

## Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform: the European Commission's ambition must be preserved

ZEP strongly supports the European Commission's proposal for a regulation Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) that proposes **to increase the size of the Innovation Fund and Horizon Europe funding programmes** and **calls on the Council to align with the European Commission** to increase funding under the Innovation Fund and Horizon Europe programmes.

The Council's General Approach to STEP would see no increase in the Innovation Fund and Horizon Europe. ZEP is very concerned about this position and would like to **reiterate the need for an appropriate response to the incentives provided under the Inflation Reduction Act to ensure industrial decarbonisation** across the EU while preserving jobs and economic activity.

The European Commission proposed an injection capacity objective of 50 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year for the EU by 2030. The European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change published a [report in June 2023](#) stating that the EU must strive for net emissions reductions of 90-95% by 2040, relative to 1990 levels. These ambitions would rely on **large-scale carbon capture and storage (CCS) deployment and increased support under the Innovation Fund**. ZEP would also like to highlight the importance of strengthening the support for CCS and carbon capture and utilisation **research and innovation**, as proposed by the European Commission.

Finally, ZEP supports the focus on low-income countries under Article 9 of the European Commission proposal but would like to highlight that most planned **CCS projects have a cross-border dimension**. Clarification would be required regarding **the eligibility of CCS projects** aiming to capture CO<sub>2</sub> in EU countries with a GDP per capita below the EU average and transport the CO<sub>2</sub> for storage in other European countries, including the EU, the European Economic Area, and the UK.

### About the Zero Emissions Platform

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*The Zero Emissions Platform (ZEP) is a European Technology and Innovation Platform (ETIP) under the Commission's Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan). It acts as the EU's adviser on the deployment of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), and Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU).*

*ZEP supports the European Union's commitment to reach climate neutrality by 2050, defined as net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050. To this end, CCS technologies represent readily available and cost-efficient pathways for decarbonising industrial and energy sectors in the European Union. Some applications of CCU – where CO<sub>2</sub> is stored in a manner intended to be permanent – can also contribute to this goal.*