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Basic information	
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2020/2043(INI)
Towards a WTO-compatible EU carbon border adjustment mechanism	
Subject 3.70.02 Atmospheric pollution, motor vehicle pollution 3.70.03 Climate policy, climate change, ozone layer 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements 6.20.01 Agreements and relations in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO)	
Procedure completed	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (Associated committee)	 JADOT Yannick	16/04/2020
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 JARUBAS Adam	
		 CHAHIM Mohammed	
		 CANFIN Pascal	
		 HUHTASAARI Laura	
		 ROOKEN Rob	
		 BOMPARD Manuel	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
 International Trade (Associated committee)	 KARLSBRO Karin	19/02/2020	
 Budgets	 GUALMINI Elisabetta	25/06/2020	
 Economic and Monetary Affairs (Associated committee)	 GARICANO Luis	23/04/2020	
 Industry, Research and Energy	 GEIER Jens	21/04/2020	

Key events

16/04/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/04/2020	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
05/02/2021	Vote in committee		
15/02/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0019/2021	Summary
08/03/2021	Debate in Parliament		
10/03/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
10/03/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0071/2021	Summary
11/03/2021	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2020/2043(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/9/02638

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE648.519	07/10/2020	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE660.204	11/11/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	BUDG	PE653.861	11/12/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	ECON	PE657.390	11/12/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE657.463	14/12/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE655.622	17/12/2020	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0019/2021	15/02/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0071/2021	10/03/2021	EP	Summary

Towards a WTO-compatible EU carbon border adjustment mechanism

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted an own-initiative report by Yannick JADOT (Greens/EFA, FR) entitled "Towards a WTO-compatible EU carbon border adjustment mechanism".

Members considered that ensuring effective and meaningful carbon pricing, as part of a broader regulatory environment, could provide an incentive to develop production methods with a lower carbon footprint and could stimulate investment in innovation and new technologies.

The report shows that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions embedded in imports to the EU have been steadily increasing, undermining the EU's efforts to reduce its global carbon footprint. Net imports of goods and services into the EU account for more than 20% of the EU's CO₂ emissions.

A WTO-compatible European Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)

Members supported the establishment of a European carbon border adjustment mechanism, provided it is compatible with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and the EU's free trade agreements (FTAs) and is not misused to enhance protectionism.

By supporting EU and global climate policies towards greenhouse gas neutrality, in line with the Paris Agreement objectives, such a mechanism would reduce global CO₂ emissions and prevent carbon leakage. It would also encourage European industries and the EU's trading partners to decarbonise their industries.

According to Members, the introduction of a carbon border adjustment mechanism should be:

- part of a package of legislative measures to ensure the rapid reduction of GHG emissions from EU production and consumption, notably by boosting energy efficiency and the deployment of renewable energies;
- combined with policies to promote investment in low-carbon industrial processes, including through innovative financing tools and an environmentally ambitious and socially fair European industrial policy to steer Europe's decarbonised reindustrialisation.

Connection with the revision of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS)

The report called for consideration of the modalities for the design of a border carbon adjustment mechanism coupled with the revision of the EU ETS, so as to ensure complementarity and consistency. To prevent possible distortions in the internal market and along the value chain, the mechanism should cover all products imported under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), including when embedded in intermediate or final products.

The report stressed that, as a starting point (from 2023) and following an impact assessment, the mechanism should cover the power sector and energy-intensive industrial sectors such as cement, steel, aluminium, oil refinery, paper, glass, chemicals and fertilisers, which continue to benefit from significant amounts of free allocations and still account for 94% of the EU's industrial emissions.

Members considered that to address the potential risk of carbon leakage while complying with WTO rules, the mechanism needs to charge the carbon content of imports in a way that mirrors the carbon costs paid by EU producers. Carbon pricing under the mechanism should mirror the dynamic evolution of the price of EU allowances under the EU ETS while ensuring predictability and less volatility in the price of carbon.

Trade-related aspects of a carbon border adjustment mechanism

Members called for the Paris Agreement and its 1.5 °C goal to become one of the main guiding principles of trade policy, to which all trade initiatives and their policy tools must be adjusted, by including it in, inter alia, free-trade agreements (FTAs) as an essential element.

