



Mr Darragh O'Brien
Minister for Climate, Energy, and the Environment
Chair of the Environment Council

21 October 2026

Dear Minister, dear Chair,

**Preserving the ambition of the European Commission's proposal on
speeding up environmental assessments**

Speeding up and simplifying permitting procedures, including the environmental assessments stage, is a strong call of the European business community. Faster and more predictable environmental assessments are essential for accelerating investment in Europe's industrial transformation, energy and infrastructure.

The European Commission's proposal on speeding up environmental assessments offers a real opportunity to deliver such necessary improvements across the Union.

We appreciate the work of the Irish EU Presidency and recognise that Member States wish to ensure the Regulation fits their national administrative systems. We also welcome elements of the Council's mandate that improve the proposal, such as the broad list of strategic projects eligible for accelerated procedures and the extension of the Birds and Habitats derogation to recurring activities.

However, we are deeply concerned that the sum of flexibilities introduced in the Council's mandate will considerably reduce the ambition of the European Commission's proposal. The Regulation can only bring widely spread speed and predictability if it sets a common framework that applies across the Union. Making the single point of contact and combined procedures optional, softening key deadlines or removing rules on changes to existing projects would leave companies facing very different procedures from one Member State to the next. The result risks being a set of fragmented national approaches, which would significantly limit the added value of this EU Regulation.

In view of the further negotiations, we therefore call on co-legislators to keep the initial ambition of the European Commission's proposal and to refrain from introducing too many flexibilities. A harmonised and predictable framework is what will make the Regulation impactful. Maintaining a strong commitment to the simplification agenda will also matter well beyond this file, as a signal for future initiatives.

We stand ready to discuss these issues with you further.

Yours sincerely,



Markus J. Beyrer
Director General