

## STATEMENT

### On the occasion of the SET-Plan Conference 2018 in Vienna

From 19 to 21 November 2018, the EU's Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan) Conference takes stock of progress towards the SET-Plan priorities and identifies how research and innovation, at European and national levels, publicly and privately funded, contribute to the EU's energy transition.

The European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) has been part of this process since the very beginning. EERA is an integral part of the SET-Plan and acts as its research pillar. It works in close collaboration with the SET-Plan Steering Group, the European Technology and Innovation Platforms, SETIS and further key players. In the light of the IPCC's<sup>1</sup> alarming [special report](#) on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C, and with regards to the upcoming COP24<sup>2</sup>, EERA confirms its commitment to work continuously and tirelessly for a successful transition towards a low-carbon society.

On the occasion of the SET-Plan Conference and with reference to the Paris Agreement and [EERA's position paper](#) on the EU's "Strategy for long-term EU greenhouse gas emissions reductions", EERA states:

#### **Investment must be increased dramatically**

Progress beyond expectations has been made in many low-carbon technologies, which constitute one of the major components in the fight against global warming. However, to fully unleash the potential of existing and future low-carbon technologies, increased private funds and much more ambitious funding programmes at national and international levels are needed. Financial resources are particularly necessary to boost low-carbon technologies from research and innovation activities to deployment, including support for pilot and demonstration programmes. New and disruptive technologies are a part of this, as are the timely implementation and upscaling of the results achieved so far. The Mission Innovation initiative aims to increase public R&I funding from 1.8 % to 3.6 %. This is a commendable step, but single-digit efforts won't suffice to meet the Paris Agreement.

Endeavours must be accompanied by ambitious policy frameworks to create incentives for further investment. Regulatory and legal frameworks should also be used to promote such a development towards an innovative and sustainable European economy. In order to limit global warming to 1.5 °C, average annual investment in low-carbon technologies and energy efficiency needs to be increased by around a factor of six by 2050 compared to 2015, according to the IPCC report (C.2.6, medium confidence).

#### **Clear and strong political leadership is essential**

The mitigation of global warming and its adverse consequences involves society as a whole. It cannot be achieved by technological progress alone. Economic, institutional and socio-cultural barriers need to be

<sup>1</sup> United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; report published on 8 October 2018

<sup>2</sup> 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, conference to be held on 2-14 December 2018

addressed as well, to name just a few. Education and public awareness are crucial. Resources must be mobilised, concerted and coordinated across all involved sectors and at all political levels. Pan-European initiatives and cooperation beyond Europe should be encouraged. Clear and strong political leadership is indispensable. We call on all political leaders to fulfil their responsibility and pave the way for a successful transition in all sectors and at all levels. We urge them to provide clearly defined goals, concise strategies and roadmaps, a reliable, forward-looking legal framework, appropriate financial means and comprehensive support action, developed in a participatory and integrated way, bringing together all the actors involved.

## Action must be bold and is needed now

The IPCC report clearly shows that limiting the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5 °C, as agreed in the Paris Agreement, must remain the common goal. Achieving this is only possible if we respond quickly. Delaying action will cause irreversible change and increase costs: “The challenges from delayed actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions include the risk of cost escalation, lock-in in carbon-emitting infrastructure, stranded assets, and reduced flexibility in future response options in the medium to long term,” states the IPCC report (D1.3, high confidence). In its conclusions of 9 October 2018, the Council of the European Union also recognises the “unprecedented urgency”, while stating that nationally determined contributions fall short of what is required to achieve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement. Action already undertaken is a start, but it needs to be expanded, accelerated and scaled up.

**We are already witnessing the effects of global warming today. Climate change is happening on our watch – the time to respond is now. The target can only be met by concerted action across sectors. Significantly increased efforts in energy research and innovation will be key to foster forward-looking solutions in all the areas of sustainable development.**

### About EERA

The European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) is an association of European public research centres and universities active in low-carbon energy research. Bringing together more than 250 organisations and around 50,000 researchers from 30 countries, EERA represents Europe’s largest energy research community. EERA is a key player in the SET-Plan, which aims to accelerate the development and deployment of low-carbon technologies. EERA’s mission is to catalyse European energy research for a low-carbon future by helping streamline regional, national and European funding and delivering results from basic research to the demonstration phase. EERA members coordinate their research by collaborating across 17 Joint Programmes, which are aligned with the priorities defined in the SET-Plan and cover all low-carbon technologies. [www.eera-set.eu](http://www.eera-set.eu)