

Statement by organisation leaders on the IPCC report and the urgency of climate action

The IPCC Report published in August illustrates how climate change has accelerated. The leaders of the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava), Climate Leadership Coalition (CLC), the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), Finnish Development NGOs (Fingo), the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK), the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and the Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK) consider it vital that the climate objectives of Finland and the EU are adhered to and remain prepared to tightening the targets as climate change accelerates. The signatories also call for the development of early warning systems for crises caused by climate change.

Open letter to the Government and Parliament of Finland

Dear Political Leaders,

The IPCC Report published in August illustrates how climate change has accelerated. In all the scenarios considered in the report, global warming is likely to exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by the early 2030s at the latest. Should the level of emissions remain high, the global temperature could rise by more than 3°C by 2060 – and even more in Finland. Such a development would pose serious problems for, for example, global food security, the health of citizens and the stability of societies.

We, the undersigned, consider it vital that the net-zero carbon targets described in the Finnish draft Climate Act and the EU Climate Law as well as the Fit for 55 targets are adhered to. In addition, provisions must be made for tightening the existing climate targets as climate change and its consequences worsen; these include flooding and wildfires, which pose a threat to people and livelihoods. It is also necessary to make adequate resources including funding and research for the measures required to achieve the tightening targets and for a fair transition.

We also hope that Finland and other like-minded countries will use international arenas – such as the United Nations – to promote the development of early warning systems for crises caused by climate change in order to catalyse proactive measures. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that many countries are ill-equipped to deal with new and unexpected crises in terms of preparation, legislation and management models. This also applies to climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Promoting a warning system on a global scale would encourage countries to reform their emergency procedures or to create new ones. It would also increase pressure to agree on joint, accelerated climate measures at the COP26 in November.

The organisations we represent have implemented climate measures for several years, and we are ready to increase the scope of these measures and cooperation in reducing our carbon footprint, increasing our carbon handprint as well as promoting adaptation measures and a fair transition.

Kind regards,

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Sture Fjäder, Chairman, Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland, Akava
Jyri Häkämies, Director General, Confederation of Finnish Industries, EK
Liisa Laakso, Chairman of the board, Finnish Development NGOs, Fingo

Juha Marttila, President, The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners, MTK
Antti Palola, Chairman, Finnish Confederation of Professionals, STTK
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References

IPCC report, August 2021

- <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>

The proposal for the Finnish Climate Law

- <https://ym.fi/en/-/new-climate-change-act-sent-out-for-comments>

European Climate Law

- <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/06/28/council-adopts-european-climate-law/>

EU Commission's Fit for 55 - proposal

- https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_3541

Examples of area that need systemic early warning systems:

- Food security
- Water security
- Changes on weather patterns
- Critical phenomena that will accelerate climate change (positive feedbacks)
- Investments and their volume needed to mitigate change