



# Climate Parliament

17 December 2010

Mr. José Manuel Barroso,  
President of the European Commission  
Brussels,  
Belgium

Dear Mr. Barroso,

We are writing in response to the Commission's Communication of 19 October regarding the EU Budget Review. We would like to express our view that promoting renewable energy should receive much higher priority in future budgets than is currently envisaged.

Climate and energy issues receive a great deal of political attention within the EU, but the importance of these issues is not yet reflected in the EU budget. It is time for this to change.

These are not just ordinary issues. Climate change is likely to inflict increasingly intense droughts, heat waves and floods on Europe. It threatens our coastlines with sea-level rise, and will bring a flood of refugees to our shores. Meanwhile, our dependence on other regions for much of our fossil fuel supplies undermines our security.

A rapid shift to renewables can make Europe largely self-sufficient in energy, and can eliminate most of our greenhouse gas emissions. The recent *Roadmap 2050* study carried out by McKinsey and others for the European Climate Foundation showed that moving to a low carbon economy also makes good economic sense. Indeed, the study found that by 2050 using the free fuels of sun, wind and water, combined with energy efficiency measures, could save every European household as much as €1500 a year – or even more if fossil fuel prices rise sharply.

In the light of these imperatives, a significantly larger percentage of the budgets of the EU and the European Investment Bank should be devoted to promoting renewables. Among other urgent steps, more of our research funds should help to develop technologies such as cheaper solar panels and floating wind turbines. Rural development funds should help farmers deploy smallscale renewables. The EuropeAid budget should make promoting renewables in developing countries a top priority. And substantial funds should be devoted to supporting new long-distance grid connections to enable us to combine Europe's wind, solar, hydroelectric, geothermal and other renewable energy sources into a reliable supply for everyone.

We hope these priorities will feature more prominently in the draft Financial Perspectives due next year. We look forward to working with the Commission and the Council to shape a budget that fully reflects the crucial importance of climate and energy issues for the future of the European Union.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Watson, MEP, Chairman of the  
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