

European Network of Living Labs IVZW

International non-profit association

Kunstlaan 6, 1210 Sint-Joost-ten-Node, Brussels, Belgium

31st March 2026

Dear UNFCCC secretariat,

With this letter we intend to deliver a concise input for the welcome undertaking of the COP30 Presidency of laying down and foster implementation of a Roadmap for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner.

1. Established in 2006, the European Network of Living Labs is the global umbrella organization of Living Labs. These are open innovation ecosystems that embed, to varying degrees, the quadruple helix (public sector, academy and research, citizens / civil society, and private sector), our constituency is largely made of local governments and municipal authorities that want to implement their strategies, including on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, through the involvement of citizens and other members of the quadruple helix. Many Living Labs are launched by universities and research centers with the goal of involving users in co-design activities. Businesses use Living Labs to connect with societal trends and quickly scale up operations and finance.

The European Network of Living Labs is a neutral certification body for the integrity and quality of Living Labs and their effectiveness. We certify Living Labs all around the world, without any border limitations. Many of the certified Living Labs remain active members of our Network.

We represent them in global *fora* with the dual mission of contributing to the wealth of innovation and diffusion concrete activities that can be expanded together and of helping our members to connect with active agents for the public good.

We recognize and act upon sustainability, climate change mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, technology development, re-design and co-design, deployment of citizen-centric socio-technical solutions, including mobilization of citizen finance.

We are currently in the process of applying for observer status under the UNFCCC and we answer the call of the COP30 Presidency as stakeholders. Our cities and organization are typically mobilized towards human-centric innovation and design to foster deep, fast and human-centric change. In this critical decade, emission reduction and actions for adaptation and resilience are key to avoid the existential and worst impacts of climate change.

2. We agree and support all efforts by the Presidency and the broadest coalition to build upon the UAE Consensus, crucially including the Roadmap.

3. We envisage a Roadmap that is co-designed with Member states, International Organizations, academia, the private sector, and the citizens, having a focus on human-centric solutions that provide multiple co-benefits and can be implemented rapidly, while minimizing conflict. In this vein, we remind that the fossil fuel economy has historically contributed to geopolitical tensions and instability, whereas the world we envisage, rooted in clean, sustainable, and largely decentralized solutions, is a world of peace.

4. The roadmap should not oppose bottom-up and top-down dynamics but construct a virtuous cycle between the two.

4.1. At city level, carbon neutrality can be achieved in pilot cities, including thanks to the EU Mission on Carbon neutral and smart cities, to which many Living Labs are contributing with ideas, designs, participatory processes and stakeholder involvement. We mention here the importance of renewable energy communities, improvements in public transportation and light mobility, green areas and corridors, facilitations of active mobility, energy efficiency and sufficiency intervention in the built environment. Above all, the involvement of Mayors, city departments and the private and financial sector should complement and support the most active citizens in waves that involve broader and broader groups, including the most vulnerable and with the most limited means. In this, an exit strategy from gas stations can lead to orderly foreclosure and land rehabilitation, anticipated by comprehensive strategies to boost the use of bikes, shared and light mobility, as well as electric cars and public transportation, in line with the UNECE Report on "Location efficiency and accessibility of e-mobility"¹ to which we contributed.

4.2. At sub-national regional level, the transformation must be systemic and go beyond sectoral silos, as we have detailed in the TRANSFORMER project² and through the activities of our Transition Super Living Labs Working Group. Inland waterways and coastal areas are specific regions where Living Labs operate both for mitigation and resilience, such as with the POTENT-X and SCORE projects³.

4.3. At national level, the new wave of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other national planning and implementation measures should target the reduction of import dependence from fossil fuels, which is detrimental to strategy autonomy and resilience, through country-appropriate mixes of push and pull measures aimed at facilitating the adoption and the connection to the electric grid of renewable energy plants of locally appropriate dimensions (including on rooftops, balcony and façades of buildings), of electric charging stations, both in rural and urban areas and along corridors of national and international importance. In countries producing and exporting fossil fuels, the diversification of income and fiscal sources should be the result of a participatory process with a very broad range of stakeholders and of citizens, as the current lock-in in the fossil fuel economy risks obviating interesting local directions of sustainable development. Living Labs in countries of all levels of development can be helpful for exploring and pursuing such indications, both in terms of well-established and new Living Labs. Living Labs can play a significant role in navigating the complexities and offer a methodology used to stress test different views, options, trade-offs.

4.4. At international levels, a just and orderly transition should be implemented by OPEC+ and other international coordination mechanism of the supply by offering multidecadal pathways of production quotas (compatible with leaving under the ground what would overcome the 1.5 degrees carbon budget) and price trajectories, to be discussed with the oil-importing countries, including the members of the International Energy Agency, capable of guaranteeing sufficient fiscal resources for development and diversification. The protection of the purchasing power of the middle- and lower-income classes should not be achieved by subsidies to fossil fuel but with very generous facilitation of the transition towards non-fossil

¹Available at <https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/Location%20efficiency%20and%20accessibility%20of%20E-Mobility%20-%20Mobility%20needs%20and%20infrastructure%20planning.pdf>

² <https://www.transformer-project.eu/>

³ See <https://potent-x.eu/> and <https://score-eu-project.eu/>, respectively.

fuel lifestyles. Regulatory learning across countries can be in principle a context for Living lab methods utilization.

4.5. Companies with zero carbon solutions can become "unicorns" and be engine of transformation. Living labs can help identify them and help citizen-centric design of their product, services and circular supply chains.

5. For further articulation and implementation of these input (and more in general for contributing to the works around the Roadmap), please feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Wim De Kinderen
Chairperson



Martina De Sole
Director



Martina De Sole
ENoLL Director



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