



Council of the European Union

PRESS
EN

BACKGROUND¹
Brussels, 8 October 2018

ENVIRONMENT Council

Luxembourg, 9 October 2018

Chair: **Elisabeth Köstinger**, Minister for Sustainability and Tourism of the Republic of Austria

European Commission representatives: Commissioners **Karmenu Vella** and **Miguel Ángel Arias Cañete**.

Starting time: 09:30

Environment ministers will discuss the proposal on **CO2 emission standards for cars and vans** with the aim of reaching a general approach. This discussion will be live streamed.

The Council will adopt conclusions on **climate change** which will serve as orientation for the upcoming negotiations at **COP 24**, the UN Framework Convention on climate change which will take place in Katowice, Poland, in December.

The Council will adopt conclusions on **biodiversity** ahead of the meeting of the conference of the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November. These conclusions also cover the **Cartagena Protocol** on biosafety and the **Nagoya Protocol** on access and benefit sharing.

The Austrian Presidency will inform ministers on the state of play on the directive on **single-use plastics**. This point on the agenda will be broadcast live.

Further AOB items will be an information point from the German delegation, supported by the Luxembourg delegation, on the Berlin declaration on nanomaterials, as well as information from the Estonian delegation on the outcome of the Earth Innovation Forum and of the second Joint Preparatory Retreat of the Bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Tallinn in September. The Bulgarian, Polish and Slovak delegations will inform ministers on the proposed adoption of measures at EU level to tackle air pollution related to the import of used cars. The Polish delegation will elaborate on the Clean Air Programme for co-financing of new heat sources and thermal modernisation of single-family buildings in Poland. The European Commission will report on recent international meetings, namely the 67th meeting of the International Whaling Commission and the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

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

The last point on the agenda of ministers is a live streamed policy debate on the proposal on **CO2 emission standards for heavy-duty vehicles**.

Press conference: +/- 18h40

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Press conferences and public events by video streaming: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu>

Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery on:
<http://nwsr.eu/p/202759>

CO2 STANDARDS FOR CARS AND VANS

Environment ministers will discuss the proposed regulation on CO2 standards for cars and vans (recast) with the aim of reaching a general approach, i. e. the Council position on this text.

Policy debate at the Council

The Environment Council held a policy debate on the proposal on 25 June 2018. Since the proposal was tabled by the Commission last year, it has been analysed thoroughly by delegates of the member states at several Council Environment Working Party meetings. In order to reach a Council position on the proposal, the Presidency will ask ministers to **reach agreement on the ambition level, especially on the targets for 2025 and 2030 and the ZLEV incentive mechanism**, at the Environment Council on 9 October.

Background

The overall aim of the proposal is inter alia to contribute to reaching the EU's 30% reduction target by 2030 (compared to 2005 levels) in the so called non-ETS sectors and to achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreement. To this end, on 8 November 2017 the Commission submitted a proposal on **EU wide CO2 emissions reduction targets** for new passenger cars and vans from 2025 to 2029 and from 2030 compared to the targets for 2021 set by the previous legislation:

- 15 % from 2025 to 2029 for both cars and vans;
- 30 % from 2030 for both cars and vans.

These targets are EU wide targets which will be translated into a specific target for each car and van manufacturer. To progressively further the uptake of **zero- and low-emission vehicles (ZLEV)**, for example electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids, the Commission proposal includes a mechanism from 2025 onwards to incentivise manufacturers to place a higher number of these vehicles on the market. If the share of zero- and low-emission vehicles of the manufacturer exceeds certain benchmarks, the manufacturer will be rewarded with less strict CO2 emission targets. From 2025 to 2029 the benchmark is proposed to be 15% and from 2030 onwards, it is proposed to be 30%.

