

Briefing document

The EU Climate and Energy targets for 2030

Background:

In January 2014, the European Commission presented a Communication entitled "[A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030](#)". This Communication builds on the experience of the 2020 climate and energy package and constitutes the next step towards reaching the EU's objective to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80-95% below 1990 levels by 2050. This objective was agreed in 2011 by the European Council as part of the effort needed from developed countries to keep climate change below 2°C.

The 2020 Climate and Energy Framework:

The 2020 climate and energy framework, adopted in 2008, set targets known as the "20-20-20" targets for 2020:

- **A 20% reduction in EU GHG emissions from 1990 levels.** The EU emissions trading system (EU ETS) is the key tool for cutting GHG emissions from large-scale facilities in the power and industry sectors, as well as the aviation sector. The ETS covers around 45% of the EU's GHG emissions. In 2020, the target is for the emissions from these sectors to be 21% lower than in 2005. EU countries have also taken on binding annual targets until 2020 for cutting emissions from sectors not in the ETS – such as agriculture – under the "Effort-sharing decision". The targets differ according to national wealth (-16% for the UK compared to 2005).
- **Raising the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%.** Under the Renewable Energy Directive, Member States have taken on binding national targets to enable the EU as a whole to reach its 20% renewable energy target for 2020, as well as a 10% share of renewable energy in the transport sector.
- **A 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.** The energy efficiency target is addressed through the 2011 Energy Efficiency Plan and the Energy Efficiency Directive.

Worth noting:

A [report](#) from the European Environment Agency shows that:

- EU GHG emissions decreased by 23% between 1990 and 2014 and reached the lowest levels on record. Latest projections show that the EU is heading for a 24% reduction by 2020, overachieving its

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20 % reduction target.

- Nine Member States (Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and the UK) are on track to meet all three 2020 targets.

The 2030 Climate and Energy Framework:

The key elements of the 2030 framework are:

- **A 40% reduction in EU GHG emissions below 1990 levels by 2030.** To achieve this EU binding target, the sectors covered by the EU ETS – power and large industrial plants will have to reduce their emissions by 43% compared to 2005. Emissions from sectors outside the EU ETS (this includes agriculture, transport, household and waste) will have to be cut by 30% below the 2005 level. National reduction targets for the non-ETS sectors will be set in a separate proposal due to be published in July this year.
- **An EU binding renewable energy target of at least 27% in 2030.** Unlike the current framework, it would not be translated into national targets via EU legislation, aiming to give greater flexibility to Member States. Besides, the EU does not establish new targets for renewable energy in the transport sector after 2020 due to indirect land use change considerations; the Commission already indicated that food-based biofuels should not receive public support after 2020.
- **An indicative target at EU level of at least 27%** is set for improving energy efficiency in 2030 compared to projections of future energy consumption. This will be reviewed by 2020, when the Commission will propose priority sectors in which significant energy-efficiency gains can be reaped, and ways to address them at EU level. This target will not be translated into nationally binding targets.

In October 2014, EU heads of State at the European Council endorsed the new targets for climate and energy by 2030. And in February 2015, the Commission published the '[Paris Protocol](#)' which translated this decision into the EU's proposed emissions target its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) in the context of the new international climate agreement signed in Paris in December 2015, which covers the period after 2020 – the period until 2020 being currently covered by the Kyoto Protocol.

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What's next?

In July 2016, the Commission is due to present two legislative proposals:

- **A new Effort-Sharing decision for the period 2021-2030** – ie national targets for emissions reductions in the non-ETS sectors, including in the agricultural sector. The scope of the Effort Sharing Decision, however, does not include emissions or removals from land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF).
- **A proposal on the integration of the Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry sector (LULUCF) into the 2030 climate framework.** Among other things, the proposal should address the contribution that carbon credits arising from LULUCF can make to help agriculture meet its GHG reduction target.

EU Agriculture and Environment Ministers invited the Commission to examine the best means of optimising the agriculture and land-use sector's contribution to GHG mitigation and sequestration, and asked on several occasions that the Commission ensures coherence between the EU food security and climate objectives when drafting the legislative proposals.

In particular, a paper from [the Danish and Irish delegations](#) in May 2016 suggests that EU policy should encourage sustainable land management, afforestation and other forest sector mitigation activities, including forest product uses, that contribute to climate change mitigation and sustainably manage soil and forest carbon stocks.

The issue will be discussed again at the Environment Council meeting on 20 June.

Further Information:

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