

PLEASE SIGN ON TO THIS STATEMENT BY FILLING IN THE TABLE AT THE BOTTOM - deadline: 15 March

No to hydrogen greenwashing of fossil gas infrastructure on PCI & PMI List Joint Statement to EU Commission

Dear Commissioners Ms Kadri Simson and Mr Frans Timmermans,
Dear Director-General Ms Ditte Juul-Jørgensen,
Dear Ms Catharina Sikow-Magny and Mr Joachim Balke,

We are contacting you concerning the Union List of Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) and Projects of Mutual Interest (PMIs) which you are currently drafting.

We are particularly **concerned about the almost 150 large-scale hydrogen transport projects** which have applied to receive PCI or PMI priority status. According to the candidate project list provided in the public consultation:

- **90% of the project candidates either openly aim at transporting fossil fuels-based hydrogen (60%) or fail to exclude fossil based hydrogen transport (30%);**
- A high number of proposed projects are either **identical or similar to infrastructure projects that have been proposed for fossil gas transport** in this form before, or are 'classical' fossil gas projects not even mentioning hydrogen.
- **90% of these projects have been proposed by the fossil fuel industry**, most of them by ENTSO-G, a fossil gas transport industry umbrella body;

Giant hydrogen infrastructures: Wasteful use of a scarce molecule

All projects represent large scale transport, import and storage infrastructure - directly contravening the fact that **renewable, "green" hydrogen is and will be a scarce, costly resource, unrealistic at a large scale. It should be targeting limited, clearly defined uses where no alternatives to hydrogen exist.** All public money must only be used to support infrastructure that is needed for 100% renewable hydrogen. Non renewable hydrogen including nuclear based hydrogen projects should be excluded. Any hydrogen infrastructure, particularly projects benefiting from public finance, must reflect this fact.

Wasting scarce public resources on super-sizing infrastructure, for what is in fact costly, limited, and in many cases fossil gas-based hydrogen, is not in our common interest. It flies in the face of people living in Europe that already suffer from increased energy prices and costs of living as well as from the aggravation of the climate crisis. It risks piling up stranded assets, while the people foot the bill.

A priority list for people in Europe or for polluters?

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If those enormous hydrogen projects are included on the PCI list, the list risks becoming nothing but an **industry wishlist**, handing the fossil gas industry a lifeline and **channeling even more money into the fossil fuel sector - a sector that has raked in unimaginably high profits** while people in the EU are left to choose between heating and eating. It would be in direct contradiction to Europe's Green Deal vision **to prioritize large, costly hydrogen backbones instead of real solutions for people that can deliver a truly just transition**. Part of the transition should be financed by those most responsible for the climate crisis - the fossil fuel industry. Instead, the PCI/PMI list risks providing them with even more support to continue business as usual.

Do not support polluters greenwashing fossil gas pipelines

Pipeline and other infrastructure candidates that had originally been planned as pure fossil gas pipelines, are now submitted for PCI/PMI status in almost identical form with an obscure hydrogen label. This disregards that there are considerable differences between hydrogen and fossil gas transport infrastructure needs (concerning volumes, transport routes as well as supply and demand locations), and only confirms **fears around support and public finance for hydrogen being a fossil fuel industry bailout**.

Protect Europe's true common interest: real sustainability and energy security

And while the urgent need to address the climate crisis served as a main (official) argument for the hydrogen hype to gain priority status in almost all European energy policies, we see that **decarbonization has become a mere footnote** in the discussion, including the one on PCIs. Moving from fossil gas to fossil fuel-based hydrogen (mainly made using fossil gas) will not help Europe reach its climate targets and might even increase carbon pollution.

From a **geopolitical perspective it is highly problematic for Europe to lock in dependency on fossil gas-based hydrogen via infrastructure and imported green hydrogen**. The EU faces important limitations of gas supply due to the decision to move away from fossil gas from Russia. However, a large majority of fossil hydrogen is made with fossil gas, including Russian fossil gas today. Roll-out of investments for huge hydrogen projects in Africa and Ukraine to feed Europe's corporate interests is also raising serious concerns.

In this respect, we reject the potential inclusion of enormous unnecessary, costly and polluting hydrogen or hydrogen-greenwashed infrastructure as well as the inclusion of two former fossil gas PCI candidates, Melita and Eastmed, in the 6th PCI list process. They are not contributing to sustainability and they are not in our common interest.

We ask you to consider EU climate targets, social and economic consequences of the cost of living crisis over vested fossil fuel interests when drafting the 6th PCI list, and to only include projects genuinely contributing to sustainability and a just transition for Europe.

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Kind regards,
Frida Kieninger (Food & Water Action Europe)

On behalf of

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