[General approach](#)

Commission proposal ([14217/1/17](#) + [ADD1 REV 1](#))

CO2 STANDARDS FOR HEAVY-DUTY VEHICLES

The Council will hold a policy debate on the proposed regulation on CO2 standards for heavy-duty vehicles (HDVs) which concerns trucks, buses and lorries sold between 2020 and 2030. This proposal was presented to environment ministers by the Commission at their meeting in June.

Policy debate at the Council

The proposal and its impact assessment have so far been examined by member states at three meetings of the Council Working Party on the Environment. The two main political issues emerging from the discussion are the proposed targets and the suggested incentive system for zero- and low-emission vehicles.

The Presidency will guide the debate along two questions:

- Do you agree with the approach of the Commission proposal as regards a binding 2025 target and an aspirational 2030 target combined with the review mechanism? Do you consider that the proposed targets provide the appropriate level of ambition?
- In your view, is the proposed system of super credits adequate for providing incentives for zero- and low-emission vehicles, including categories of vehicles which are not subject to the CO2 targets? If not, have you considered alternative approaches?

Background

On 31 May 2017, the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation to set up a system for monitoring and reporting CO₂ emissions and fuel consumption of HDVs, as part of the first 'Europe on the Move' mobility package. The regulation will, for the first time, make heavy-duty vehicles subject to greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Member States would have to monitor and report data about all new HDVs registered in a calendar year, while HDV manufacturers would monitor and report information related to CO₂ emissions and fuel consumption of vehicles. As of January 2019, EU rules require manufacturers to calculate this information on the basis of a standardised simulation tool. The Commission would make the reported data publicly available, in a register managed by the European Environment Agency, with exceptions for sensitive data. A similar monitoring and reporting system is already in place for light-duty vehicles.

The proposal sets an overall CO₂ emission reduction target for the EU's fleet of new heavy-duty vehicles of 15% from 2025 onwards compared to 2019 emission levels. The overall target is translated into manufacturer-specific CO₂ emission targets on the basis of fleet composition and characteristics. The proposal also includes an aspirational reduction target of at least 30% from 2030 onwards. The final target from 2030 onwards will be confirmed pursuant to a review to be carried out in 2022.

The regulation has the following objectives:

- Reduce CO₂ emissions from the HDV sector in line with the requirements of EU climate policy and the Paris Agreement, while reducing air pollution notably in cities.
- Reduce the operating costs for transport operators, most of which are SMEs, and more broadly the transportation costs for consumers via fuel savings.
- Maintain the technological and innovative leadership position of EU HDV manufacturers and component suppliers.

[Presidency note](#)

[Commission proposal](#)

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Environment ministers will adopt Council conclusions on climate change which emphasise the unprecedented urgency to step up global efforts to avoid dangerous effects of climate change. The conclusions aim at giving a strong political signal and narrative on the EU level of ambition for the upcoming negotiations at COP24 in Katowice.

The Council Conclusions will elaborate on the main elements of the EU position in view of the Katowice Climate Conference COP24 (2-14 December 2018), focusing on the urgency of climate action, completion of the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP) and the Talanoa dialogue, a facilitative dialogue which takes stock of collective progress towards the Paris Agreement's long-term goals.

The Council Conclusions also contain a reaction to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Delegates of the EU member states have been preparing the draft Council Conclusions at several meetings of the Working Party on International Environment Issues and the Working Party on the Environment.

The Council will underline that in order to achieve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement all countries must enhance mitigation action in coherence with, among others, sustainable development and the protection of biodiversity. It will urge all parties to accelerate preparations for the implementation of their nationally determined contributions.

The EU is implementing ambitious climate policies, in line with the 2030 climate and energy policy framework for the European Union agreed by the October 2014 European Council in order to achieve the target of reducing domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. The Council conclusions will contain references to the recently adopted EU legislation on greenhouse gas emissions reductions, including on the reform of the EU emission trading system (ETS), emission reduction targets in sectors falling outside the scope of ETS and on the integration of land use, land use change and forestry in the EU climate and energy framework, in line with the EU and member states' nationally determined contributions. The conclusions will underline the new EU 2030 renewable energy target of 32% and the new energy efficiency target of 32.5%.

