



Council of the European Union

PRESS
EN

BACKGROUND¹
Brussels, 28 September 2016

ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

Brussels, 30 September 2016

Chair: Slovak Minister for the Environment **László Sólymos**

European Commission representation: Commissioner **Miguel Ángel Arias Cañete**

Starting time: 9:30

This meeting will be exclusively dedicated to climate issues. The Council will discuss the ratification of the Paris Agreement, the global agreement on climate change adopted in Paris in December 2015. Ministers are expected to agree on the **conclusion of the Paris Agreement** on behalf of the EU. This would allow the Council, once it has obtained the consent of the European Parliament, to adopt a Council decision on the EU's ratification of the agreement in October 2016.

Ministers are also expected to adopt Council conclusions on the preparations for the upcoming **UN climate change conference**, which is to take place in **Marrakesh**, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016 (COP22).

Press conference: +/- 13:00

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

CLIMATE CHANGE

EU conclusion of the Paris Agreement

The Council is expected to agree on the **conclusion of the Paris Agreement** on behalf of the EU. The Council will then be able to request the consent of the European Parliament, which is due to hold a plenary from 3 to 6 October.

Once the Parliament has given its consent, the Council would adopt the Council decision allowing the EU to deposit its instruments of ratification with the Secretary-General of the UN. This could happen by 7 October.

[Commission proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion on behalf of the EU of the Paris Agreement - June 2016](#)

Member states' ratification

The Paris Agreement is a mixed agreement, which means that some of the issues it covers are the responsibility of the EU and others of member states. It therefore has to be ratified by both the EU and all 28 member states.

The member states that have completed their national procedures could deposit their instruments of ratification (official documents allowing them to join the agreement) together with the EU in October. The rest of the member states are expected to deposit theirs as soon as possible thereafter, once they have completed their national procedures.

So far France, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia have already completed their national procedures of ratification and several others are very close to finalising them.

Entry into force of the Paris Agreement

The agreement will **enter into force** 30 days after ratification by at least 55 countries accounting for at least 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions. So far 61 parties have ratified, accounting for 47.79% of global emissions.

It is very likely that this threshold will be attained in time for its entry into force by the beginning of the Marrakesh climate change conference (7-18 November 2016). The first meeting of the parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) could therefore be convened during the conference.

[Official up-to-date information on the status of ratification](#)

[List of countries that have ratified to date](#)

[Table: percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions per country](#)

EU position

In March 2016, the European Council underlined the need for the EU and its member states to be able to **ratify the Paris Agreement as soon as possible and on time so as to be parties as of its entry into force**. This was also reiterated by ministers in a Council statement on the matter in June 2016. The issue was also raised during the EU 27 Bratislava summit on 16 September 2016.

[European Council \(March 2016\) - Conclusions](#)

[Council statement on the ratification of the Paris Agreement - June 2016](#)

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is a global, legally-binding instrument adopted by 195 countries in Paris on 12 December 2015, during the UN climate change conference widely known as COP21. The agreement sets out the framework for global action on climate change.

It was signed by 175 countries, including the EU and its 28 member states, on 22 April 2016 in a high-level ceremony in New York; more countries have since signed.

Its main elements are:

- It aims to keep the increase in global average temperature to **well below 2°C** above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit it to **1.5°C**.
- It also aims at increasing countries ability to deal with climate impacts (**adaptation**) and to recover from them (**loss and damage**).
- Countries shall submit comprehensive **national climate action plans** to reduce their emissions. These so-called nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are to be communicated **every five years**, to allow for a gradual increase in ambition.
- To ensure **transparency** and oversight, the parties to the agreement agree to report on their progress in implementing their targets.
- Developed countries commit to continue providing **climate finance** to assist developing countries, both to reduce emissions and to build resilience to climate change impacts, and other countries are also encouraged to provide or continue to provide support.

[Paris Agreement](#)

[Timeline - A new global climate change agreement](#)

Commitment: EU emissions reduction target

In its October 2014 conclusions, the European Council agreed on the 2030 EU climate and energy policy framework and endorsed a binding target of a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of **at least 40% by 2030 compared with 1990**. The target is to be delivered **collectively** by the EU in the most cost-effective manner possible, with all member states participating in this effort, balancing considerations of fairness and solidarity.

This target was reflected in the intended nationally determined contribution submitted by the EU in March 2015.

[European Council \(October 2014\) - Conclusions](#)

[Intended nationally determined contribution](#)

Implementation: EU policies on climate

The implementation of the EU's action on climate includes the legislative proposal to revise the EU **emissions trading system (ETS)**, presented by the Commission in July 2015.

Proposals for an **Effort-Sharing Regulation** (regarding sectors not covered by the ETS) and on the integration of the land use, land use change and forestry sector (**LULUCF**) were presented by the Commission in July 2016.

These proposals are currently being considered by the Council and the European Parliament.

Marrakesh climate change conference

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the preparations for the upcoming **UN climate change conference** to take place in **Marrakesh**, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016.

Another set of Council conclusions on the preparations for the Marrakesh conference with regard to **climate finance** will be adopted at the Ecofin meeting on 11 October 2016.

Following the Paris conference of December 2015, at which the Paris Agreement was adopted, at the Marrakesh conference countries around the world will **continue their work on strengthening the global response** to climate change. The focus will be on enhancing ambition, promoting implementation and providing support.

At the Marrakesh conference, governments are expected to discuss the **details** of the Paris Agreement and to **prepare for the implementation** of all its provisions. This includes those on the reduction of emissions (mitigation), but also those on adaptation to climate change, means of implementation and support for developing and most vulnerable countries.

Some of the key issues will be scaling up action before 2020 and ensuring appropriate financial flows. New frameworks on technology and capacity-building also need to be developed.
