



SOCIETÀ METEOROLOGICA ITALIANA Onlus

Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale per lo studio e la divulgazione di meteorologia, climatologia e glaciologia. Fondata nel 1865, aderente alla EMS - European Meteorological Society
Iscritta all'Anagrafe Nazionale delle Ricerche M.U.R.S.T, codice 53496MMN
Osservatorio di Moncalieri, Collegio Carlo Alberto, via Real Collegio 30 – 10024 Moncalieri - TO
Tel. +39 347 080 44 44, +39 335 144 71 69 Email: info@nimbus.it - Web: www.nimbus.it
C.F.: 97604160016, C/C Postale n. 19 62 11 43



Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

Mrs. Adina Vălean, EU Transport Commissioner

Cc Italian Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport

Cc Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition

Moncalieri, 13th February 2021

Subject: Is high speed rail Lyon-Turin consistent with EU climate strategy?

Dear Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen and Mrs. Vălean,

We thank you for your letter Ref. PF/Ares(2021)494893 dated February 9th, 2021.

We agree that rail transportation is an important part of the energy transition. But not all rail projects are climate sustainable, depending on how they are built. In fact, environmental sustainability is based on measurable physical quantities, not words. Our question, which was not answered, asked:

how the construction of a 57.5 km Lyon-Turin tunnel under the Alps can be compatible with the European Union's objectives and tight deadlines for the drastic reduction of greenhouse gases, since its emissions during construction are estimated (by the promoter and without being certified by a third party) to be at least 10 million tons of CO₂ and the potential offsetting will not take place before 2048, as inferred from [Special Report n° 10/2020](#) of the European Court of Auditors.

We are very sensitive to the problems of pollution in the alpine valleys and metropolitan areas; however, we are not aware of any European policy aimed at discouraging the use of roads in order to promote the use of existing railways.

Another question that has remained unanswered is the one regarding the economic and social effectiveness of highly capital-intensive and low labour-intensive investments, such as the construction sites of the "megaprojects", compared to those with high labour intensity and low capital intensity such as maintenance, safety, energy efficiency improvements distributed throughout the territory.

In your letter you refer to **solidarity and unity**, themes on which our sensitivity is utmost. But again, our propensity for facts and figures leads us to observe that every day there are thousands of *travellers* who cross or try to cross the Alps in an ancient

way: on foot. Just as there are thousands who cross the Mediterranean Sea on rafts and rubber dinghies. There is certainly a problem of solidarity and unity of purpose on a European scale.

This problem, of course, would not be solved by the new Lyon-Turin line.

If you would like to answer our questions, we would be extremely grateful.

Kind regards.

Luca Mercalli, President of the Società Meteorologica Italiana

Angelo Tartaglia, Politecnico di Torino

Ugo Bardi, Università di Firenze

Sergio Ulgiati, Università degli Studi di Napoli Parthenope

Gianni Silvestrini, President of the scientific committee, Kyoto Club

Pietro Salizzoni, Ecole Centrale, Lyon