

Mr. Janez Potocnik
European Commissioner for the Environment
European Commission

CC:

European Commission
Directorate General for Environment
Unit E2 – Public Consultation Rio+20
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

15th January 2013

Re: **Stakeholder consultation on “Ensuring Sustainable Development Globally: EU Follow-up to Rio+20”**

Dear Commissioner Potocnik,

Our organisations, part of the European civil society network opposing the financialisation of nature, have engaged in good faith in several consultations and meetings promoted by the European Commission on environmental, development, economic and financial issues in recent years. However, all too often, the written contributions we have provided to stakeholder consultation processes have not been taken into account in the final outcome of the process. Nor have we ever received an adequate explanation from the European Commission of the reasons for this dismissal of our contributions.

While the European Commission has often raised questions in a way that suggests an open debate will follow, it in fact has displayed what in our view is a strong bias in favour of market-based approaches to both longstanding problems and new challenges. We believe that the time has come for the EC to adopt a less ideological approach and encourage a broader, non-biased discussion about possible approaches to the environmental, social, economic and financial crises affecting the EU and the rest of the world. Only in this way can the root causes of these crises be effectively addressed, as well as European responsibilities in this regard.

The ideological bias to which we call your attention was also evident, we believe, in the position taken by the EU at the Rio+20 Conference in Brazil last June, despite the strong criticisms voiced by several developing countries and large sectors of international civil society. The minutes of expert meetings to which we have gained access through targeted requests confirm that the EC has adopted a highly tendentious stance in support of a fully market-based and financialised Green Economy.

In our efforts to help make the new consultation on “Ensuring Sustainable Development Globally: EU Follow-up to Rio+20” promoted by the European Commission more effective, we would like to supplement the questions highlighted by the Commission in the background documentation with a set of more precise questions addressing the European Commission itself. The objective is to understand better the justification for the surprising views which appear to have become dominant within the EC, together with the EC's motivation in holding such a consultation with different stakeholders.

More specifically, we would like, through these questions (which are detailed in the annex to this letter), to see the specific vision of Green Economy currently promoted by the European Commission and the European Union as a whole addressed *before* any debate on specific priorities for action, on sustainable development goals, or on financing and institutional frameworks for implementing any agreed actions.

We remain available to engage on these and other issues in the consultation process, provided that the Commission first responds to our questions in a public manner (for example, in a public meeting over the coming weeks or months).

We hope that the Commission will consent to a fruitful and constructive discussion with our organisations and the rest of European civil society and citizenship.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards

Member organisations of the European Network against the Financialisation of Nature supporting this submission:

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