

**Ms. Ursula von der Leyen**  
President of the European Commission

Cc:  
**Ms. Jessika Roswall**  
Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy  
European Commission

**Mr. Christophe Hansen**  
Commissioner for Agriculture and Food  
European Commission

**Mr. Manfred Weber**  
Chair of the European People's Party  
European Parliament

**Ms. Dolors Montserrat**  
Vice-Chair of the European People's Party  
European Parliament

Madrid, 11 November 2024

Dear Ms. President of the European Commission,

As president of ASAJA, the Spanish Farmers' Association, I am writing to inform you of the situation resulting from the recent catastrophe caused by a 'cold drop' phenomenon and the consequent flooding in the region of Valencia, which has caused 219 deaths so far and economic losses estimated at several hundred millions of euros. This tragedy has been aggravated by questionable management of river areas under the competence of Ms. Teresa Ribera, current Vice-President of the Spanish Government for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, and nominated candidate to be the next Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition of the European Commission.

The Spanish organisation *Iustitia Europa* has filed a legal complaint against Ms. Ribera before the Supreme Court, accusing her of omission of the duty of care, prevarication, reckless homicide and injuries. The complaint argues that, as head of the Júcar Hydrographic Confederation and responsible for basin supervision, Ms. Ribera had a duty to supervise, coordinate and activate the emergency protocols necessary to prevent and mitigate the effects of the cold drop. However, her inaction and lack of direct intervention to manage these risks has revealed a series of serious omissions, with devastating consequences.

The neglect of riverbed and gully cleaning, which we have been warning about as an organisation for years, has left these areas vulnerable to natural disasters of great magnitude, such as the one we have recently suffered. As those responsible for the protection of our natural resources and with the obligation to protect the public, it is essential that these omissions and failures to protect our natural resources are addressed, especially now that Ms. Ribera is standing as a candidate for vicepresident of the European Commission.

I would like to remind you that in June of this year we already sent you a letter expressing our concern about her possible appointment as Commissioner of the European Commission due to her management as Vice-President of the Spanish Government, which we consider detrimental to the Spanish agricultural sector. During her more than six years in office, she has not held a single meeting with the main agricultural organisations. This lack of communication and collaboration has generated a deep sense of helplessness and frustration among farmers and ranchers, who see decisions that directly affect their livelihoods being taken without their voice or expertise.

In this regard, I respectfully request that this situation be considered in the assessment of her suitability for the position of Executive Vice-President for Clean, Just and Competitive Transition at the European Commission, in order to ensure that sustainability and climate risk management policies in Europe are in the hands of people who are committed to the security and well-being of citizens.

I thank you in advance for your attention to this request and remain at your disposal for any further questions or information you may require.

Kind regards,



**Pedro Barato Triguero**  
President of ASAJA