

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2008/2001(INI)	Procedure completed
Interim report on the scientific facts of climate change: findings and recommendations for decision-making		
Subject 3.70.03 Climate policy, climate change, ozone layer		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CLIM Climate Change	PPE-DE FLORENZ Karl-Heinz	22/05/2007
European Commission	Commission DG Environment	Commissioner DIMAS Stavros	

Key events			
25/04/2007	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
01/04/2008	Vote in committee		Summary
09/04/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0136/2008	
21/05/2008	Results of vote in Parliament		
21/05/2008	Debate in Parliament		
21/05/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0223/2008	Summary
21/05/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2008/2001(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Special committee/Committee of inquiry
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 207
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CLIM/6/57975

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE400.387	22/01/2008	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE402.591	20/02/2008	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0136/2008	09/04/2008	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0223/2008	21/05/2008	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2008)3593/2	12/06/2008	EC	

Interim report on the scientific facts of climate change: findings and recommendations for decision-making

The Temporary Committee on Climate Change adopted the interim report by Karl-Heinz FLORENZ (EPP-ED, DE) on the scientific facts of climate change (findings and recommendations for decision-making).

MEPs welcome the recognition by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at their meeting in Bali that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC AR4) represents the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment of climate change to date.

The report recalls that the scientific consensus as expressed in IPCC AR4 leads to the conclusion that the level of global GHG emissions must be reduced by between 50 and 85% compared to 2000 to avoid serious risks to the planet. Nearly all Member States are making good progress in their efforts to comply with their individual EU burden-sharing targets, thus raising the likelihood that the EU will reach its Kyoto target by 2012. Nevertheless, Member States will have to reduce GHG emissions in a more ambitious way if they are to meet the targets adopted at the March 2007 European Council, which means reducing their GHG emissions by between 60 and 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels.

The Temporary Committee considers that the scientific consensus on the origins and causes of climate change is well established and recognised worldwide. Scientific evidence from all continents and most oceans shows that many natural systems are already affected by regional climate changes due to historic carbon emissions from the industrialised countries. Furthermore, it has been scientifically proven that the underlying causes of global warming are mostly man-made.

While recognising that scientific progress has always been marked by uncertainties, MEPs condemn scientifically unsubstantiated efforts to portray the results of studies into the causes and effects of climate change as doubtful, uncertain or questionable. They believe that further research is essential for responsible decision-making but consider that the level of knowledge acquired to date is sufficient for the urgent formulation of policies that will ensure the necessary reduction of GHG emissions to limit global warming to 2°C, as well as measures for adaptation to current climate change. MEPs emphasise that the window of opportunity for starting the mitigation efforts needed to achieve the 2°C target will close by the middle of the next decade.

The report highlights that further analysis and research is needed as regards the effects of climate change, such as the impact on economic competitiveness, the energy costs and social development in Europe, the role of land use, the role of forests and deforestation, the role of the maritime environment and the external costs of climate change as a result of industry, particularly transport, including quantifying the impact of pollution caused by air transport. MEPs also believe that further research is needed into the impact of the policy of promoting biofuels and their effects on the increase of deforestation, the expansion of cultivated land and world food supplies.

The IPCC is invited to publish an overview of its assessment reports aimed at the public. MEPs are convinced that individual changes in lifestyle patterns are necessary and should be a part of educational attempts to communicate the causes and effects of global warming. They call on the scientific community and political representatives to join forces to raise awareness among the public and to campaign for small steps that could make the difference.

This interim report addresses exclusively the impacts and effects of climate change based on scientific evidence. MEPs call on the Temporary Committee on Climate Change to continue its work and, at the end of its mandate, to present a final report containing recommendations as to actions or initiatives to be taken on the EU's future integrated policy on climate change. The final report will also include Parliament's position in the negotiations regarding the international framework for climate policy after 2012.

Interim report on the scientific facts of climate change: findings and recommendations for decision-making

The European Parliament adopted by 566 votes to 61, with 24 abstentions, a resolution on the scientific facts of climate change (findings and recommendations for decision-making).

The interim report on this issue had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Karl-Heinz FLORENZ (EPP-ED, DE) on behalf of the Temporary Committee on Climate Change.

MEPs welcome the recognition by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at their meeting in Bali that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC AR4) represents the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment of climate change to date.

The resolution recalls that the scientific consensus as expressed in IPCC AR4 leads to the conclusion that the level of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be reduced by between 50% and 85% compared to 2000 to avoid serious risks to the planet. Nearly all Member States

are making good progress in their efforts to comply with their individual EU burden-sharing targets, thus raising the likelihood that the EU will reach its Kyoto target by 2012. Nevertheless, Member States will have to reduce GHG emissions in a more ambitious way if they are to meet the long-term targets adopted at the March 2007 European Council, which means reducing their GHG emissions by between 60% and 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels.

The Parliament considers that the scientific consensus on the origins and causes of climate change is well established and recognised worldwide. Scientific evidence from all continents and most oceans shows that many natural systems are already affected by regional climate changes due to historic carbon emissions from the industrialised countries. Furthermore, it has been scientifically proven that the underlying causes of global warming are mostly man-made.

MEPs reiterate their commitment to the EU's strategic objective of limiting the global average temperature increase to not more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels, but believe, notwithstanding this, that all efforts to curb emissions should in fact aim at staying well below the 2°C target, as such a level of warming would already heavily impact on our society and individual lifestyles and would also entail significant changes in ecosystems and water resources.

While recognising that scientific progress has always been marked by uncertainties, MEPs condemn scientifically unsubstantiated efforts to portray the results of studies into the causes and effects of climate change as doubtful, uncertain or questionable. They believe that further research is essential for responsible decision-making but consider that the level of knowledge acquired to date is sufficient for the urgent formulation of policies that will ensure the necessary reduction of GHG emissions to limit global warming to 2°C, as well as measures for adaptation to current climate change. MEPs emphasise that the window of opportunity for starting the mitigation efforts needed to achieve the 2°C target will close by the middle of the next decade.

The resolution highlights that further analysis and research is needed as regards the effects of climate change, such as the impact on economic competitiveness, the energy costs and social development in Europe, the role of land use, the role of forests and deforestation, the role of the maritime environment and the external costs of climate change as a result of industry, particularly transport, including quantifying the impact of pollution caused by air transport. MEPs also believe that further research is needed into the impact of the policy of promoting biofuels and their effects on the increase of deforestation, the expansion of cultivated land and world food supplies.

The IPCC is invited to publish an overview of its assessment reports aimed at the public. MEPs are convinced that individual changes in lifestyle patterns are necessary and should be a part of educational attempts to communicate the causes and effects of global warming. They call on the scientific community and political representatives to join forces to raise awareness among the public and to campaign for small steps that could make the difference.

The Parliament calls on the Temporary Committee on Climate Change to continue its work and, at the end of its mandate, to present a final report containing recommendations as to actions or initiatives to be taken on the EU's future integrated policy on climate change, in line with the EU objective of limiting global temperature increases to below 2°C and in accordance with the findings and recommendations of IPCC AR4.