To: Mariya Gabriel  
Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

CC: Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal  
Kadri Simson, Commissioner for Energy

3 June 2020

Addressing Significant Gaps in the Horizon 2020 EU Green Deal Call

Dear Commissioner Gabriel,

We welcome your Horizon 2020 EU Green Deal call allocating €1 billion towards demonstration of clean technologies. However, we are concerned by three main gaps which undermine its relevance and accessibility across Member States and avoidance of the policy priorities of the EU Green Deal.

Firstly, while Area 2 of the Green Deal Call has the ambition to cover such a wide and paramount challenge as “supplying clean, affordable and secure energy”, the identified topics are limited in scope and geographical coverage. The call topics should be broad enough that they leave national governments and ministries the freedom to pursue the energy transition in a way that is compatible with their particular circumstances. It is particularly important that the Green Deal Call supports the decarbonisation pathways of all Member States, including Southern and Eastern Europe.

Therefore, to ensure a balanced and holistic approach, the Green Deal call must add a third topic on: “Geothermal District Heating for an affordable, secured and smart sector integration”. Geothermal technology still requires R&I support to accelerate its market uptake, but at the same time it has massive potential throughout the whole of Europe and could decarbonise the district heating networks in Central and Eastern Europe.

Secondly, the decarbonisation of heating and cooling is one of the central pillars to make the EU Green Deal a success. Heating and cooling is omitted in many calls and must be considered in all areas. Heat represents nearly half of the EU’s energy consumption and 80% of this energy consumption is still supplied by fossil fuels. Rapidly deploying renewable heating and cooling solutions a key priority of EU climate, renewable energy and energy efficiency targets.

Finally, addressing heat poverty combines the EU’s initiatives on climate, energy renewable energy, social inclusion and economic recovery. After all, “leaving no one behind” is one of the key principles of the EU Green Deal. Between 50 to 125 million EU citizens are unable to afford adequate indoor thermal comfort.¹ To tackle heat poverty, it is crucial not only to improve the energy efficiency of the existing and new building stock, but also to convert the heating and cooling supply for buildings to renewable energy sources.


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We attach our recommendation on an addition call on Geothermal District Heating and Cooling. We would be delighted to meet with you to discuss our suggestions in detail.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Philippe Dumas
Secretary General of EGEC

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