



Climate Change

Green 10 Briefing for the European Parliament

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The Earth's atmosphere has gone through cycles of warming and cooling that maintained an environmental balance capable of supporting life for millennia. Human activities over the last 150 years have caused these cycles to alter, resulting in global climate change. Dangerous, human-induced climate change has now arrived and addressing it is a matter of survival and sustainability for humanity and ecology. Since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [1] presented its Fourth Assessment Report in 2007, new scientific findings tell us that the impacts of climate change on the planet, people and nature are appearing much sooner and are more severe than anticipated.

But while humans will be worst affected, they have also caused climate change, we also have the power to get it in check. The EU has a long-standing goal of limiting global average temperature increase to below 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. The scenario most consistent with the EU's 2 degree goal, as reported in the latest IPCC report, requires that global emissions peak between 2000 and 2015 and decline sharply thereafter. Recent observations, however, confirm that the worst-case IPCC scenarios are already occurring. This means that EU and international policy are already lagging behind climate science and the need to act now is more urgent than ever. We must drastically change the way we produce and consume energy, rapidly deploy clean energy technologies, change our transportation systems and protect forests and oceans if the planet is to stay below 2 degree warming.

Why this is important for the European Parliament

The EU must transform the challenge of climate change into an opportunity to make Europe the most sustainable, resource efficient economy in the world. In order to avoid dangerous climate change, the EU must make strides towards the transformation of its economy from one that remains energy-intensive to one that is highly efficient and which uses renewable resources rather than fossil fuels. While doing so the EU should implement greenhouse gas reduction policies that have significant co-benefits in health, ecosystem preservation and biodiversity, poverty reduction, employment and energy security. The emission reductions that the EU needs to achieve must be in line with the best available scientific information and must be adaptable to address new scientific evidence, while providing medium- and long-term provisional targets.

When the European Parliament will work on it

The second half of 2009 will be a critical period for efforts to combat climate change. The UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen in December will be an important test of the global resolve to create historic change: the international effort must take a quantum leap and deliver a treaty in Copenhagen to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions from 2012.

Decisions made and actions carried out during the next five years in the EU, one of the world's biggest emitters with a high historic responsibility for emissions, will be critical for the Union doing its fair share in avoiding dangerous climate change. The EU has already put itself at the forefront of efforts to maintain a high-level of ambition. The current economic turmoil should not reduce the long-term imperative of putting Europe in the vanguard of realising a sustainable future: measures to stimulate economic activity must be directed towards green technology and energy efficiency.

At EU level, several important dossiers will be going through Parliament for consideration and vote in the near future, including the energy efficiency package, implementation measures for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), a review of the Energy Tax Directive and the recast of the Industrial Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive. Certain elements of the energy efficiency package, including the recast of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the Energy Labelling scheme, should have second readings in Parliament that will conclude during the Swedish presidency. In 2010, the Parliament will work on the EU implementation of the international agreement made at Copenhagen (which includes a review of the ETS, and effort sharing decision). Full revision of the Ecodesign directive and the Energy Services Directive, which will set energy efficiency targets for Europe, along with the Energy Labelling Directive and the EU Ecolabel, is also expected in 2010. . The European Parliament can also play an important role in working with the new European Commission to begin strengthening the existing weak standards for passenger car emissions and to work on a proposal to make the European energy system smarter and suitable for a large scale integration of renewables.

How can we work together

The Green10 coordinates joint responses and recommendations to EU decision makers. We work with the EU law-making institutions - the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers - to ensure that the environment is placed at the heart of policymaking. This includes working with our member organisations in the Member States to facilitate their input into the EU decision-making process.

The Green 10 is working with European NGOs and civil society groups around the world to design and develop effective climate change strategies while promoting equity and sustainable development and ensuring implementation at international, EU, national and local levels. Many of the individual organisations within the Green 10 working on climate change are part of the Climate Action Network (CAN)-Europe, the largest pan-European climate umbrella organisation and also a network member of the Green10. Links to all ten member organisations and networks of the Green 10 can be found on the Green 10 website.

Specific key NGO demands for MEPs related to climate change include:

- 1. Cut EU emissions by at least 40% by 2020 over 1990 levels, of which 30% must happen domestically within the EU.**
- 2. Strengthen European energy efficiency legislation so as to deliver the emission cuts stated above.**
- 3. Reform the ageing European energy and grid system into a smart, flexible and interconnected system, ready for a large uptake of renewable energy.**
- 4. Strengthen the EU ETS through full auctioning of allowances and target-setting consistent with the overall EU 2020 reduction target as mentioned above.**
- 5. Ensure additional financial and technological streams to support developing countries in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. Europe's fair share of an estimated 110 Billion Euros annual international support by 2020 is 30 Billion Euros annually.**
- 6. Introduce a strong CO2 emission performance standard for power plants.**
- 7. Strengthen the emission performance standard for cars to achieve average emissions of 80 grams per kilometre by 2020.**
- 8. Enhance and re-affirm Europe's global leadership on climate change by working with international partners.**

Who we are

The Green 10 are ten of the leading European environmental organisations and networks, including: BirdLife International, CAN-Europe, CEE Bankwatch Network, the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Friends of the Earth Europe, Greenpeace, Health & Environment Alliance (HEAL), International Friends of Nature, Transport + Environment (T&E) and WWF European Policy Office. Membership of the Green 10 is more than 20 million people.



www.green10.org

www.climnet.org

[1] The IPCC is the leading scientific body for the assessment of climate change established by the UN and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to provide a clear scientific view on the current state of climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic consequences.