

Per email: kabinet.demir@vlaanderen.be / zuhal.demir@n-va.be / info@regions4.org  
**Flemish Minister for Justice and Enforcement, Environment, Energy and Tourism and  
European Vice-President of climate network Regions4  
Ms Zuhail Demir  
Brussels**

**Open letter**

15 October 2020

**Reject environmental permit for climate hostile and plastic polluting Project One of Ineos**

Dear Environment Minister and Vice-President Zuhail Demir,

We cannot address the climate crisis if we continue the expansion of fossil fuels and relating infrastructure. The Project One of Ineos proposed for the port of Antwerp would be detrimental to our efforts to tackle the climate crisis by creating new markets for petrochemicals derived from fracking, but also contribute to localized public health impacts from harmful air pollutants, and the loss of biodiversity and natural habitats.

In June 2020, members of Regions4, a network of regional governments that focuses on the themes of climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development elected you Vice-President for Europe.[i] At the general assembly meeting on 18 June 2020, you called for an ambitious global fight against climate change and biodiversity loss, highlighting that global challenges require cooperation with other regions and pointing out to the fact that regional governments worldwide play an important role, clearly articulating your understanding of the crisis ahead of us that would be made worse by Ineos's Project One.

The growing scientific evidence shows that fracking, an extraction technique for shale oil and gas, as well as the production of plastics leads to severe public health impacts, environmental damages and contributes significantly to global warming. Without a rapid reduction in methane emissions - from fracking operations in particular - we are on track to exceed a 2°C increase in average global temperatures and beyond, with devastating consequences.

Research published in 2019 by the European Geosciences Union in the journal Biogeosciences (volume 16, pages 3033–3046)[ii] demonstrates that shale gas development in North America is the single largest driver for the recent increase in global methane emissions, accounting for one-third of the increase in global emissions from all sources. Ineos's Project One will expand this driver of global emissions at a time when we need to take steps to reduce and eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.

Addressing methane emissions from petrochemical and plastic production is a critical first step toward reducing the overall climate impact from plastics, which is estimated to generate 56 gigatons of carbon-dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions by 2050, corresponding to 10-13% of the global carbon budget to stay within a 1.5 ° warming scenario.[iii]

Unfortunately, the current proposed Project One of Ineos for the port of Antwerp, combines both reliance on US fracked shale gas and the production of virgin plastics. If this project ever starts operating, it will take the EU, and particularly Belgium a big step away from having a chance to meet its energy and climate targets and reach the goal of the Paris Agreement.

That's why we, the undersigned organizations, urge you to reject the environmental permit for this climate hostile and plastic polluting project.






Referring to the detailed international objection from August 2019<sup>[iv]</sup> we justify our request as follows:






- A decision over the deforestation of a natural carbon capture system in a highly industrialized zone, surrounded by high emitters, can therefore only be made after the decisions on the EIA procedures of the ethane cracker and the PDH unit have been made.
- Ongoing structural plastic pellet pollution in the protected Natura 2000 sites surrounding the area where Project One is planned must be solved before any new permit can be considered. Bearing in mind the negative effects observed by plastic pollution, it is necessary to monitor and assess the scale of the problem first and to increase the responsibility and accountability of these spills before new production units can be permitted.
- Since protected Natura 2000 sites in the Netherlands are likely to also be affected by the emissions to air and water of Project One, as well as by the increased pellet leaks derived from the extra supply of ethylene and propylene produced by Project One, a transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment must be conducted.
- Climate and environmentally destructive fracked US gas is critical to Ineos's proposed Project One.<sup>[v]</sup> We emphasize once again the obligation to assess the direct and any indirect effects, the secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, effects of the project on climate and the environment. This assessment must pay attention to the full lifecycle emissions (all along the supply chain) and the transboundary effects (including the direct impacts on the affected communities in the USA, in particular Pennsylvania, the area from where Ineos gets the fracked gas).
- Major Carbon Capture Storage projects have so far failed to deliver any kind of concrete results<sup>[vi]</sup>. Reliance on future CCS will not solve the full lifecycle emissions problem and incompatibility of Project One with the Single Use Plastics directive and - resulting from it - the obligation to reduce virgin plastic production.





Every facility, like the proposed expanded Port of Antwerp Ineos one, that relies on fracked gas is a direct contribution to a dramatic increase in global warming, a constant production of plastic pollution and an involvement in human rights abuses along the supply chain. Everyone involved must be held responsible according to the precautionary, preventive and polluter pays principles of the European Union.

The Port of Antwerp has already a massive transformational task to achieve. The investment plans of Ineos will torpedo every effort towards this necessary and existential process. We urge you therefore to object the current deforestation request as well as the PDH plant and ethane cracker.





