

Brussels, 16th September 2019**Subject: Open letter for European Parliament to reject misguided “One in, one out principle” and introduce sustainability screening of new initiatives**

Dear European Parliament President Sassoli,
Dear Political Group Chairs,
Dear Committee Chairs,

The Green 10, ten of the largest environmental organisations and networks working together at the European level and representing over 54 million citizens across Europe, wishes to express its deep concern regarding the introduction of a “One in, one out” principle for new legislation, as planned by European Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen.

The proposed principle calls for any new initiative that creates a burden on businesses to be compensated by relieving an equivalent existing burden in the same policy area. This notion is inherently incompatible with the increased climate and environmental ambition set out by the Commission President-elect and risks undermining the potential benefits of new initiatives under the European Green Deal.

We urge Parliament to strongly oppose the “One in, one out” mechanism for new initiatives as this could create a chilling effect leading to further harm the climate and the environment, as well as create greater division in society and undermine Europeans’ wellbeing.

Europe has some of the world’s most ambitious and successful environmental, health and social standards, which are essential to protecting people and planet. These laws tackle urgent issues such as addressing the climate crisis, reducing inequality and discrimination, improving people’s health, ensuring good-quality jobs and safe working conditions, and preserving the environment and nature.

Analyses by the European Commission and others have repeatedly demonstrated that environmental legislation does not create unnecessary administrative burden. The “One in, one out” principle would force policy-makers to identify measures to be scrapped, which will lead to an arbitrary cut in regulations and a slow-down – or even reverse – of progress in exactly those areas in which increased ambition is desperately needed. **The principle would not only undermine von der Leyen’s own plans for a European Green Deal, it would also put at risk existing standards that protect Europeans and the environment.**

We call on you to use the opportunity of the hearings to ensure that the planned “one in, one out” principle is deleted from the mission letters. Instead of a principle to preempt new regulations, the new Commission must adopt a “think sustainability first” principle that would mainstream environmental and social good, and would support the objectives of the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals.

We wish to thank you in advance for your support, and look forward to working with you on making the European Green Deal a reality and help put Europe firmly on a path to a truly sustainable future.

Yours sincerely,



Ester Asin, Director, WWF European Policy Office

Also on behalf of the following Green 10 Directors:

Ariel Brunner, Senior Head of Policy - BirdLife Europe

Jeremy Wates, Secretary General - European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Mark Fodor, Executive Director - CEE Bankwatch Network

Wendel Trio, Director - Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe

Jagoda Munic, Executive Director - Friends of the Earth Europe

Jorgo Riss, Executive Director - Greenpeace European Unit

Genon K. Jensen, Executive Director - Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

Andrea Lichtenecker, Executive Director - Naturefriends International

William Todts, Executive Director - European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E)

[Green 10 briefing on "One in, one out" principle](#)