul F. Walker**, Director, Environmental Security and Sustainability, Green Cross International, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Mercy For Animals**
- **Mohamed Adow**, Founder and Director of Power Shift Africa
- **Warren Ellis**, Author, Creator
- **Prof. Dr. Stefanie Engel**, Environmental Economist
- **Ludovico Einaudi**, Pianist and composer
- **David Byrne**, Artist
- **Udo Lindenberg**, Musician
- **Jenny Ricks**, Fight inequality alliance Global Convenor
- **GRAIN**, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Volker Bertelmann (Hauschka)**, Artist
- **Ayana Elizabeth Johnson**, Ph.D., scientist and writer, Urban Ocean Lab
- **International Baby Food Action Network**, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Dolores Huerta**, President and Founder of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, Co-Founder of the United Farm Workers

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- **Olivier De Schutter** Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human right at the United Nation
- **Pat Mooney**, Founder ETC Group, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Extinction Rebellion**
- **Helen Mack Chang**, Fundación Myrna Mack, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Siila Watt-Cloutier**, Canadian Inuit Human Rights and Environmental Activist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Dr. Maude Barlow**, National Chairperson, Council of Canadians, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Walden Bello**, Filipino Human Rights and Environmental Campaigner, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **John F C Turner**, British Architect, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Juan Pablo Orrego**, President, Ecosistemas, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Nicanor Perlas**, Center for Alternative Development Initiatives, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Fred Gibson**, producer
- **Rainn Wilson**, Actor
- **Prof. Dr. Theo van Boven**, Dutch Human Rights Activist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Bianca Jagger, Founder**, President and Chief Executive, Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Sam Fender**, Artist
- **Jacqueline Moudeina**, Chadian Laywer and Human Rights Activist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Khadija Ismayilova**, Azerbaijani Investigative Journalist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Alice Tepper Marlin**, President and Founder, Social Accountability International, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Ben Howard**, Artist
- **Roger de Weck**, Author and Visiting Professor at the College of Europe
- **Prof. Dr. Swati Banerjee**, Professor and Chairperson, Centre for Livelihoods and Social Innovation (CLSI), School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
- **Pierre Ozer**, scientist, teacher at ULiege Belgium
- **Marie Esmeralda**, Princess of Belgium, activist

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- **Dr. Friederike E. L. Otto**, Acting Director Environmental Change Institute
- **Professor Raveendran**, Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Margaret Klein Salamon**, PhD, Author of Facing the Climate Emergency and Founder, The Climate Mobilization
- **Herbert Grönemeyer**, Artist
- **Aurélien Barrau**, astrophysicien
- **Sulak Sivaraksa**, Founder and Director, Sathirakoses-Nagapradeepa Foundation, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Aminatou Haidar**, Sahrawi human rights activist, Right Livelihood Award Laureate
- **Jeremy Thomas CBE**, Film Producer

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