

Towards a new international climate agreement in Paris

2015/2112(INI) - 14/10/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 434 votes to 96, with 52 abstentions, a resolution tabled by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety entitled 'Towards a new international climate agreement in Paris'.

Parliament recalled that according to the scientific evidence presented in the 5th Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), warming of the climate system is unequivocal. Climate change represents an urgent and **potentially irreversible global threat** to human societies and the biosphere and must thus be addressed at international level by all Parties.

An ambitious, global, legally binding agreement: Members called on governments to take, without delay, binding and concrete measures against climate change and towards an ambitious and legally binding global agreement in Paris 2015 in order to meet this target. Such an ambitious and legally binding international agreement would help to address the carbon leakage and competitiveness concerns of the relevant sectors and in particular the energy intensive sector.

The 2015 Protocol must be legally binding and ambitious from the outset when adopted in Paris, and should aim at phasing out global carbon emissions by 2050 or shortly thereafter so as to keep the world on a cost-effective emission trajectory compatible with the below 2 °C target.

In case of a gap between the level of ambition of the aggregate effect of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) submitted before Paris and the necessary level of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction required to keep temperatures below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, it will be necessary to draw up a work programme to start in 2016 in order to set out the additional reduction measures. Members called on the COP 21 Parties to support five-year commitment periods as the most appropriate choice so as to avoid locking into a low level of ambition.

Moreover, Parliament is concerned that the early analysis of the aggregate impact of the INDCs submitted so far has concluded that current unrevised INDCs would result in the global average temperature rising by between 2.7°C and 3.5°C. It called for the **Parties to agree at COP21 in Paris to revise the current INDCs before 2020** in order to bring them into line with the latest scientific assessments and a safe 2°C-compatible global carbon budget.

Union's climate policy: Members called for general reinvigoration of the EU's climate policy, which would help build momentum in international climate discussions and would be in line with the upper limit of the EU's commitment to reducing its GHG emissions to 80-95 % below 1990 levels by 2050. They called on the Member States to consider complementary commitments that build on the agreed 2030 target, including action outside of the EU, in order to enable the world to achieve the below 2 °C target.

In this regard, Parliament recalled the [European Parliament resolution of 5 February 2014](#) which called for three binding targets: an energy efficiency target of 40%, a renewables target of at least 30% and a GHG reduction target of at least **40%**.

Moreover, Members stressed that the Paris Agreement will contain the provisions needed to tackle the **human rights dimension** of climate change and provide support for poorer countries whose capacities are strained by climate change impacts.

Pre-2020 ambition and the Kyoto Protocol: Parliament placed particular emphasis on the urgent need for progress in **closing the gigatonne gap** which exists between the scientific analysis and the current Parties' pledges for the period up to 2020. To close further this gap, Members emphasised the important role of other policy measures, to which a collective effort should be dedicated, including energy efficiency, substantial energy savings, renewable energy, resource efficiency, the phase-out of HFCs, sustainable production and consumption, the phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies.

Parliament emphasised that, although the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol will be limited in its extent, it should be seen as a very important interim step, and therefore called on the Parties, including the EU Member States, to **complete the ratification process as soon as possible and in any case before December 2015**.

Comprehensive effort of all sectors: Parliament stressed the need to ensure long-term price stability for emissions allowances and a **predictable regulatory environment** which directs investment towards measures to reduce GHG emissions and fosters the transition to a low-carbon economy. It called for an agreement that covers sectors and emissions in a comprehensive manner and sets economy-wide absolute targets combined with emissions budgets, which should ensure the highest possible level of ambition.

Members highlighted that the agreement should set a **comprehensive accounting framework for emissions and removals from land** (LULUCF). They emphasised the role of **forests** in climate change mitigation and the need to enhance the adaptive capacities and resilience of forests to climate change whilst calling on the EU to pursue its objective of halting global forest loss by 2030 and to at least halve tropical deforestation by 2020, compared with 2008 levels.

Recalling that **transport** is the second biggest GHG emitting sector, the resolution insisted on the need to put a range of policies in place aimed at lowering emissions from this sector. It called for all the Parties to work through the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to develop a global policy framework to enable an effective response, and to take measures to **set adequate targets before the end of 2016** for achieving the necessary reductions in the light of the 2 °C target.

Climate finance: cornerstone of the Paris Agreement: Parliament urged the EU and other countries to prepare a **credible 'financial package'**, covering both pre-2020 and post-2020 periods, in order to support greater efforts for GHG reduction, forest protection and adaptation to climate change impacts. It **called for climate finance to be included in the agreement** as a dynamic element that reflects the changing environmental and economic realities.

The resolution requested that the EU and its Member States agree on a **roadmap for scaling up predictable, new and additional finance**, in line with existing commitments, towards their fair share in the overall targeted amount of USD 100 billion a year by 2020 from a variety of public and private sources. The EU is invited to encourage all countries to deliver their fair share of climate finance.

Members also called for concrete EU and international commitments to deliver **additional sources of climate finance**, including setting aside some EU ETS emission allowances in the 2021-2030 period and allocating revenues from EU and international measures on aviation and shipping emissions for international climate finance and the Green Climate Fund, inter alia technological innovation projects.

The Commission, the Member States and all the Parties to the UNFCCC are called upon to use all means at their disposal to encourage financial institutions to **redirect their investments** on the scale necessary to finance a genuine transition to resilient low carbon economies.

The resolution also insisted on the need to:

- enhance scientific research, technological development and innovation in combating climate change, by taking advantage of Horizon 2020;
- strengthen coordination and climate-risk management at EU level and to create a clear EU adaptation strategy.

Parliament also stressed the need for **climate diplomacy** to be part of a comprehensive approach to the EU's external action. The EU should play an ambitious and central role at the conference, speaking with 'one voice' and playing the role of mediator in seeking progress towards an international agreement and staying united in that regard.