

Press Release

Climate Emergency and the Need to Phase-out Fossil Energy – what else needs to happen to take fast action?

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Yesterday's new report launched by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) drastically pictures our planet's climate emergency, issuing an alarming plea that climate change impacts are rapidly building up and hitting us earlier than expected, aggravating the lives of ever more people. According to the IPCC, 3.3 to 3.6 billion people are living in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change, suffering from disasters such as wildfires, droughts and floods that occur more often and become increasingly fatal, in form of famines and mass dislocation.

This is why we need to act NOW, if we are to prevent the IPCC's report from becoming a "atlas of human suffering", as spelt out loud by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. International climate leadership has failed to quickly implement a holistic and profound transformation of the world's economies, by ending the reliance on fossil coal and gas as soon as possible and run our systems on sustainable energy sources. Of course, the effective decarbonisation of key sectors such as energy, transport and heating are an enormous task and will be highly disruptive - but failing to do so will make things a lot worse and result in a catastrophe for humankind and our planet.

EREF, speaking out for Europe's renewable energy producers since 1991, would like to remind leaders once again that climate action cannot be fierce and vigorous enough. This means to substantially increase target levels and enact stronger measures that will put us on the pathway towards net-zero emissions. EREF Director Dr. Dörte Fouquet hence urges governments to commit to "policy and legal reforms that fast deliver the frameworks and instruments needed for the consequent deployment of renewables across all value chains and sectors. This is the most cost-efficient and only available option that is future-proof, fomenting leadership in innovation and a green transition that deserves its name, while at the same time decrease our dangerous dependency on importing fossil fuels - and cut ties with dictators and rogue states."

In the context of our planet's state of climate emergency, Putin's unjustifiable and horrific war on Ukraine has instantly changed mindsets among European and global leaders. While the imminent priority is to lay down arms and save human lives, Putin's deadly aggression against an innocent neighbour makes it also crystal-clear that we cannot simply continue to fuel our economies (and in consequence foreign war machinery) with gas, oil, and coal, be that from Russia or other world regions. EREF can only hope that we will learn from such terrible mistakes and make ourselves free

from carbon-intensive energy trade and usage - by maximising our efforts and install far greater renewable energy capacities, until all power generation is running on 100% renewables.

A lot will depend on whether we succeed in our ambition to making energy become truly green – not only whether our planet will remain inhabitable. Next to sheer survival, this is a matter of sovereignty for liberal democracies, and our capacity to build a sustainable future. Let's not waste another moment and exploit the tremendous potential that lies in a society powered by renewable energies.

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