



Brussels, March 10th, 2023

Dear Chancellor Scholz,  
Dear Vice-Chancellor Habeck,

We, a coalition of some of the largest environmental organisations and networks active at the EU level are writing with concern regarding the recent political backpedalling and confusion created by the German government that has led to the postponement of the Council vote on the new CO2 standards for cars and vans.

We were surprised to read about the change in position of the German government concerning the deal reached with the European Parliament. The text had already been supported by the German government during the Coreper meeting last November.

The combustion engine phase-out is absolutely necessary to align Europe's road transport sector with Europe's climate goals. Without it, the EU risks fatally undermining its own climate ambitions. Especially in the current times when the US joins China in overtaking Europe in the clean tech race, investment certainty on the future of the automotive industry in Europe is key. Yet your government is taking Europe hostage, now.

At stake is not just the single most important law to tackle emissions from road transport, but the credibility of the EU's democratic and legislative norms. Reneging on a deal - negotiated by the Council and Parliament in good faith - at such a late stage in the legislative process risks creating a dangerous precedent for ongoing and future negotiations. If one government can do that, every government will feel empowered to undermine the democratic EU decision-making process.

This is not about e-fuels. Compromises on that have been made, including the phase out date, a review in 2026 and a recital to look into how they can be dealt with outside this regulation. This is about the credibility of and commitment to the European Green Deal. The Energy transition will be challenging, it will require helping people, companies and workers. But the only way to make it a success is to set clear goals and remain united on European climate targets.

We call on you to stand firm and confirm the support of your government for the existing agreement without further delay.

Birdlife Europe and Central Asia  
CEE Bankwatch Network  
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)  
Friends of the Earth Europe  
Greenpeace  
Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)  
Naturefriends International (NFI)  
Transport & Environment (T&E)  
WWF European Policy Office