To: Maroš Šefčovič - Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Energy Union

Concerning: Communication on the Energy Union with a forward-looking Climate Change Policy

Brussels, 18th February 2015

Dear Vice-President Šefčovič,

On behalf of the European Environmental Bureau, I want to thank you for seeing our delegation of the Green 10 in the start of this month and discussing our common cause in the new Energy Union. We share your conviction that the 'time is ripe' for a green energy for future generations.

We welcome your support for the case of energy efficiency and we fully support this initiative. **Efficiency first** is the consistent, most cost effective and quickest way fight to energy poverty in Europe. A warm home, thanks to sealed windows and efficient heating, symbolises the progress European citizens deserve. We are convinced it is important to include the ‘efficiency first’ concept by name in the Energy Union communication to reach out to people and lay the path for businesses to follow.

At the same time, we are concerned that under a heading of energy security Europe will lock itself into fossil-based energy infrastructure that will leave Europe with stranded investments and a failed climate policy. Shale gas, nuclear power plants and new coal involve high environmental risks, require high upfront investments and lack the support from European citizens. **Efficiency first**, rolled out through effective actions, provides a more effective way to tackle the problem of energy security without creating a further set of problems. We have to ensure a fair economic comparison between energy supply and energy efficiency. This is needed to avoid silos, integrate the various dimensions of the Energy Union and prioritise investments in energy efficiency where they create jobs, improve the air quality and make most economic sense.

Our dependency on fossil fuels poses an economic but also an environmental problem. Unless we moderate our energy demand and limit global climate change, the losses and costs to our environment, our biodiversity, and our climate will cause a net welfare loss of 1.8% of the current GDP. **Efficiency first** is the right message to address economic, social and environmental concerns from stakeholders across Europe.

To make **efficiency first** matter, a strong, binding governance mechanism is needed in addition to the existing legislation. We need to review the current policies with their consistency with staying below

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1 Half or more of Europeans are worried about air pollution (56%), water pollution (50 %) and climate change (50%) (Special Eurobarometer 416 & Special Eurobarometer 409)
2 In case of a global temperature increases by 3.5°C, climate damages in the EU could amount to at least €190 billion, a net welfare loss of 1.8% of its current GDP (JRC 2014 Climate Impacts in Europe. The JRC PESETA II Project)
3 € 110 bn net saving on consumer expenditure (VHK Ecodesign impact accounting for EC 2014)
4 Ecodesign, Energy Labelling, Energy Star and Tyre Labelling measures have created 0.8 million extra direct jobs for industry, wholesale and retail sector (VHK for EC 2014)
5 320 Mt CO2 equivalent (7% of 2010 EU-total) less greenhouse gas emissions
a 2°C global temperature rise. This means to reassess the viability of strengthened 2030 targets for a 40% end-use-savings, domestic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions of at least 60% and at least 45% of energy coming from sustainable renewable energy in the upcoming Communication.

If Europe were to opt for vague messages, a weak, light-touch governance and insufficient targets, we would fail to reach out to people, deliver on our long-term climate and energy goals and face losses in many environmental areas.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these points.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Wates
Secretary General