



Autumn-Winter Newsletter

December 2023

EDITORIAL

The recently concluded [COP28 climate talks in Dubai](#) marked a historic moment in the global fight against climate change. After days of negotiations, a significant deal was struck, signalling a collective **commitment to [transition away from all fossil fuels](#)**—an unprecedented step forward.

However, amidst the positive momentum, it is crucial to recognize that **challenges persist**. The reassurance given to oil producers and developing countries, allowing them to chart their own paths to net zero, underscores the delicate balance required in navigating the complex web of global interests.

While the Dubai deal sends encouraging signals, it is important to acknowledge that the true catalysts for change lie in the hands of citizens, businesses, and national governments. The pace at which the world is currently moving towards a sustainable future falls short of what is urgently needed.

The real challenge lies in its **effective implementation** and transformation into **tangible actions**. At **eco-union**, we recognize the significance of this commitment and are poised to contribute to the monumental task of translating this positive momentum into **concrete actions that drive real change**.

We believe it is important to view the COP28 outcome as a positive and useful tool, but it is not, by any means, the panacea for the climate crisis. The real test lies in our **collective ability** to turn intentions into deeds and to **accelerate the transition to a sustainable future**.

In closing, the commitment made in Dubai must serve as a catalyst for **immediate and impactful action**. Let us work together to ensure that the positive signals from COP28 transform into a **sustainable and resilient future for our planet**.

PROJECTS UPDATE

Barcelona Zero Emissions Destination



The [Executive Summary](#) of the report "[Climate Impacts and Decarbonisation of Tourist Mobility in Barcelona](#)", published in May, is now available in **English**. It compiles data on the **current state of tourism activity** in Barcelona, along with the **resulting emissions** and potential scenarios of **modal shift to rail**.

Blue Tourism Initiative



Representatives from our [Blue Tourism Initiative](#) (BTI) participated in the [Sun & Blue Congress](#) that took place in Almería (Spain). During this year's focus on blue tourism and innovation, **Jérémie Fosse**, eco-union's Director, addressed the theme of **fair and inclusive governance for the Mediterranean**. Additionally, **Giulia Balestracci**, BTI Project Officer, and **Arnau Teixidor**, IUCN Regional Manager, shared insights on **sustainability for responsible and innovative blue tourism**, providing key findings from the report titled "[Towards sustainable blue tourism: trends, challenges and policy](#)".



[pathways](#)", published in June. The Executive Summary of the report is now also available in [Spanish](#) and [French](#).

INCITE-DEM: citizens involvement in european democracies



The [INCITE-DEM](#) project, supported by the [Horizon Europe programme](#) of the EU, aims to enhance **inclusive participation and civic engagement**, while expanding **democratic innovation** and dynamic feedback mechanisms between citizens and institutional actors in representative democracies. Based on high quality research, the project will experiment with inclusive design processes for democratic innovation in practice, by setting up **Democracy labs in 6 European countries**. Experiences and research will be translated into specific policy guidance and strategic policy roadmaps for a **sustainable, inclusive, and innovative democracy** in a

world in transformation.

Rethinking Barcelona Tourism

As part of the [Rethinking Barcelona Tourism](#) project, **eco-union** organised the hybrid workshop "[The role of social and solidarity economy for sustainable tourism in Barcelona](#)". Participants shared and discussed current experiences in the tourism sector within the framework of social and solidarity economy. The session also explored new services for an **alternative, inclusive, and local offer in Barcelona**, incorporating an **intersectional perspective**. Institutional actions for integrating **leisure activities and tourism services based on social and solidarity economy** were also addressed.

Tipping+: Just energy transition in coal and carbon intensive regions



Even though the EU funded [TIPPING+](#) project has concluded, an [overview of the 5 policy briefs](#) that were published in July is now available. This overview offers a comprehensive cross-cutting synthesis of the **key policy insights** derived from the project.

Travel Smart




The [Travel Smart Campaign](#), led by [Transport & Environment](#) together with a coalition of global partners including **eco-union**, published a [new briefing](#) encouraging businesses to **set ambitious rail travel policies** that will enable them to significantly **reduce corporate travel emissions**. The document shows rail travel is a viable and desirable option, available to companies operating in Europe and the US. Yet too **few companies are embracing rail travel** in their business travel policies.

+ Resilient Tourism: Adaptation of tourism sector to climate change

This December, we announced the launch of our latest project: [Turismo + Resiliente](#) (+ *Resilient Tourism*, in English). Led by **eco-union**, this initiative aims to build a methodology for self-diagnosis of **vulnerability of the tourism sector to climate change**, accompanied by participatory research and co-creation of adaptive capacities for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) located in Spain. With the support of [Fundación Biodiversidad](#) of the Spanish Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge.



Viaja en Verde

 **Viaja en Verde** As part of the European Mobility Week, we released a [Sustainable Travel Policy Pledge](#). This pledge garnered the commitment of an inaugural coalition comprising social and environmental entities, committing to enact tangible measures that **promote sustainable mobility** and **diminish the environmental footprint of travel** for their staff. Additionally, in collaboration with Ecodes, Fundación Renovables, Transport & Environment and UAB-ICTA, we organised a webinar titled "[Why is it important to have a sustainable travel policy?](#)".

eco-union NEWS

Launch of the "Activating SMEs x CLIMATE and RESILIENCE" Pact

19 entities from diverse sectors, ranging from international organisations to chambers of commerce and NGOs, including **eco-union**, joined forces to sign the "Activating SMEs x CLIMATE and RESILIENCE" Pact ([Activando PYMES x CLIMA y RESILIENCIA](#), in Spanish). This groundbreaking agreement aims to catalyse the **transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises in Spain**, promoting **efficiency**, **emissions reduction** and **alignment with ecosystems** in their business models.

