

Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker
President of the European Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Brussels, 28th June 2019

Dear President Juncker,

Re: Environmental Priorities Under Finland's Presidency of the European Union

It gives me great pleasure to send you a copy of the European Environmental Bureau's Memorandum to the incoming Finnish Presidency of the European Union, setting out our hopes and aspirations with respect to the environment-related outcomes of the Presidency. Prepared in cooperation with Seas at Risk, the Memorandum addresses not only topics dealt with under the auspices of the Environment Council but also those dealt with by other Council configurations where these concern matters relating to or affecting the environment.

Finland is taking over the EU Presidency at key moment in the legislative cycle of the European Union, with a new Parliament and Commission due to take up their positions during the coming six months. This changeover also allows for the setting of new priorities – in particular, those of the new Commission will have a major influence on the direction that the EU takes in the coming five-year period. These priorities will largely determine the extent to which the EU will embrace sustainability as the overarching principle guiding all EU policies. In this regard we have been pleased to see the Finnish Presidency programme published this week under the title 'Sustainable Europe – Sustainable Future' and hope that with the support of other institutions and stakeholders, it will be able to lead the Council to adopt positions that rise to the challenge of the dual existential crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, as well as widespread pollution, and seize the opportunities inherent in the needed transition from a linear to a circular economy.

The Memorandum has been prepared on behalf of a large constituency: the EEB's 150 member organizations, spread across more than 30 European countries, themselves have a combined individual membership of more than 30 million environmentally concerned citizens. We hope that in the coming months this document will serve as a useful point of reference not only for the Finnish Presidency but more widely throughout the Member States and within the EU institutions.

The success of an EU Presidency depends upon a collective effort by all parties to the decision-making processes. In this context, we urge you to support the Finnish Government in giving environmental issues the priority they deserve during its Presidency.

We would of course welcome any reflections that you may have regarding the issues addressed in the Memorandum.

Yours sincerely,



CC: College of Commissioners
 European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC)