

Climate diplomacy

2017/2272(INI) - 26/06/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the joint report by Arne LIETZ (S&D, DE) and Jo LEINEN (S&D, DE) on climate diplomacy.

The committee stated in the report that EU diplomatic capacities should be strengthened in order to **promote climate action globally**, support the implementation of the **Paris agreement** and prevent **climate change-related conflict**.

Members began by recalling that climate impacts exacerbate food insecurity, displacement, migration, poverty, gender inequalities, human trafficking, and violence, and have an impact on peace and security. They were particularly concerned about the deterioration in the planet's ecosystems and water resources and the growing threat posed by the scarcity of water and by water-related risks.

It stated that **climate diplomacy** can be understood as a form of targeted foreign policy to promote climate action through reaching out to other actors, cooperating on specific climate-related issues, building strategic partnerships and strengthening relations between state and non-state actors, including major contributors to global pollution.

Implementation of the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030: reaffirming the EU's commitment to the Paris Agreement the UN Agenda 2030, Members called on the Commission and the Member States to **play an active and constructive role** during the 2018 Talanoa Dialogue and COP24 in Katowice, Poland, as 2018 will be a crucial year for the implementation of the Paris Agreement

Noting that several studies have found indirect links between climate change, natural disasters and the outbreak of armed conflicts, Members stressed that EU foreign policy should develop capacity to monitor climate change risks, including crisis prevention and conflict sensitivity.

Recognising that climate change exacerbates conditions leading to migration in vulnerable areas, Members called on the EU to actively participate in the debate on a universal legal definition of the term 'climate refugee' within the UN with a view to establishing an international legal framework for persons displaced due to the effects of climate change and the adoption of a common approach on this issue.

Strengthening the EU capacity for climate diplomacy: in order to better reflect the increased engagement in climate diplomacy, Members called for an **increased allocation of human and financial resources** in the EEAS and the Commission. The Commission and the Member States were urged to **increase climate diplomacy-related spending** in the next multiannual financial framework (MFF), to approve earmarking of at least 30 % for climate-related spending, as advocated by Parliament in [its resolution](#) of 14 March 2018 on the next MFF. The EU budget as a whole should be aligned to the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs in order to ensure that budget spending does not run contrary to climate efforts.

They urged the EU and particularly EEAS to:

- include climate diplomacy on **EU delegations'** agendas when meeting their counterparts from third countries and international or regional organisations and
- include a **focal point** on climate change in the main EU delegations in third countries and ensure a higher percentage of **climate experts** when creating mixed posts in the EU delegations.

- **mainstream gender perspectives** into climate policies and to take a gender-responsive approach as climate change often exacerbates gender inequalities

The report stressed the need for **significant transformational investment** in economies. Members were convinced that an EU financial system which contributes to climate mitigation and incentivises investments in clean technologies and sustainable solutions will be a role model for other countries.

The fight against climate change as a driver of international cooperation: Members called on the Commission to integrate the climate change dimension into **international trade and investment agreements** and to make ratification and implementation of the Paris Agreement **a condition** for future trade agreements.

The Commission was also asked to:

- make a comprehensive assessment of the **consistency** of existing agreements with the Paris agreement wherever appropriate;
- streamline financial instruments with a view to **ensuring coherence**, to support third countries in tackling climate change and to increase the effectiveness of EU climate action;
- systematically include a **mandatory fundamental climate change clause in international agreements**, including trade and investment agreements, regarding mutual commitment to ratifying and implementing the Paris Agreement, thereby supporting the European and international decarbonisation process.

Members emphasised also the need to move moving towards a circular net-zero carbon economy, and believed that further work on developing **carbon border adjustments** is necessary as a leverage for further efforts by all countries to achieve the objectives enshrined in the Paris Agreement.

The EU's strategic partners: Members regretted the US President's announcement of his decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, but considered it important for the EU to keep up its efforts to re-engage the US in multilateral cooperation on climate action. They considered that **parliamentary dialogue and cooperation with local authorities** are key to this end.

They called for the EU to strengthen support for **civil society** around the globe as agents for climate action, and stressed the role of **regions and cities** as regards sustainable development.

Lastly, Members highlighted the importance of **cross-border cooperation** between Member States and partner countries, particularly as regards cross-border environmental impact assessments.