Recalling the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 26 February 2018 on European Climate Diplomacy, the Environment Council will reconfirm that the EU will continue to lead the way in the global pursuit of climate action as well as the recognition of the severe implications that climate change has for international security and stability.

[COP24](#)

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON BIODIVERSITY

Environment ministers will agree Council conclusions on the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing.

The Council conclusions set the general political framework of the EU negotiating position, while specific positions on different agenda items of COP 14, COP-MOP 9 and COP-MOP 3 will be elaborated and set out in the technical EU position papers for the negotiators.

The Council will express its deep concern that the natural resource base and ecosystem services that humanity depends upon are at high risk and that most pressures driving biodiversity loss continue to increase, thus threatening the achievement of most of the global, regional and national biodiversity targets, as well as the achievement of the sustainable development goals. The main pressures on biodiversity are habitat loss and change, land degradation, climate change, invasive alien species, terrestrial and marine pollution and unsustainable use of biodiversity.

The Council will stress the need for convening a high-level biodiversity summit at the level of Heads of State/Heads of Government in 2020 to strengthen the political visibility of biodiversity and its vital contribution to the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

The conclusions will welcome the initiative of the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt to host a high level segment in November 2018, in the context of COP 14, to discuss mainstreaming biodiversity into energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing, processing and health.

Convention on Biological Diversity COP 14

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the governing body of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and advances implementation of the CBD through the decisions it takes at its periodic meetings.

The Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP) is equally the Governing Body of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing.

The objectives of the CBD are the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.

The main topics on the agenda of CBD COP 14 in November 2018 will be the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, mainstreaming of biodiversity into all relevant sectors, resource mobilization and financial mechanism, capacity building, climate change, OECMs, marine and coastal biodiversity, synthetic biology, digital sequence information, invasive alien species, and pollinators. In the context of COP 14, the host country Egypt has organised a high-level segment on the theme "Investing in biodiversity for people and planet", focusing on mainstreaming biodiversity in the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing, and

health, in the broader context of sustainable development and the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Cartagena Protocol COP-MOP 9

The aim of the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety is to regulate international trade in living modified organisms (LMOs) by ensuring that importing countries know what they are importing and are satisfied that there are no undue risks to biodiversity or human health. The supplementary protocol provides a framework for liability and redress for any damage resulting from international movements of LMOs.

The key priorities for the Cartagena Protocol COP-MOP 9 will be the preparation for the follow-up to the strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 and the strategic plan for the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety 2011-2020, the review of effectiveness of structures and processes under the convention and its protocols, risk assessment and risk management, and assessment and review of the effectiveness of the protocol.

Nagoya Protocol COP-MOP 3

The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way. The focus of the Nagoya Protocol COP-MOP 3 will be on capacity-building, awareness raising on the importance of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, and information sharing and access and benefit-sharing clearing-house.

[Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Directive on single-use plastics
 - Information from the Presidency. Commission proposal ([9465/18 + COR 1 + ADD 1 to ADD 7](#))
 - Reports on main recent international meetings: 67th meeting of the International Whaling Commission; High-level political forum on sustainable development
 - Information from the Presidency and the Commission ([12765/18](#), [12803/18](#))
 - Berlin declaration on nanomaterials
 - Information from the German delegation, supported by the Luxembourg delegation ([12487/1/18 REV1](#))
 - Outcome of a high-level environment conference and a joint preparatory retreat of the bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly
 - Information from the Estonian delegation ([12699/18](#))
 - Adoption of measures at EU level to tackle air pollution related to the import of used cars
 - Information from the Bulgarian, Polish and Slovak delegations ([12681/18](#))
 - Clean air programme
 - Information from the Polish delegation ([12682/18](#))
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