Fairer and faster permitting for a successful European renewable energy transition

Spanish organisations within the [Climate Action Network Europe](#), including **eco-union**, presented a [report](#) for the **proper deployment of renewable energies**. The document provides an overview of policies and the regulatory landscape related to the processing of renewables in different EU countries (Czechia, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania). It draws attention to the need for **proper monitoring** and a much more **people and biodiversity-focused implementation**.

Letter to VP Teresa Ribera: civil society calls for climate leadership at COP28

Civil society organisations, members of the [Civil Society coalition for a Climate-ambitious Spanish Presidency of the EU Council](#), spearheaded by **eco-union** and Conama, have penned a [letter to Teresa Ribera](#) (third Vice-President of the Government of Spain and Minister for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge). The missive earnestly calls for swift **international climate action** to combat the climate emergency. Emphasising the critical need to **limit global temperature rise below 1.5°C**, the letter underscores that the attainable goals of the Paris Agreement hinge on nations intensifying their efforts and commitments.

European NGOs raise concerns about draft NECPs

More than 50 organisations, **eco-union** among them, have supported a [NECP lobby letter](#) to the European Commission to express serious concerns regarding the **lacking ambition level and inadequate quality of the draft National Energy and Climate Plans** (NECPs). In the [letter](#), we implored the EC to safeguard EU law and climate commitments and provide recommendations to Member States to ensure NECPs effectively steer the EU Green Deal and the Fit for 55 package until 2030.

Side event: Towards a low-carbon, inclusive and healthy mobility in Europe

The event was scheduled on the occasion of the [informal ministerial meeting on Transport](#) that took place in Barcelona on the 21st and 22nd of September. It was promoted by the [Civil Society coalition for a Climate-ambitious Spanish Presidency of the EU Council](#) (coordinated by Fundación Conama and **eco-union**).



During this event, representatives from several Member States, the European Commission, the industry sector, and civil society organisations, debated the **necessary and pressing decarbonisation of transport** at national and EU level.

IN OUR RADAR

Hot News, Articles & Publications (hand picked by our team)

Global scale

According to projections in the [Global Carbon Budget 2023](#) report, **global CO2 emissions in 2023 will be 1.1% higher than in 2022**, and 1.4% above pre-pandemic levels (2019). **Globally, fossil fuel emissions are declining in 26 countries** accounting for 28% of global emissions, and slowing in others, but this pace is insufficient to meet the Paris Agreement targets: the probability of exceeding 1.5°C in 2030 is 50%, and in 28 years it would exceed 2°C.

in Europe

[The European Commission plans to present its proposal for EU emissions reductions by 2040](#) to the European Parliament on 6 February. Setting an **intermediate target in 2040** (between projected net zero by 2050 and -55% by 2030) is a legal mandate of the [European Climate Law](#) of 2021, as well as the publication of a European carbon budget for the period 2030-2050. The [EU Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change](#) recommended to the Commission in June that [the 2040 target should be 90-95% of 1990](#) levels.

in the Mediterranean

During the [23rd Meeting \(COP23\) of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols](#), held from December 5 to 8, 2023, in Portorož, Slovenia, [significant measures were embraced to safeguard ecosystems](#) amidst the escalating challenges posed by the triple planetary crisis encompassing **climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution**. These measures included: establishing a Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change in Turkey, committing to making every effort to ensure that by 2030 at least 30% of coastal and marine areas are effectively conserved and managed, or adopting new legally binding, time-bound Regional Plans on agriculture, aquaculture and urban stormwater management, among others.

En España (en español)

Un [informe](#) del [Transnational Institute](#) revela que [las 15 principales empresas energéticas anteponen sus beneficios a la financiación climática](#). Estas empresas, incluyendo **Endesa e Iberdrola**, obtuvieron beneficios que superan en más de siete veces el dinero que los países ricos destinaron a naciones más pobres para abordar el cambio climático durante un periodo de cinco años. Entre 2016 y 2022, estas empresas generaron unos beneficios de 175.860 millones de dólares. Esta cifra es significativamente mayor que la suma comprometida por los países ricos, **incluida España**, que **incumple su promesa** de aportar 100.000 millones de dólares anuales **para abordar el cambio climático**.

A Catalunya (en català)

[Barcelona inundada](#). El centre d'investigació [Climate Central](#) va presentar una anàlisi a llarg termini sobre **l'impacte de la crisi climàtica a punts emblemàtics de tot el món**, incloent-hi la capital catalana. L'escenari projectat considera un augment de temperatura de 3 °C respecte de l'era preindustrial, una xifra que s'assoliria amb les polítiques climàtiques actuals. Els impactes del canvi climàtic inclouen **onades de calor extremes, sequeres més freqüents** i el **desglaç de glaceres**, a més d'un **augment del nivell del mar** que afectaria notòriament les ciutats a mesura que les temperatures pugin. Les imatges proporcionades pel *Climate Central* il·lustren l'abans i després de llocs emblemàtics de Barcelona, com ara la



Catedral de Barcelona i el Parc de la Ciutadella, i destaquen les possibles afectacions a causa del canvi climàtic.

EVENTS to follow

- [2nd UfM Stakeholder Conference on Sustainable Blue Economy](#), 19-20 February 2024, Athens (Greece)
- [Growth vs Climate Conference](#), 13-15 March 2024, Barcelona (Spain)
- [UN Environment Assembly](#), 26 February - 1 March 2024, Nairobi (Kenya).

[Join us](#) to improve our impact!