



**FRANS TIMMERMANS**  
Executive Vice-President

Brussels, 7/1/2021

*Dear Mr Mouton,*

*Thank you for the letter transmitted to President von der Leyen on behalf of the GasNaturally Steering Committee and signed by 57 CEOs and associations. I am replying on President von der Leyen's behalf.*

*This letter is an important and timely contribution to the current debate on the role of gaseous fuels in achieving our objective to become a climate neutral continent in 2050.*

*I would like to stress that the major initiatives issued so far by the Commission to implement the European Green Deal, including the Energy System Integration Strategy and Hydrogen Strategy<sup>1</sup> recognise that gaseous fuels will have a role to play in the clean energy transition on the way to 2030 and 2050 and also in the longer term. In this context, unabated natural gas will have to be increasingly replaced by renewable and low-carbon alternatives.*

*We expect that biogas, biomethane, hydrogen and synthetic gases will provide sustainable options for decarbonisation in a wide range of sectors. The extent to which natural gas reforming with CCUS and methane pyrolysis could be significant in the future depends on technological progress and will likely require a case-by-case assessment of the economic feasibility of individual projects. Ensuring a level playing field for all decarbonisation options, which is also put forward in your letter, is an approach that the Commission supports. However, such an approach also requires a life cycle analysis of the total carbon impact and comparison with decarbonisation options offered by renewable and low-carbon gases and by electricity.*

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance the Impact Assessment to the Communication “Stepping up Europe’s 2030 climate ambition” (SWD(2020) 176 final), The Energy System Integration and Hydrogen Strategies (COM(2020) 299 final, July 2020 and COM(2020) 301 final)

*Mr François-Régis Mouton*  
*Chair*  
*GasNaturally Steering Committee*

*E-mail: [chair@gasnaturally.eu](mailto:chair@gasnaturally.eu)*

*During 2021, the Commission will review the Renewable Energy Directive and the EU gas market legislation and propose rules to facilitate the uptake of renewable and low carbon gases in the gas market and the development of an EU hydrogen market. The public consultations planned in this process will address issues such as incentivising investments in hydrogen production and infrastructure and addressing legal and administrative barriers for wider deployment of all renewable and low-carbon gases. Moreover, as announced in the EU strategy to reduce methane emissions<sup>2</sup>, addressing methane emissions along the value chain will be decisive for the role of natural gas, as well as for renewable and low carbon gases in the future. The Commission plans to propose legislative measures in this area this year.*

*The Commission is looking forward to your input in the public consultations and future exchanges on how we can best achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal.*

*Yours sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

*Frans Timmermans*

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<sup>2</sup> COM(2020) 663 final