



Climate Action

Ministers approve EU ratification of Paris Agreement

30/09/2016



In a historic move, EU ministers today approved the ratification of the Paris Agreement by the European Union. The decision was reached at an extraordinary meeting of the Environment Council in Brussels. This decision brings the Paris Agreement very close to entering into force.

Once approved by the European Parliament next week, the EU will be able to deposit its ratification instrument before national ratification processes are completed in each Member State.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said: "Today's decision shows that the European Union delivers on promises made. It demonstrates that the Member States can find common ground when it is clear that acting together, as part of the European Union, their impact is bigger than the mere sum of its parts. I am happy to see that today the Member States decided to make history together and bring closer the entry into force of the first ever universally binding climate change agreement. We must and we can hand over to future generations a world that is more stable, a healthier planet, fairer societies and more prosperous economies. This is not a dream. This is a reality and it is within our reach. Today we are closer to it."

EU Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias Cañete said: "They said Europe is too complicated to agree quickly. They said we had too many hoops to jump through. They said we were all talk. Today's decision shows what Europe is all about: unity and solidarity as Member States take a European approach, just as we did in Paris. We are reaching a critical period for decisive climate action. And when the going gets tough, Europe gets going."

So far, 61 countries, accounting for almost 48% of global emissions have ratified the deal. The Agreement will enter into force 30 days after at least 55 countries, representing at least 55% of global emissions have ratified.

The EU, which played a decisive role in the adoption of the Paris Agreement last December, is a global leader on climate action. The European Commission has already brought forward the main legislative proposals to deliver on the EU's commitment to reduce emissions in the European Union by at least 40% by 2030.

Next steps

Today's approval will be forwarded to the European Parliament for its formal consent next week. Once Parliament has consented, the Council can formally adopt the Decision.

Read more:

- [Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete's press conference speech](#)
- [Paris Agreement](#)



Climate Action

Paris Agreement

At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal.

The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.

The agreement is due to enter into force in 2020.

Key elements

The Paris Agreement is a bridge between today's policies and climate-neutrality before the end of the century.

Mitigation: reducing emissions

Governments agreed

- a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to **well below 2°C** above pre-industrial levels;
- to aim to limit the increase to **1.5°C** since this would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change;
- on the need for **global emissions to peak as soon as possible**, recognising that this will take longer for developing countries;
- to undertake **rapid reductions thereafter** in accordance with the best available science.

Before and during the Paris conference, countries submitted comprehensive **national climate action plans** (INDCs). These are not yet enough to keep global warming below 2°C, but the agreement traces the way to achieving this target.

Transparency and global stocktake

Governments agreed to

- come together every 5 years to **set more ambitious targets** as required by science;
- **report to each other** and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets;
- track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust **transparency and accountability** system.

Adaptation

Governments agreed to

- strengthen societies' ability to **deal with the impacts** of climate change;
- provide continued and enhanced international **support** for adaptation **to developing countries**.

Loss and damage

The agreement also

- recognises the importance of averting, minimising and addressing **loss and damage** associated with the adverse effects of climate change;
- acknowledges the need to **cooperate** and enhance the **understanding, action and support** in different areas such as early warning systems, emergency preparedness and risk insurance.

Role of cities, regions and local authorities

The agreement recognises the role of **non-Party stakeholders** in addressing climate change, including cities, other subnational authorities, civil society, the private sector and others.

They are invited to

- scale up their efforts and support actions to **reduce emissions**;
- **build resilience** and decrease vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change;
- uphold and promote regional and international cooperation.

Support

- The EU and other developed countries will continue to **support climate action** to reduce emissions and build resilience to climate change impacts **in developing countries**.
- Other countries are encouraged to provide or continue to provide such support voluntarily.
- Developed countries intend to continue their existing collective goal to mobilise USD 100 billion per year by 2020 and extend this until 2025. A new and higher goal will be set for after this period.

Questions and answers on the Paris Agreement

Lima-Paris Action Agenda

This initiative of the Peruvian and French COP Presidencies brought countries, cities, businesses and civil society members together to **accelerate cooperative climate action** in support of the new agreement.

Examples of major announcements

Paris Pledge for Action

EU's role

The EU has been at the forefront of international efforts towards a global climate deal.

Following limited participation in the Kyoto Protocol and the lack of agreement in Copenhagen in 2009, the EU has been building a broad coalition of developed and developing countries in favour of high ambition that shaped the successful outcome of the Paris conference.

The EU was the first major economy to submit its intended contribution to the new agreement in March 2015. It is already taking steps to implement its target to reduce emissions by at least 40% by 2030.

EU Climate Action at COP21 (Storify)

How the EU helped build the ambition coalition (Storify)

Action areas at EU & international level

Next steps

- The agreement opened for signature for one year on 22 April 2016.
- The agreement will enter into force after 55 countries that account for at least 55% of global emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification.

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