# Convention (1979) on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution: amendment to the 1999 Protocol to abate acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone

2013/0448(NLE) - 06/04/2017 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to accept, on behalf of the European Union, an Amendment to the 1999 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: the Union is a party to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution as well as to the 1999 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone ('the Gothenburg Protocol').

The parties to the Gothenburg Protocol opened negotiations with a view to improving further the protection of human health and the environment, including through the establishment of **new emission reduction obligations for selected air pollutants to be achieved by the year 2020** and the updating of emission limit values addressing emissions of air pollutants at source.

In 2012, the Protocol was modified and two new annexes added. The Amendments set out in Decision 2012/1 entered into force and became effective on the basis of the expedited procedure provided for in the Gothenburg Protocol. The Amendment set out in Decision 2012/2 requires acceptance by the Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol.

The Union has already adopted instruments on matters covered by the Amendment. This last one should now be approved.

CONTENT: the Council draft seeks to approve, on behalf of the European Union, **the Amendment to the 1999 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone**, set out in Decision 2012/2 of the Executive Body of the Convention.

The proposed Amendment to the 1999 protocol sets out **new national emission reduction commitments** for 2020 onwards.

It covers **four air pollutants**: sulphur, nitrogen oxides, ammonia and volatile organic compounds (VOC) other than methane, and **particulate matter**.

In particular, the amendment includes: (i) emission reductions for **black carbon**; (ii) an update of the emission limit values set in the annex to the protocol; (iii) new standards on the content of non-methane VOC's in products.