

Mr. José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1000 Brussels

December 16, 2013

Re: EU Fuel Quality Directive and unconventional fossil fuels

Dear President Barroso,

We are scientists involved in many different areas of climate science. We write to you to recommend that EU policies recognise and account for higher emissions from production of unconventional fossil fuels. Such policies will encourage investments in low-carbon fuels and technologies consistent with the world's limited carbon budget and will encourage companies and states to leave the most carbon-intensive fossil fuels in the ground.

We live in an era during which it has become clear that we cannot burn all of the fossil fuels without causing dangerous climate change, as the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has made clear. Instead, we must leave a substantial amount of the fossil fuels in the ground and move to cleaner sources of energy. Policy-makers now have a paramount responsibility to ensure that happens. Your decisions today will affect the kind of planet future generations will inherit.

We understand the Commission is currently considering a new proposal on the implementation of the 2009 EU Fuel Quality Directive (FQD). This law set an emissions reduction target and gave the European Commission a legislative mandate to develop a methodology to account for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the production of fossil fuels. Fossil fuels currently represent 95% of the EU's fuel consumption.

The Commission's 2011 proposal to implement the requirements for fossil fuels used a scientifically sound approach to label the significant variations in the GHG intensity of different fossil fuel "feedstocks", including higher values for fuels such as coal-to-liquid, tar sands, oil shale and gas-to-liquid. Since the FQD requires companies to report on the GHG emissions of the fuels that they place on the European market, using these different emission values, the FQD will for the first time hold the oil industry accountable for the carbon emitted during production of the fuels they sell on the European market. This accountability will send a much needed signal to oil suppliers to invest in cleaner fuels. We therefore urge you to continue with the implementation based on this scientific approach.

We are at a time in history when it is still possible to minimise the effects of climate change by making fossil fuels pay their full costs to society and thus accelerate a shift to cleaner energy. The consequences of your decision on the FQD as one part of Europe's climate actions will reach far beyond Europe's borders. We urge you to uphold the scientifically sound proposal in order to ensure Europe's climate legislation is fully implemented and that Europe maintains its leadership on climate action.

Yours sincerely,

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