

To: Pascal Canfin, Bas Eickhout, Cesar Luena, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Anja Hazekamp



Re: Wopke Hoekstra's nomination

Dear members of the ENVI Committee,

Extreme weather has hit our homes hard across Europe this summer. Ravaging wildfires, flash floods, and drought have caused devastation as well as integral damage to our food and water systems. These events serve as a strong reminder of the urgent need to accelerate our efforts in combating climate change.

At this important moment in time, European Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen has nominated Dutch Christian Democrat Wopke Hoekstra as new climate commissioner, taking over from Frans Timmermans.

We believe Mr. Hoekstra is not the right person for this crucial position. Not only does he lack expertise and experience in dealing with climate change issues, he also has a history of aligning very closely with fossil fuel interests.

Specifically, we have the following concerns about Mr. Hoekstra:

- During his private and political career of over 20 years, he has no track record of individually promoting or pushing for policies and measures that contribute to solving the climate crisis. He also has no experience in international climate negotiations.
- Instead of that, he has a track record of working for over 15 years, between 2002 and 2017, with corporations that promote fossil fuel interests.
- While being minister of Finance in the Netherlands, he pleaded against rapidly ending gas exploitation in Groningen, despite the massive negative impacts gas drilling had on hundreds of thousands of citizens. This was reported in a recent Dutch parliamentary inquiry into the gas debacle.
- Earlier this year, Hoekstra, as leader of his political party, personally blocked government plans for reducing nitrogen emissions that were aiming to bring Dutch policy measures in line with EU legislation on nature protection.
- As Finance minister he provided 3.4 billion EUR in support to aviation company KLM during COVID19, without attaching any environmental, climate or other conditions to this package.

We strongly believe that, with such a track record, Mr. Hoekstra cannot lead the EU on climate policies. We therefore are asking you **not to accept Mr. Hoekstra's nomination and give a strong recommendation to President Von Der Leyen that Mr. Hoekstra can not be appointed as climate commissioner.**

If we want to prevent and mitigate climate disasters in the future, it is crucial that governments free themselves from the influence of the fossil fuel industry by introducing and

implementing a conflict-of-interest framework. Making a person with strong and long-time links with oil and gas interests responsible for EU climate policies is the wrong step.

Yours sincerely,

Chloé Mikolajczak

Coordinator of the Fossil free politics campaign

On behalf of the other members of the Fossil Free Politics coalition (Corporate Europe Observatory, Food and Water Action Europe, Friends of the Earth Europe, Global Witness and Greenpeace).

Co-signed by 44 organisations:

350.org (International)

Action Aid International (International)

Attac Austria (Austria)

Attac France (France)

BUNDjugend - Young friends of the Earth Germany (Germany)

CEE Bankwatch Network (Belgium)

Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment (CECIC) (Uganda)

Common Weal (UK)

Earth Action Inc (USA)

Enginyeria sense Frontereres (Spain)

Environmental Association Za Zemiata - Friends of the Earth Bulgaria (Bulgaria)

Estonian Green Movement - Friends of the Earth Estonia (Estonia)

Focus (Slovenia)

Fossil Free Parliament (UK)

Fossil Free Sweden (Sweden)

Fracking Free Clare (UK)

Fresh Eyes (UK)

Friends of the Earth Malta (Malta)

Friends of the Earth International (International)

Friends of the Earth Hungary (Hungary)

Friends of the Earth Spain (Spain)

Friends of the Earth US (USA)

Fundacja Otwarty Plan (Poland)

Global Justice Now (UK)

Grandmothers act to save the planet (International)

Green Liberty (Latvia)

International Society of Doctors for Environment-ISDE (Italy)

Jordens Vanner - Friends of the Earth Sweden (Sweden)

La Ruta del Clima (Spain)

Lurraren Semealabak

Mouvement Ecologique (Luxembourg)

Naturefriends Greece (Greece)

NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark (Denmark)

Polish Institute for Human Rights and Business (Poland)

Rise for Climate Belgium (Belgium)

RSEEO-BENIN (Benin)

Sherpa (France)
South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (South Africa)
The Energy Poverty Research Initiative (UK)
Udapt (Netherlands)
Urgewald (Germany)
WeMove (Europe)
We Smell Gas (International)
Working Group Food Justice (International)
Zelena akcija/FoE Croatia (Croatia)