Sincerely

	Signatory/Organization	Logo
1.	<p>Andy Gheorghiu, Policy Advisor and Campaigner,</p> <p>Food &amp; Water Action Europe, email: <a href="mailto:agheorghiu@fweurope.org">agheorghiu@fweurope.org</a></p>	
2.	<p>Delphine Lévi Alvarès</p> <p>Rethink Plastic alliance Coordinator</p> <p><a href="#">Rethink Plastic alliance</a></p>	
3.	<p>Von Hernandez</p> <p>Global Coordinator</p> <p><a href="#">Break Free From Plastic (BFFP)</a></p>	
4.	<p>Garret Patrick Kelly</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>SEE Change Net Foundation</p>	
5.	<p>Antoinette Vermilye, co-Founder,</p> <p>Gallifrey Foundation</p>	

6.	Eilidh Robb,  COP26 Coordinator  UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC)	
7.	Sarah Moyes  Plastic and Circular Economy Campaigner  Friends of the Earth Scotland	
8.	Yvette Arellano Senior Staff, Policy Research  Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services	
9.	Debbie New, Creative Director, Climate Finance Action	
10	Sabine Frank Executive Director Carbon Market Watch	

11	Kate Ruddock,  Friends of the Earth Ireland	 <b>Friends of the Earth</b>
12	Jennie Dixon Campaigner  Frack Free East Yorkshire	
13	Annelies Schorpion Programme Coordinator Resource Justice Friends of the Earth Europe	 <b>Friends of the Earth Europe</b>
14	Hilde Lindner-Hausner Abgefrackt Weidener Becken gegen Fracking <a href="http://www.abgefrackt.de">www.abgefrackt.de</a>	 <a href="http://www.abgefrackt.de">www.abgefrackt.de</a>
15	Lyndsey O'Connell Campaign Lead 'Sick Of Plastic Ireland' Email: <a href="mailto:sickofplasticireland@gmail.com">sickofplasticireland@gmail.com</a> .	

16	Muriel Papin Déléguée Générale No Plastic In My Sea (France)	
17	Mary Gutierrez, Director, Earth Action, Inc.	
18	Antwerpen Schaliegasvrij, citizens collective Annick Vanisterbecq, Co-founder <a href="https://www.schaliegasvrij.be/">https://www.schaliegasvrij.be/</a> schaliegasvrij@antwerpen.be	
19	INEOS WILL FALL campaign ineoswillfall@gmail.com	
20	Katrin Van den Troos, Climaxi	

21	Hugo Van Dienderen, co-president Grootouders voor het Klimaat ( Grandparents for Climate)  Belgium	
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23	John Higgins, Coordinator, Fracking Free Clare	
24	Adrian Palmer, spokesperson for Frack Free York and Villages	
25	Elena Rastei, Zero Waste Romania	






26	Adela Pickles, Frack Free Ryedale <a href="mailto:frackfreeryedale@gmail.com">frackfreeryedale@gmail.com</a>	
27	João Costa - Academia Cidadã / Citizenship Academy from Portugal	 <div> <p>ACADEMIA <b>CIDADÃ</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>CITIZENSHIP</b> ACADEMY</p> </div>
28	Jim Emberger, Spokesperson, New Brunswick Anti-Shale Gas Alliance, Canada <a href="mailto:shaleinfo.nb@gmail.com">shaleinfo.nb@gmail.com</a>	NBASGA
29	Brook Lenker, Executive Director, FracTracker Alliance	
30	Elizabeth O'Nan, Director, Protect All Children's Environment	
31	Woodrow W. Clark II, MA <sub>3</sub> PhD  Qualitative Economist, Managing Director  Clark Strategic Partners	











32	Tammy Murphy, LL.M.,  Medical Advocacy Director,  Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania, USA	
33	Mariel Nanasi,  New Energy Economy,  New Mexico, USA	
34	Quanah Brightman, Spokesperson, United Native Americans	
35	Ewa Sufin-Jacquemart, President of the Executive sBoard, Fundacja Strefa Zieleni, Poland	





36	<p>Karen Feridun</p> <p>Founder</p> <p>Berks Gas Truth</p>	
37	<p>Karen Feridun</p> <p>Co-founder</p> <p>Better Path Coalition</p>	
38	<p>Joslin Faith Kehdy</p> <p>Founder</p> <p>Recycle Lebanon</p>	
39	<p>Ana Rocha</p> <p>Executive Director</p> <p>Nipe Fagio Tanzania</p>	
40	<p>Sharon Furlong, Spokesperson</p> <p>Bucks Environmental Action</p> <p>Bucks County, Pennsylvania</p>	

