



KADRI SIMSON

MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
ENERGY

Rue de la Loi, 200
B-1049 Brussels
Tel. +32-2 295 05 20
Kadri.SIMSON@ec.europa.eu

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Ms Jutta Paulus, MEP
European Parliament
60, Rue Wiertz
B-1047 Brussels

Dear Ms Paulus,

Thank you for your letter of 13 December 2022 addressed to Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans and myself, in which you express your concern regarding the Council's general approach on the proposal for a Regulation on methane emissions reductions in the energy sector.

I share your views that, while the general approach maintains the measurement, reporting and verification obligations, the abatement measures were substantially weakened. I explained this view during my intervention at the Energy Council on 19 December. The changes on leak detection and repair, on inactive wells and on venting and flaring represent a substantial reduction in ambition, and therefore could prevent us from achieving effective reductions of methane emissions already in the short term.

It is important that the legislation that we adopt on methane abatement does not put us behind many of our energy partners, and also behind what market operators are already doing today in terms of industry best practices to control their methane emissions.

Nevertheless, the conclusion on the general approach is a necessary step in the process to move on to trilogues, and in this context I invited Member States to show flexibility in the trilogue negotiations with the Parliament to achieve an ambitious compromise.

I thank you for your strong support and look forward to taking this further at the trilogues.

Yours sincerely,

Kadri Simson