

European Climate Law

2020/0036(COD) - 08/10/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 392 votes to 161, with 142 abstentions, amendments to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law).

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for inter-institutional negotiations.

The main amendments adopted in plenary concern the following points:

Binding target of climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest

The proposed Regulation shall establish a framework for the irreversible, predictable and swift reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and enhancement of removals by natural or other sinks in the Union in line with the Union's climate and environmental objectives.

Members insisted that not only the EU but also all individual Member States should achieve climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest.

The relevant Union institutions and the Member States shall provide support at Union and at national, regional and local level respectively, to enable the achievement of the climate-neutrality objective in the Union and in all Member States, taking into account the importance of promoting fairness and solidarity and a just transition among Member States, social and economic cohesion, the protection of vulnerable Union citizens and the importance of managing, restoring, protecting and enhancing marine and terrestrial biodiversity, ecosystems and carbon sinks.

Negative emissions after 2050

From 1 January 2051, the EU and all Member States are expected to absorb more greenhouse gases than they emit.

By 31 May 2023, the Commission shall study, after an impact assessment, the possibilities of setting a specific target for the Union by 2040 and present legislative proposals if appropriate. By December 2020, the Commission shall draw up a plan setting out the measures to be taken at EU level to ensure that sufficient resources are mobilised to finance the investments needed to achieve a climate-neutral EU economy.

Specific target for 2030

While the European Commission has proposed raising this target to at least 55%, Parliament proposed that the Union's specific climate target for 2030 should be a **60%** reduction in emissions compared to 1990.

By 30 June 2021 at the latest, the Commission shall identify the changes to be made to all Union legislation relevant to the achievement of the Union's specific climate objective for 2030 and take the necessary measures. The Commission shall in particular evaluate the options for aligning emissions from all sectors, including aviation and maritime transport, with the 2030 target for climate and the 2050 climate-neutrality objective in order to reduce these emissions to net zero by 2050 at the latest and shall present legislative proposals, where appropriate, to the European Parliament and to the Council.

The Commission shall:

- base its proposals on a comprehensive impact assessment covering environmental, economic and social effects, reflecting the post-COVID-19 economic situation and paying special attention to the sectoral reduction and removal potentials, and the impact of Brexit on Union emissions;
- assess the cumulative impact of amending the Union legislation implementing the Union's 2030 target on different industry sectors;
- ensure that a fair and cost-effective balance is maintained between the EU ETS and the effort sharing sector, as well as between national targets in the effort sharing sector.

Trajectory towards climate neutrality

Parliament called on the Commission to assess by 31 May 2023 a trajectory at European level to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and to present, if necessary, a legislative proposal to this effect. This legislative proposal shall take into account the EU's greenhouse gas emissions budget, which sets the total amount of greenhouse gases, in CO₂ equivalent, that could be emitted until 2050 at the latest without jeopardising the EU's commitments under the Paris agreement.

This trajectory shall be reviewed no later than six months after each global stocktake under the Paris agreement, starting with the 2028 global stocktake.

European Council on Climate Change (ECCC)

Members want the Commission to establish, by 30 June 2022 at the latest, in cooperation with the nationally appointed climate advisory bodies, a European Climate Change Council (ECCC), a permanent, independent and interdisciplinary scientific advisory group on climate change, based on the latest scientific findings of the IPCC, to assess policy coherence and progress.

EU strategy on adaptation to climate change

By 31 January 2021 at the latest, and every five years thereafter, the Commission shall adopt an updated EU strategy on adaptation to climate change. The updated EU strategy shall aim to ensure that adaptation policies are prioritised, integrated and implemented consistently across all EU policies, international commitments, trade agreements and international partnerships.

European Climate Pact and citizen participation

The Commission shall establish a European Climate Pact in order to involve citizens, social partners and stakeholders in the development of climate policies at EU level and to promote dialogue and the dissemination of scientific information on climate change and its social and gender equality aspects, as well as to share best practices on climate initiatives.

Parliament proposed that the EU institutions and Member States shall ensure that continuous progress is made to make public and private financial flows consistent with a pathway towards a climate-neutral and resilient society. It also called for the Union to end investment protection for fossil fuels in the context of the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty.