Basic information

2013/0448(NLE) NLE - Non-legislative enactments Decision	Procedure completed
Convention (1979) on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution: amendment to the 1999 Protocol to abate acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone See also 2002/0035(CNS) **Subject** 3.70.02 Atmospheric pollution, motor vehicle pollution 3.70.03 Climate policy, climate change, ozone layer 3.70.09 Transfrontier pollution 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	VĂLEAN Adina (PPE)	10/07/2014
	Shadow rapporteur PAOLUCCI Massimo (S&D) GIRLING Julie (ECR) BEARDER Catherine (ALDE) KONEČNÁ Kateřina (GUE/NGL) AFFRONTE Marco (EFDD)	

Former committee responsible	Former rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Climate and Food Safety		

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Former committee for opinion	Former rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy		

Council of the European Union	

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Agriculture and Fisheries	3556	2017-07-17

European Commission	

Commission DG	Commissioner
Environment	POTOČNIK Janez

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
18/12/2013	Preparatory document	COM(2013)0917	
06/04/2017	Legislative proposal published	07524/2017	Summary
15/05/2017	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/06/2017	Vote in committee		
28/06/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A8-0241/2017	Summary
05/07/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0295/2017	Summary
05/07/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
17/07/2017	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
17/07/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/09/2017	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2013/0448(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Consent by Parliament
Legislative instrument	Decision
Amendments and repeals	See also 2002/0035(CNS)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 218-p6a Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 192-p1
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/00318

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE551.879	23/05/2017	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A8-0241/2017	28/06/2017	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T8-0295/2017	05/07/2017	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	07524/2017	06/04/2017	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Preparatory document	COM(2013)0917	18/12/2013	Summary
Commission working document (SWD)	SWD(2013)0531	18/12/2013	
Commission working document (SWD)	SWD(2013)0532	18/12/2013	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2013)0917	06/08/2014	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Decision 2017/1757
OJ L 248 27.09.2017, p. 0003 Summary

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

2013/0448(NLE) - 18/12/2013

PURPOSE: to approve the 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 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (the LRTAP Convention) concluded under the auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is the main international legal framework for cooperation and measures to limit and gradually reduce and prevent air pollution and its adverse effects upon human health and the environment in the UNECE region.

The LRTAP Convention was signed on behalf of the European Economic Community in 1979 and approved by Council Decision 81/462/EEC of 11 June 1981.

To date, the LRTAP Convention has been extended by eight Protocols, including the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone. This Protocol promotes a multi-pollutant approach to prevent or minimize exceedances of critical loads of acidification and nutrient nitrogen and critical levels of ozone for human health and vegetation. To that effect, it sets national emission ceilings for each Party to be met by 2010 and thereafter for the following four air pollutants: sulphur (mainly sulphur dioxide, SO2), nitrogen oxides (NOx), ammonia (NH3) and volatile organic compounds other than methane (VOC).

To support the achievement of the national emission ceilings, the Annexes of the Protocol establish emission limit values to control emissions of air pollutants generated at source from relevant categories of stationary and mobile sources.

The accession of the Community to the Protocol was approved on behalf of the Community by Council Decision 2003/507/EC of 13 June 2003. The Protocol, which entered into force

on 17 May 2005, has been transposed into EU law mainly through Directive 2001/80/EC on large combustion plants and Directive 2001/81/EC on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants (NEC Directive).

Review of the Protocol: following the review of the Protocol by the Parties, it has been judged necessary to strengthen efforts to meet the environmental and human health-related objectives of achieving critical loads and levels for long term protection of human health and the environment. Two Decisions (EB Decisions 2012/1 and 2012/2) were adopted which amended the text of the Protocol and its Annexes and added two new annexes (X and XI). Two other Decisions on the implementation of the Protocol provisions (provisional application of adjustments to national emission reduction commitments or to national emission inventories) were also adopted by consensus of the Parties.

It is now necessary to approve the modifications made to the Protocol on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: the Council is called upon to accept, on behalf of the European Union, the Amendment to the Protocol to the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone.

Main aim of the proposed amendment: the amended Protocol sets out **new national emission reduction commitments to be met by 2020 and beyond** for four air pollutants:

- sulphur (mainly sulphur dioxide, SO2),
- nitrogen oxides (NOx),
- ammonia (NH3),
- volatile organic compounds other than methane (VOC)

as well as for fine particulate matter (PM2,5).

It also promotes :

1. emission reductions for black carbon (a component of particulate matter a short-lived climate pollutant),
2. updates the emission limit values set in the Protocol Annexes,
3. establishes new standards on the content of non-methane volatile organic compounds in products,
4. and completes the reporting obligation of the Parties regarding the emissions of air pollutants as well as the progress made in the fields of technology and research.

Transposition mechanism: the amendments to the Protocol shall be transposed into EU law through several legal instruments. To that purpose, the Commission has proposed a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council to amend the NEC Directive and a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from medium combustion plants. Both those Directives

shall apply alongside existing EU emission source control Directives, including Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions.

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.

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

2013/0448(NLE) - 17/07/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to approve, 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.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2017/1757 on the acceptance on behalf of the European Union of an Amendment to the 1999 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-Level Ozone.

CONTENT: the Council adopted a Decision approving, on behalf of the 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/EC of the Executive Body of the Convention.

The Union is a party 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 in 2007 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 amended and two new annexes were added. The Amendments set out in Decision 2012/1/EC entered into force and became effective on the basis of the expedited procedure provided for in the Gothenburg Protocol.

The Amendment contained in Decision 2012/2 is the subject of this Decision.

The Amendment sets out **new national emission reduction commitments from 2020 on air pollutants**: **sulphur, nitrogen oxides, ammonia and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) other than methane** and **particulate matter**.

The Amendment takes a step forward by: (i) incorporating **black carbon** as a particulate matter component; (ii) **updating the emission limit values** (emission standards) for different air pollution sources: stationary (e.g. factories and processing plants) and mobile (e.g. vehicles, non-road mobile machines and agricultural and forestry tractors); (iii) introducing new standards on the **content of non-methane VOC's in products**.

The Union has already adopted instruments on matters covered by the Amendment, including Directives 2001/81/EC on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants and (EU) 2015/2193 on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from medium combustion plants.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 17.7.2017.

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

2013/0448(NLE) - 05/07/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 630 votes to 10 with 25 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the acceptance on behalf of the European Union of an Amendment to the 1999 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone.

Following the recommendation by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, Parliament **gave its consent** to the acceptance of an amendment of the protocol.

The request for consent was submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 192(1) and Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

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

2013/0448(NLE) - 28/06/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Adina-Ioana VĂLEAN (EPP, RO) on the draft Council decision on the acceptance on behalf of the European Union of an Amendment to the 1999 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone.

The committee recommended that Parliament **give its consent** to the acceptance of an amendment of the protocol.

In the explanatory memorandum accompanying the report, it is recalled that the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, which entered into force in 1983, was the first legally binding international instrument created to control and reduce damage to human health and the environment caused by transboundary air pollution.

The Eighth Protocol to the Convention, **the 1999 Protocol on the reduction of acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone** (or the Gothenburg Protocol), sets emission ceilings for sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and ammonia.

On 4 May 2012, the parties to the Gothenburg Protocol adopted a wide range of revisions, including more stringent emission reduction commitments for 2020.

The revised Protocol is also the first binding agreement to include emission reduction commitments for fine particulate matter. It now includes measures addressing short-lived climate pollutant black carbon (or **soot**). Reducing particulate matter is considered to be a major step in reducing air pollution.

The ratification of the amendments will be an important step towards a higher level of protection of human health and the environment from transboundary air pollution.