

To: European Climate Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra

CC: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

CC: European Commissioner Teresa Ribera

Dear European Climate Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra,

Subject: Supporting an Accountability Framework to protect against undue influence of polluters at UNFCCC SB62 in Bonn, Germany

We are writing to follow up with you after our letter from 4 November 2024¹ concerning the undue influence of the fossil fuel industry at the UN climate talks, and how we can address the privileged, unregulated access they are currently granted through introducing an Accountability Framework, drawing on similar UN precedents such as Art. 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control protocol².

It was very positive to hear your support for the Accountability Framework when questioned by MEPs at your confirmation hearing last year.³ The Framework proposal⁴ is the result of an unprecedented cross-constituency collaboration between climate NGOs, trade unions, women and gender and youth groups who participate in the climate talks.

For too long those who profit from maintaining the current fossil fueled system have stopped, delayed or watered down actions to halt global heating⁵. Their voices have dominated the conversation, including at the UN climate talks.

The first steps to identify such voices have already been taken by the UNFCCC secretariat, introducing stronger participant disclosure requirements,⁶ but the upcoming climate talks in Bonn this June are a good opportunity to progress further on an Accountability Framework ahead of COP30 in November in Belém, Brazil.

In Belém, governments will gather once more to try and further the goals agreed under the Paris Agreement and limit global temperature rises to 1.5° C. It is again a chance for the EU to show global leadership and re-establish the credibility of its commitment to transition away from fossil fuels.

¹ <https://fossilfreepolitics.org/news/112-orgs-tell-hoekstra-not-to-bring-fossil-fuel-lobbyists-to-cop29/>

² <https://fctc.who.int/resources/publications/m/item/guidelines-for-implementation-of-article-5.3>

³ "If there's more that the European Union can do, then I would love to push it."

https://hearings.elections.europa.eu/documents/hoekstra/hoekstra_verbatimreporthearing-original.pdf

⁴ https://corporateaccountability.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Joint-civil-society-submission-on-COI-Aug-17-2022_.pdf

⁵ <https://fossilfreepolitics.org/news/report-big-oil-and-gas-buying-influence-in-brussels/>

⁶ <https://kickbigpollutersout.org/articles/release-un-climate-treaty-participants-required-disclose-industry-ties>

While the European Commission could claim to not bring any fossil fuel executives to COP29, EU Member States still brought more than 113 fossil fuel lobbyists to Baku on their national delegations, according to analysis by Fossil Free Politics⁷ as part of the international Kick Big Polluters Out⁸ campaign. What's more, industry executives were in Azerbaijan to sign new gas deals rather than announce any fossil fuel phase outs.⁹

If the EU is serious about leading on tackling climate change and the phase out of fossil fuel energy, it should play an active role in curbing the fossil fuel industry's undue influence on this year's climate negotiations in Bonn and Belém.

As European Climate Commissioner, we also ask that you support measures that protect public policy making against the influence of fossil fuel lobbyists in the EU. This should be part of a broader EU-level conflict of interest framework.

We, the undersigned ask that you:

1. **Proactively publicly call for the UNFCCC to create an Accountability Framework** to protect climate talks from the undue influence of fossil fuel interests, to agree a definition of "conflicts of interest" at Bonn, and to strengthen disclosure requirements so that all those participating in the talks have to declare their conflicts of interest prior to attendance.¹⁰
2. **Build on the positive precedent last year, where the official EU delegation did not bring any fossil fuel lobbyist to COP29** in line with our call to commit to not providing registration at UN climate talks for executives or lobbyists of fossil fuel corporations, backed by 112 organisations¹¹. The EU should not be bringing oil and gas lobbyists to COP30 or any future COP.
3. **Support an EU-level conflict of interest framework** to protect European decision-making from the undue influence of the fossil fuel industry.

The Fossil Free Politics coalition, made up of more than 200 organisations in Europe and around the world, would be happy to discuss the matter further before COP30, and will follow up with your office once you are back from Belém.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Stewart, Fossil Free Politics coordinator, on behalf of:

⁷ <https://fossilfreepolitics.org/news/europe-brings-gas-lobbyists-to-cop29-to-strike-deals/>

⁸ <https://kickbigpollutersout.org/>

⁹ <https://fossilfreepolitics.org/news/europe-brings-gas-lobbyists-to-cop29-to-strike-deals/>

¹⁰ https://corporateaccountability.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Joint-civil-society-submission-on-COI-Aug-17-2022_.pdf

¹¹ <https://fossilfreepolitics.org/news/112-orgs-tell-hoekstra-not-to-bring-fossil-fuel-lobbyists-to-cop29>

- 350.org
- A Sud - Ecologia e Cooperazione APS
- Andy Gheorghiu Consulting
- Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)
- Bond Beter Leefmilieu
- Campagna Nazionale Per il Clima Fuori dal Fossile
- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
- CEE Bankwatch Network
- Center for International Environmental Law
- Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment & Management (CECIC)
- Clean Energy Action
- Climate Clock
- Co-ordination Office of the Austrian Bishops' Conference for International Development and Mission (KOO)
- Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN)
- Common Weal
- Corporate Accountability
- Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
- Dream Tank
- EKOenergy ecolabel
- Electra Energy
- Emergenzaclimatica.it
- Empower Our Future
- Engineering Without Borders
- Food & Water Action Europe (FWAE)
- Forum Ambientalista
- Fossil Free Parliament
- Fossil Free Politics
- Friends of the Earth Europe
- Friends of the Earth Ghana
- Friends of the Earth International
- Friends of the Earth Malta
- Global Witness
- Greenpeace
- Hawkmoth
- Indigenous Environmental Network
- Innovation pour le Développement et la Protection de l'Environnement
- Les Amis de la Terre France
- LIFE eV
- Limity jsme my
- Mothers Rise Up
- Mouvement écologique
- Movimento No TAP/SNAM Brindisi
- National Society of Conservationists - Friends of the Earth Hungary
- Naturefriends Greece
- NTS Group
- Observatori DESCA
- Oil Change International
- PowerShift e.V.
- Reacción Climática
- ReCommon
- SOMO
- South Durban Community Environmental Alliance
- Super Cap LLC
- The Palestinian Institute for Climate Strategy (PICS)
- Transnational Institute
- Transparency International
- Trócaire
- Urgewald
- WhatNext?
- World Future Council