milieudefensie
hoe geef jij onze aarde door?

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Dear CEO,

Our climate demands action now. The time for leaning back is over. For the world, for the Netherlands and for your enterprise. Healthy companies have a climate plan. Which is why we would like to hear what you will be doing to limit dangerous climate change as much as possible.

You are receiving this letter because you lead an enterprise with control over and influence on a substantial amount of CO_2 emissions. An enterprise that can and must contribute to the system change necessary to prevent dangerous climate change.

In our struggle against dangerous climate change, Milieudefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands focuses on large enterprises like yours. In this letter, we explain how we will be doing this and what we expect from your enterprise.

Action is now an imperative

The UN Climate Convention and the Paris Agreement determine that global warming must be limited to 1.5 °C. All of the world's countries are in agreement on this and this political consensus is based on state-of-the-art climate science as laid down in the reports of the UN Climate Panel (IPCC). The IPCC calculated in 2018 that in 2030 global CO_2 emissions must be reduced by an average of 45% globally (from 2010 levels) to maintain a realistic chance of realising this imperative objective and averting an existential crisis. This minimum cut-off value has been confirmed by the global community in the Glasgow Climate Pact (November, 2021).

In 2021, the urgency of this mission was once again confirmed in the most recent IPCC report, which further underscores the imperative of immediate, far-reaching and sustainable emission reductions. Without such measures, the remaining carbon budget to prevent dangerous climate change will have been depleted within the next 10 years. Hence, any objective to reach zero emissions in 2050 is meaningless if it does not go hand in hand with substantial emission reductions between now and 2030.

The energy transition required to reach the 1.5 °C objective demands a system change. Without the proportional contribution of key system players, reaching this target becomes impossible.

The ruling in the court case between Milieudefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands and Royal Dutch Shell confirms that it is not just countries bearing a co-responsibility to prevent dangerous climate change, but that this extends to companies, too.

The court ruled that Royal Dutch Shell must bring its activities in line with a reduction trajectory concomitant to the Paris Agreement by using its control and influence to almost halve the global emissions caused by the Shell Group within the next 9 years. This applies to all emissions, including the emissions associated with the use of products sold by Shell (scope 1, 2 and 3).

The conclusion is inescapable: action must be taken now, without hesitation and by all available means, to reduce the deficit and prevent the worst impacts of climate change. There's no room for permissiveness. Action is a mandatory obligation. And system players, such as your enterprise, bear a special responsibility. Society demands, the global community expects and the law requires that you take action.

What we ask of you

A healthy company has a climate plan. In Milieudefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands' view, the ruling in the case against Royal Dutch Shell implies that every large emitter has a *de minimis* obligation to reduce its emissions in line with the global imperative resulting from the Paris Climate Agreement. And this is what we ask of you. How is your company or the group that your company is part of, concretely and verifiably, giving shape to the changes required between now and 2030? Implementation of this plan should, by 2030, reduce your business' CO_2 emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3) by at least 45% compared to 2019. We expect your plan to be climate-just. The deadline for this climate plan is 15 April 2022.

What you can expect from us

Yours is not the only enterprise we are writing to today. This letter is being sent to 29 Dutch companies in total, comprising enterprises active in a range of sectors. Enterprises which each contribute significantly to causing dangerous climate change through substantial emission of greenhouse gases throughout their business chain. A commitment from these enterprises determines to a large extent whether we will win or lose the struggle to avert dangerous climate change.

To assess the climate plan of your enterprise and those of all of the other companies, Milieudefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands has entered into a collaboration with the renowned international New Climate Institute. The New Climate Institute will evaluate all plans and assess their quality and practicality. In June 2022, we will publish the results in a ranking.

In a world in which dangerous climate change forces companies to take action, in our view it is inevitable that policy-makers, investors, financiers, insurers, accountants and other consultants should weigh the risks and liabilities resulting from this threat in their day-to-day operations. This is beginning to emerge in the attitudes of large pension funds as well as accountants through the International Sustainability Standards Board. As a civil society organisation, we will continue to remind these parties of their obligations, risks and independent responsibilities.

Are you a frontrunner or a straggler?

This letter serves as an announcement, but above all, it is an invitation. Because it is neither our wish nor our ambition to engage in legal battles with all of the Netherlands' large polluters. We much prefer to enter into a dialogue about how to achieve a just climate transition. Our objective is that all system players, such as your enterprise, play their part. We will acknowledge and, if required, support frontrunners; stragglers can count on our unrelenting pressure.

It is possible that we are unfamiliar with your most recent climate plan. If so, then please get in touch. We look forward to your prompt reaction.

Yours sincerely,

Donald Pols, director Milieudefensie

Neele Boelens, chair of Jongeren Milieu Actief

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