

Resolution on the European Green Deal

2019/2956(RSP) - 15/01/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 482 votes to 136, with 95 abstentions a resolution on the Green Pact for Europe presented by the Commission on December 2019.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S&D, Renew and Greens /EFA groups.

Parliament stressed the urgent need for ambitious action to tackle climate change and environment challenges and stressed that all people living in Europe should enjoy the fundamental right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and a stable climate. The Green Pact should be at the heart of Europe's strategy for a new sustainable growth, respecting the limits of the planet, and for creating economic opportunities, driving investment and creating quality jobs.

Increasing the EU's climate ambition for 2030 and 2050

While welcoming the fact that the deal aims at carbon neutrality by 2050, Parliament called for an ambitious EU climate law with a binding national and economy-wide target of zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at the latest, as well as intermediate EU targets for 2030 and 2040 to be achieved under such legislation. The EU's domestic greenhouse gas emission reduction target for 2030 should be increased to 55% compared to 1990 levels. The EU should adopt these targets well in advance of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

The Commission is invited to present, where necessary, proposals based on impact assessments, with a view to revising EU climate and energy legislation by June 2021, in order to deliver on the increased climate ambitions. It should also make use of the additional potential of other existing EU legislation to contribute to the fight against climate change.

Given the global differences in climate ambition, Parliament voted in favour of a WTO-compliant border carbon adjustment mechanism. This mechanism would provide an alternative to existing carbon leakage measures under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS).

Financing the EU Green Deal and ensuring a fair transition

Parliament called on the Commission to propose a comprehensive financing plan based on a coherent set of proposals to stimulate public and private investment at all levels. Such a plan would address the considerable financing needs and additional investment required to meet the objectives of the European Green Deal, which well exceed the conservative figure of EUR 260 billion stated by the Commission, which does not consider for instance the investment needs for climate adaptation and for other environmental challenges such as biodiversity, or the public investment needed to address social costs.

Parliament supported plans for a sustainable investment plan to help bridge the investment gap, finance the transition to a carbon-neutral economy and ensure a just transition between all EU regions. It expressed its conviction that a well-designed and fair transition mechanism, including a Just Transition Fund, would be a key element to facilitate this transition and achieve ambitious climate goals while addressing the social impact it will have.

Members called for the creation of a mechanism to ensure good coordination and coherence between all available EU policies, financing instruments and investments, including the EIB, in order to increase

synergies, complementarities and additionality of their financing, and to mobilise sustainable public and private investment.

The planned revision of the State Aid Guidelines should reflect the strategic objectives of the EU Green Deal and aim to strengthen investment in sustainable solutions, to ensure the phasing out of direct and indirect subsidies to coal and fossil fuels in the European Union and to provide guidance for national, regional and local authorities, whose role will be decisive in the implementation of the Deal.

Parliament made a series of recommendations, including the following:

- ***providing clean, affordable and secure energy***: Parliament called for a revision of the directive on renewable energy sources and the setting of binding national targets for each Member State. It recommended that “energy first principle”, which is fundamental to reducing the Union's energy dependence, should be implemented in all sectors and policies;
- ***mobilising industry for a circular and clean economy***: Members welcomed the announcement that the Commission will present a new industrial strategy and a strategy for SMEs by March 2020. They called for an ambitious new action plan for the circular economy, while recalling the key role of digital technologies in supporting the green transition. They called for the establishment of a green EU Single Market through provisions such as the use of green public procurement;
- ***accelerating the shift from sustainable and smart mobility***: Parliament welcomed the forthcoming strategy on sustainable and smart mobility and shared the Commission's view that all modes of transport (road, rail, air and waterborne) should contribute to the decarbonisation of the transport sector, in line with the objective of reaching a climate-neutral economy;
- ***designing a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system***: Parliament welcomed the Commission's proposal to present a "From Farm to Fork" strategy in 2020 in order to put in place a more sustainable food policy with the ambition of guaranteeing affordable and quality food for Europeans, while ensuring a decent life for farmers and fishermen and the competitiveness of the agricultural sector. It called for a sustainable CAP that helps farmers to deliver more environmental and climate benefits and to better manage volatility and crises;
- ***preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity***: deploring that Europe continues to lose its biodiversity at an alarming rate, Parliament called for the EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030 to include both ambitious and enforceable legal measures, with binding targets, to step up the protection of vulnerable ecosystems and comprehensive measures to tackle the causes of biodiversity loss.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed the concept of the ‘do no harm’ and the commitment by the Commission to ensure that all EU actions should help the EU achieve a sustainable future and a just transition.

It stated that it will, as work on the Green Deal progresses, return with more detailed positions on specific measures and policy actions and will use its full legislative powers to review and amend any proposals from the Commission to ensure that they support all the objectives of the Green Deal.