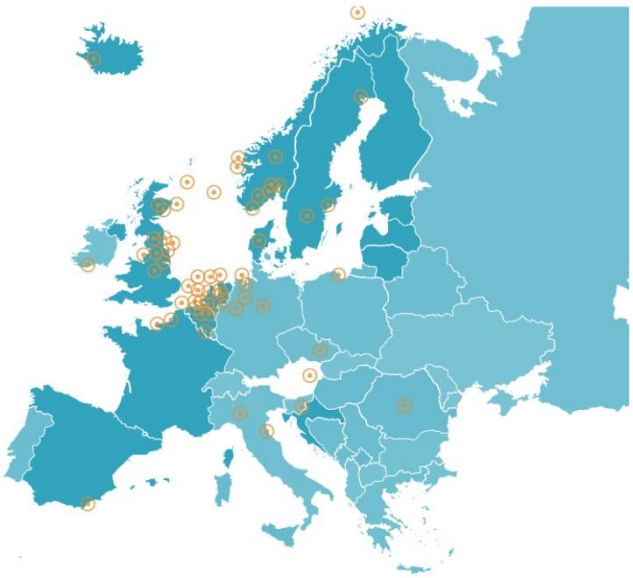
ZEP response – Consultation on the list of candidate Projects of Common Interest in cross-border carbon dioxide transport networks

Reaching climate neutrality by 2050 requires strategic investment decisions. The pathway towards climate neutrality will bring about a major transformation of energy-intensive industries, such as cement, lime, steel, chemicals and refining, that are at the core of the European economy and provide products that are at the heart of how we live our lives. For these sectors, pathways including CCS and CO2 infrastructure represents the lowest-cost route to decarbonisation whilst maintaining industrial activity and preserving existing jobs.

By developing CO2 transport and storage infrastructure, CO2 emitters can capture and store emissions produced during industrial processes. CCS also plays an important role in the manufacturing low-carbon hydrogen which can be used to fuel energy-intensive industries and households. When applied to industrial processes and power plants, CCS can secure jobs and incomes and ensure European industrial competitiveness in international markets while delivering sustainable growth.

In your opinion, is a proposed project significantly contributing to market integration/sustainability/security of supply/competition and therefore needed from an EU energy policy perspective?



- Securing political support for the list of candidate projects on cross-border CO2 infrastructure[1] is vital. These projects are on the right track to become operational before 2025. A long-term policy framework providing a degree of predictability for investments should be a priority for European policymakers. CO2 infrastructure projects call for European legislators to extend the scope of existing legislation – such as the TEN-E regulation and EU ETS directive – to prepare for the rollout of CO2 and clean hydrogen infrastructure. As indicated in the European Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities, all modes of CO2 transportation to permanent geological storage – pipeline, ship, barge, train, truck – enable other economic activities to achieve climate change mitigation. This outcome is critical and should be preserved and reflected in revised TEN-E regulation, the EU ETS directive the EU ETS Monitoring and Reporting Regulation, as it will allow near-ready CO2 transport and storage projects to be realised and to create opportunities for numerous CO2 emitters throughout the entire EU area to have access to low-cost decarbonisation pathways. Repurposing existing natural gas infrastructure should also be discussed and the potential for CO2 transport should be assessed.

- Other initiatives, such as the 'Hydrogen and gas market decarbonisation package', provide opportunities to expand relevant elements of the existing gas regulatory framework to enable the transport of other gases, including CO2 in the context of CCS. As CCS is scaled

[1] List of candidate Projects of Common Interest (PCI) in CO2 infrastructure, 2021

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up in the EU and cross-border transport solutions are required, companies should be able to offer CO2 transport services to the market based on a clear legal basis.

- While some upcoming and planned CCS projects will rely on CO2 transport by pipeline, the role of shipping will become increasingly important in this decade to connect CO2 emitters across Europe to unevenly distributed storage sites. Several candidate projects on the 5th list (and 4th and previous list) rely on CO2 transport by ship. It is crucial to put in place an enabling policy framework that will support the development of cross-border European CO2 infrastructure.

- Rolling out CO2 infrastructure is necessary to enable the kick-start of a clean hydrogen economy. Large-scale volumes of low-carbon hydrogen will become available as soon as CO2 infrastructure is in place, thus contributing to industrial decarbonisation. CO2 infrastructure is a no-regret opportunity that enables industries to go carbon negative and achieve carbon dioxide removals.

- Thorough carbon accounting is needed to ensure that only those projects that store CO2 in a manner intended to be permanent – geological storage in compliance with CCS Directive and long-term storage in materials, such as cement – should be able to access funding under the Connecting Europe Facility for Energy funding.

About the Zero Emissions Platform

The Zero Emissions Platform (ZEP) is a European Technology and Innovation Platform (ETIP) under the Commission's Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan) and acts as the EU's technical adviser on the deployment of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), and Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU) under Horizon2020 R&I programme (grant agreement 826051).

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 the decarbonisation of industrial and energy sectors in the European Union. Some applications of CCU – where CO2 is stored in a manner intended to be permanent – can also contribute to this goal.