



Mr. Janez Potočnik
Commissioner for the Environment
DG Environment
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

18 June 2012

Dear Commissioner Potočnik,

During the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development - Rio +20, private and public stakeholders will discuss how to reduce poverty, advance social equity and ensure environmental protection. European business supports these goals. We are engaged to improve the sustainability and competitiveness of the European economy through the "greening" of all economic sectors in order to tackle the global challenges we face.

In this context, we were encouraged by the progress towards a global climate agreement achieved last year during the COP 17 in Durban. It is essential to preserve the support expressed for an "outcome with legal force" for all the parties and that the Rio process complements the on-going UN climate negotiations.

We are, therefore, concerned over the re-introduction in a number of places in the draft text for the outcome of the Rio +20 Conference, of references to "common but differentiated responsibilities" in the context of climate change or UNFCCC. Focus on this specific issue could clearly set a precedent with the potential to move the climate change negotiations back to a status prior to the Durban outcome, thereby delaying and international agreement that contains appropriate commitments for all developed and emerging countries.

We also urge EU negotiators to resist efforts to weaken Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), by rejecting IPR references or more indirect and unqualified language on (non-voluntary) technology transfer, "assured" or "preferential" technology access and "access to information" to be included in a final Rio+20 outcome. This is essential as IPRs create value for companies, play a key role in promoting future economic growth, also in the field of environmental protection, and help position European business in an increasingly innovation-driven global economy.



Finally, we note the attention devoted to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). We witness a growing awareness amongst companies that CSR can have a positive impact on business performance for example by helping to manage risks.

For this reason we believe that CSR should be pursued through a voluntary approach, driven by business. Consequently, companies should be able to decide how to best communicate their CSR performance to stakeholders, according to the needs of target groups, the company's possibilities as well as a cost-benefit analysis.

Yours sincerely

Philippe de Buck