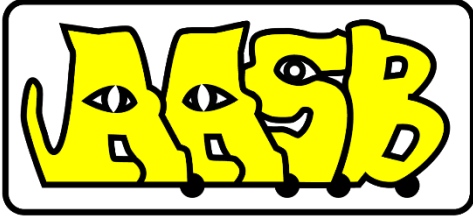


41	Arianne Elinich, Director Bucks County Concerned Citizens Against the Pipelines	
42	JEAN'NE BLACKWELL  DIRECTOR SLO CLEAN WATER SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA. UNITED STATES	 SLO Clean Water.org San Luis Obispo, CA
43	Tracey Read CEO/Founder Plastic Free Seas, Hong Kong	 <b>PLASTIC FREE SEAS</b> 無塑海洋
44	György Szabó Zero Waste Program Manager Humusz Szövetség, Hungary	 <b>HUMUSZ</b> szövetség
45	Michael Doshi Director of Partnerships Algalita Marine Research and Education	 <b>ALGALITA</b>

46	Vamsi Sankar Kapilavai Senior Researcher Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group	
47	Norman Philip Friends of the Earth Falkirk	
48	Wilfred Dcosta Indian Social Action Forum - INSAF India	
49	Green Liberty, Latvia	
50	Rob Buurman Director Recycling Network Benelux	

51	Nuša Urbančič Campaigns Director Changing Markets Foundation	
52	Enzo Favoino Researcher, Scuola Agraria del Parco di Monza, Scientific Coordinator, Zero Waste Europe	
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55	Susana Fonseca Member of the Board ZERO - Association for the Sustainability of the Earth System	

56	Lorraine Inglis Weald Action Group	
57	Catherine Harrington Frack Off London	
58	Ellie Wyatt Frack Free Sussex	
59	Susan Gough Frack Free Ryedale Frack Free Kirby Misperton	
60	Jill Sutcliffe, Dr Chair Keep Kirdford and Wisborough Green, KKWG	

61	Aleksandra Wieczorek Chairwoman of the board Polish Zero Waste Association (Polskie Stowarzyszenie Zero Waste)	<p>POLSKIE STOWARZYSZENIE</p> 
62	Natalie Fee Founder of City to Sea	
63	Al Williams (Earth First! UK) - al.williamz@gmail.com	
64	Merili Vares Executive Director Let's Do It Foundation	
65	Geoffrey Gardner Upper Valley Affinity Group Vermont, U.S.	

66	Sarah Stewart President Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc. Massachusetts, MA	 <p>Animals are Sentient Beings, Inc. animalsaresentientbeings.org</p>
67	Jack O'Sullivan Founder and Member of Board of Management Zero Waste Alliance Ireland (ZWA) County Westmeath, Ireland	 <p>GAN DRAMHAÍL IN ÉIRINN NULINĒS ATLIEKOS AIRIJOJE</p>
68	Henriette Schneider Deutsche Umwelthilfe	 <p>Deutsche Umwelthilfe</p>

*#BreakFreeFromPlastic is a global movement envisioning a future free from plastic pollution. Since its launch in September 2016, nearly 1,900 organizations from across the world have joined the movement to demand massive reductions in single-use plastics and to push for lasting solutions to the plastic pollution crisis. In Europe alone, 90 core organizations are active in more than 30 countries. These organizations share the common values of environmental protection and social justice, which guide their work at the community level and represent a global, unified vision. Sign up at [www.breakfreefromplastic.org](http://www.breakfreefromplastic.org)*

[i] <https://english.n-va.be/news/zuhail-demir-becomes-the-european-vice-president-of-climate-network-regions4>

[ii] <https://www.egu.eu/news/506/new-study-fracking-prompts-global-spike-in-atmospheric-methane/>

[iii] <https://www.ciel.org/plasticandclimate/>

[iv] [https://www.foodandwatereurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/International-Objection-against-1st-Ineos-EIA-Antwerp\\_Aug19.pdf](https://www.foodandwatereurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/International-Objection-against-1st-Ineos-EIA-Antwerp_Aug19.pdf) (EN)

[https://www.foodandwatereurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Internationaal-bezwaar-tegen-Ineos\\_28-August-2019.pdf](https://www.foodandwatereurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Internationaal-bezwaar-tegen-Ineos_28-August-2019.pdf) (NL)

[v] <https://www.ineos.com/inch-magazine/articles/issue-15/3-billion-boost-at-antwerp/>

<https://www.ineos.com/news/ineos-group/ineos-announces-2.7-billion-investment-in-new-european-chemical-plants/>

[vi] <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/eu-funded-carbon-capture-storage-efforts-failed-say-auditors/>

[https://www.diw.de/documents/publikationen/73/diw\\_01.c.791736.de/diwkompakt\\_2020-153.pdf](https://www.diw.de/documents/publikationen/73/diw_01.c.791736.de/diwkompakt_2020-153.pdf)

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