Hon. Dr. Robert Habeck
Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Action

Hon. Agnès Pannier-Runacher
Minister for Energy Transition

14 December 2022

Open letter: Franco-German engine for a resilient and efficient European energy transition

Dear Ministers,

As members of the civil societies of France and Germany, we are deeply concerned about the lack of joint efforts from our two countries in the ongoing negotiations on the EU's energy targets for 2030. Franco-German cooperation has been and is still vital for the development and strengthening of the European Union, including its climate policy. The Franco-German engine needs to keep going and set an example for an ambitious and solidarity approach towards the climate and energy crisis. Therefore, we urge you as our leaders to focus on the structural solutions to reduce dependency of Russian and, more generally, fossil oil, gas and coal altogether since this is the only way to secure sustainable energy supply in the winters to come. **More energy-savings, efficient energy use and an accelerated and ambitious roll-out of renewable energy including renewable hydrogen are crucial for both: ensuring an affordable, independent and secure energy supply on the one hand and limiting global warming to 1.5° C on the other hand.**

Therefore, we – the undersigning twelve organisations from French and German civil society – urge you to coordinate your position in the ongoing trilogues, especially on the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive **and to jointly support,** as **the Franco-German engine within the EU, at least 45 % target for renewable energy in the EU's energy mix and a 14.5 % target for energy efficiency** (compared to 2020) until 2030 as proposed by the European Parliament**.** The current EU-Council position does not contribute sufficiently to the security of Europe's energy supply and its climate commitments under the Paris Agreement. In the Treaty of Aachen, Germany and France affirmed their determination to work together for a strong, sovereign, sustainable and resilient European Union. Therefore, the Franco-German duo should work intensively hand in hand on restructuring the European energy system by boosting renewable energies, energy efficiency and sufficiency.

Higher targets for renewables and energy efficiency are not only an economic and climate imperative, but are also strongly supported by EU citizens. **The overwhelming majority of European citizens support massive investments in renewable energy.** 87% of Europeans think "the EU should invest massively in renewable energies such as solar and wind" (Eurobarometer 97). Rather than returning to business as usual and sinking more public money into fossil fuels, we should listen to citizens in the EU and focus on a renewable path out of the energy crisis.

Higher EU energy targets will have a positive impact also on other sectors:

- According to the study "2030 EU energy efficiency target: The multiple benefits of higher ambition" by Cambridge Econometrics, an energy efficiency 14.5 % target for 2030 would deliver a reduction of households' expenditure for energy on average by 10.3 % and for transport by 8.5 % in 2030. Thereby, a 14.5% target would equal **saving 120 billion euros in energy and transport expenditures for the whole EU, the creation of 752 000 jobs in 2030** and an **increase of the EU's Gross Domestic Product by 0.6 % in 2030**, which represents the creation of 94 billion euros in monetary wealth.
- The Briefing "More Renewables, less Inflation" by E3G and Ember sets out that significant costs could be avoided by increasing the deployment of renewables. The data for the time period between March and October 2022 alone show that the record increase in wind and solar generation compared to last year **resulted in avoiding the use of eight billion cubic meters of fossil gas equaling €11 billion**.

Climate inaction has proven costly and will continue to do so in the future. Rapidly improving energy savings and accelerating the deployment of sustainable renewable energy will not only help protect people from even higher energy price increases in the coming decade. It will also address the larger, looming climate emergency, which will increasingly affect current and future generations.
Now is the time for you as our political leaders to set an example and lead us towards an energy secure, sovereign, affordable and climate-neutral Europe.

Sincerely,
on behalf of

Deutscher Naturschutzring e.V.
Réseau Action Climat France
Bundesverband Erneuerbare Energien e.V.
Le CLER - Réseau pour la transition énergétique
Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V.
E3G
France Nature Environnement
Greenpeace France
Green Planet Energy
Germanwatch
WWF Deutschland
WWF France