CEC European Managers Pledge:
A Vision for European Climate Leadership

- **On behalf of our European managerial member organisations and our affiliated member federations, CEC European Managers are committed to fully supporting EU's ambition of becoming a global leader in the green transition – while ensuring competitiveness and geopolitical security.**
- **CEC European Managers also support a strong and ambitious EU 2040 climate target of a 90% reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions compared to 1990 levels.**

Why does CEC European Managers pledge to support the EU's ambitions?

The cost of inaction is much higher than the cost of action

- The Economist estimates that a Paris-aligned climate transition would cost only 1% of global GDP per year[1]. Falling renewable energy prices, profitable low-carbon business models, and public health benefits make a just transition more affordable than ever. By contrast, inaction could reduce global income by 19% by 2050[2] – with some estimates as high as a 50.6% loss in GDP by 2050 if climate change continues unchecked[3].

[1] The energy transition will be much cheaper than you think | The Economist (Nov 2024)

[2] *Kotz, M., Levermann, A. & Wenz, L. The economic commitment of climate change. Nature* ***628****, 551–557 (2024).* https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07219-0

[3] Planetary Solvency – finding our balance with nature University of Exeter, The Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA)

Acting now is good leadership: it protects the economy, society, and Europe's global standing.

Europeans demand action

- Climate change is seen as the most pressing issue in several EU Member States and among the top three concerns in most others. Europe is warming at more than twice the global average, making the continent a climate hotspot. 85% of Europeans consider climate change a serious problem for the world, and 81% support the EU's goal of reaching climate neutrality by 2050[4]. 88% say it is important for the EU to take action to increase renewable energy and energy efficiency, and 84% support the aim of boosting Europe's competitiveness in clean technologies.

The opportunities are evident

- The EU is at a pivotal moment. A successful just transition to a low-carbon economy can strengthen competitiveness, geopolitical resilience, and shared prosperity, while protecting workers and regions.

As some major economies slow their climate action while others accelerate, Europe must act decisively to secure its leadership and competitive edge - or risk letting others define the global green agenda.

Many European businesses are already investing heavily in sustainability, eyeing clear market and innovation opportunities. Despite geopolitical tensions, European business leaders continue to fully support ambitious climate action.

[4] Source: Eurobarometer, June 2025

Put corporate climate leadership to work for Europe's climate goals

For the EU to secure its position as a global climate leader, CEC European Managers emphasise the pivotal role of leaders and managers. Because – leaders and managers are empowered to:

- **Drive change and implementation.**
  Managers and leaders make daily decisions that shape strategy, build culture, and align low-carbon innovation with competitiveness. Each leader is not just part of the puzzle, but a force driving transformation that makes implementation happen.

- **Shape culture and followership.**
  In a time of political polarisation, leaders and managers can help create a culture in organisations and local communities that accepts the necessity of change, and make people work for a common purpose and cause.

- **Enable everyday green living.**
  By developing products and services that make sustainable choices easy and desirable—without radical sacrifice—corporate leaders and managers can make sustainability both attractive and practical. By opening new paths for everyday action, they help prevent the climate agenda from becoming elitist or top-down.

- **Think systemically and holistically.**
  Effective leadership is about looking beyond silos—across departments, sectors, and even countries. Climate change, biodiversity loss, social concerns, and geopolitics are deeply interconnected and must be

addressed as such. By avoiding sub-optimisation, leaders are often able to see the full picture.

- **Advise policymakers.**
  As representative of one million European Managers and leaders, CEC European Managers, can provide evidence-based input to help EU institutions shape future-proof and implementable regulation that delivers for both citizens and businesses. Therefore, the dialogue between political and business leaders should be strengthened to the benefit of all.

Visionary corporate managerial leadership may be Europe's untapped green superpower. Together leaders and managers can catalyse the EU's climate ambitions by connecting ambitious political goals, business strategy, and developing culture in organisations and companies.

European managers are ready!

Climate action requires strong leadership – and CEC European Managers are ready to do our part. Effective leadership depends on close cooperation between managers and the European institutions.

We therefore call on the EU to consider the following in the upcoming process of designing the policy architecture beyond 2030, to unlock the full potential of corporate climate leadership.

- **A stronger voice.**

Give leaders and managers a stronger voice in climate and sustainability policy-making, including on how to achieve climate targets, as they are most often the ones in charge of implementation. Recognise managers and leaders as a force of change in the green and just transition.

- **Regulatory certainty.**

Managers and leaders need regulatory certainty when it comes to planning, strategy, and long-term investments. Certainty is a higher priority than lowering climate ambitions. Thus, a clear and ambitious 90% target for 2040 that can be trusted will set a new direction.

- **Invest in leaders and managers.**

It is important also to invest in leadership and management skills, as the Draghi Report mentions investing in "managerial capabilities"[5]. Being a green global superpower also means that managers and leaders must be among the greenest in the world. Importantly, leaders and managers in small and medium-sized enterprises must also be included.

- **Clever regulation.**

If EU legislation under the Green Deal and the Clean Industrial Deal is to function in a practical, managerial context and be implementable, it must become actionable and strategic "management tools" that create value. If the leadership and management perspective is better integrated into legislation, there is a greater chance it will be implemented in practice.

- **Political leadership.**

By leading decisively and demonstrating that climate action, competitiveness, geopolitical security, and fairness can go hand in hand, the EU can inspire other regions and nations around the world to follow suit and maintain its competitive edge as a global standard-setter in sustainability.

[5] Mario Draghi: *The future of European competitiveness. Part A | A competitiveness strategy for Europe*. September 2024, p. 33