

Title

In January, the European Commission presented its proposal for the future of the EU climate and energy policies. This [White Paper](#) put forward a target cut in greenhouse gas emissions of only 40%, and an EU target for renewable energy of less than 30% - both far too low to prevent climate change. It also fails to present a convincing and robust approach to energy savings, where existing non-binding targets have been systematically failing.

According to Ariel Brunner, Head of EU Policy at BirdLife Europe, “the Commission is setting its ambition at a level that cannot safeguard us from damaging climate change and it even proposes to open Europe’s doors to the worst types of dirty fuels.”

Indeed, the proposal suggests scrapping the [Fuel Quality Directive](#), a piece of legislation that penalises the use of dirty fossil fuels such as tar sands and promotes more sustainable biofuels in the transport sector.

The paper also broadly disregards the need for environmental safeguards which are the only way to guarantee an efficient use of resources while also avoiding unwanted impacts on the environment from the exploitation of renewable energy resources.

To stand a reasonable chance of avoiding more than two degrees of warming by the end of the century, the European Union needs to set up binding 2030 targets for climate, renewables and energy saving. A truly ambitious and effective target has to be a 55% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

To ensure that the energy sector goes on investing and innovating to build a clean, sustainable energy system, Europe also needs safeguards guaranteeing that renewable energy investments do not harm wildlife, destroy habitats or increase emissions in coming decades.

“This will require good technology choices, careful planning of wind farms and power line investments, and tighter controls on bioenergy. But we definitely cannot afford to row back on Europe’s overall ambition on renewables now.” Brunner stressed.

The Commission has shown that it recognises the need for improved biomass policies in order to secure resource efficient use of biomass. Now they just need to realize that support systems for bioenergy are the way to deliver real carbon emission savings and preserve an EU future where nature has a home.