Stressing that the EU has played a leading role in global climate action, the report encouraged the Commission and Member States to step up their climate diplomacy ahead of and after the adoption of the legislative proposal for a carbon border adjustment mechanism, and to ensure continued dialogue between trading partners to incentivise global climate action.

Fuelling the EU budget as a new own resource

Members backed the Commission's intention to use the revenue generated by the carbon border adjustment mechanism as new own resources for the EU budget. They defended the objective that this resource should be mainly channelled towards the Green Deal and the just transition, with a significant share earmarked for the transition in the poorest countries and those most affected by climate change.

Towards a WTO-compatible EU carbon border adjustment mechanism

The European Parliament adopted by 444 votes to 70, with 181 abstentions, a resolution towards a WTO-compatible EU border carbon adjustment mechanism.

Members noted that while greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the EU have fallen by 24%, GHG emissions embedded in imports into the EU have continued to rise, undermining the EU's efforts to reduce its global carbon footprint.

Net imports of goods and services into the EU account for over 20% of the EU's CO₂ emissions. GHG emissions from imports should therefore be better monitored to identify possible measures to reduce the EU's global carbon footprint.

A WTO-compatible European Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)

Parliament supported the establishment of a European carbon border adjustment mechanism, provided it is compatible with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and the EU's free trade agreements (FTAs) and is exclusively designed to advance climate objectives and not be misused as a tool to enhance protectionism.

According to Members, the introduction of a carbon border adjustment mechanism should be:

- part of a package of legislative measures to ensure the rapid reduction of GHG emissions from EU production and consumption, notably by boosting energy efficiency and the deployment of renewable energies;
- combined with policies to promote investment in low-carbon industrial processes, including through innovative financing tools and an environmentally ambitious and socially fair European industrial policy to steer Europe's decarbonised reindustrialisation.

As a complement to the introduction of such a mechanism, the Commission should propose a more ambitious and binding norms and standards on products placed on the EU market in terms of GHG emission reduction and savings on resources and energy.

Connection with the revision of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS)

The resolution called for consideration of the modalities for the design of a border carbon adjustment mechanism coupled with the revision of the EU ETS, so as to ensure complementarity and consistency. To prevent possible distortions in the internal market and along the value chain, the mechanism should cover all products imported under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), including when embedded in intermediate or final products.

As a starting point (from 2023) and following an impact assessment, the mechanism should cover the power sector and energy-intensive industrial sectors such as cement, steel, aluminium, oil refinery, paper, glass, chemicals and fertilisers, which continue to benefit from

significant amounts of free allocations and still account for 94% of the EU's industrial emissions.

Members considered that to address the potential risk of carbon leakage while complying with WTO rules, the mechanism needs to charge the carbon content of imports in a way that mirrors the carbon costs paid by EU producers. Carbon pricing under the mechanism should mirror the dynamic evolution of the price of EU allowances under the EU ETS while ensuring predictability and less volatility in the price of carbon.

The environmental criteria should therefore play an essential role in the choice of instrument, ensuring a predictable and sufficiently high carbon price that incentivises decarbonisation investments.

Trade-related aspects of a carbon border adjustment mechanism

Members called for the Paris Agreement to become one of the main guiding principles of trade policy, to which all trade initiatives and their policy tools must be adjusted, by including it in, inter alia, free-trade agreements (FTAs) as an essential element.

Stressing that the EU has played a leading role in global climate action, the resolution encouraged the Commission and Member States to step up their climate diplomacy ahead of and after the adoption of the legislative proposal for a carbon border adjustment mechanism, and to ensure continued dialogue between trading partners to incentivise global climate action.

Any mechanism must create an incentive for industries in the EU and abroad to produce clean and competitive products and avoid carbon leakage, without endangering trade opportunities.

Fuelling the EU budget as a new own resource

Parliament supported the Commission's intention to use the revenue generated by the border carbon adjustment mechanism as new own resources for the EU budget. The new revenue should further support climate action and the objectives of the Green Deal, such as the just transition and the decarbonisation of Europe's economy, and for an increase in the EU's contribution to international climate finance in favour of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, which are most vulnerable to climate change.