



MEDIA BRIEFING

Comparing the current at least 40% target with the new draft 55% 2030 Climate Target as proposed by the Commission

The European Commission will likely launch on Thursday 17 September a proposal to increase the EU's 2030 climate target to -55% emission reductions and removals of greenhouse gases, as compared to 1990 levels.

This is a substantial increase from the current at least -40% target, though the two cannot be fully compared as the Commission in its proposal is expected to change the sectors covered by this target.

The current 2030 climate target does not cover emissions from all sectors. Emissions from international shipping, and emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) are not included.

By contrast, the Commission will be proposing to include these sectors in the new -55% target. This is a substantial change. For example in 2018, net removals from the LULUCF sector were equivalent to 6% of 1990 emissions and removals. Including this 6% removals in the calculation will allow an increase in emissions in other sectors accordingly, or said differently, including 6% removals from LULUCF would lead to an emission reduction target of -49% compared to 1990 emissions and removals (a baseline including LULUCF).

It is thus important to understand that the “at least 40%” and the “55%” will both be calculated from a different starting point: -40% of 4.912 Mt CO₂-e vs. -55% of 4.657 Mt CO₂-e. It therefore cannot be stated that the target is moving from 40% to 55%.

Comparing the at least 40% target with the 55% target would require to use the same benchmark, but it is not the case.

Total emissions of all sectors except international shipping and excluding LULUCF (as in the current 40% target) in 1990 were 4.912Mt CO₂-e. A reduction of 40% would lead to emissions of 2.947 Mt. A reduction of 55% would lead to emissions of 2.210 Mt CO₂-e.

Total emissions including shipping and LULUCF in 1990 were 4.657 Mt. A reduction of 55% would lead to emissions of 2.096 Mt. As the Commission aims to increase net removals from the LULUCF sector, total emissions from the other sectors would be 2.396 Mt, of which one can assume around 100 Mt will be in the shipping sector. This means emissions in the sectors covered by the current 2030 target would be around 2.396 Mt (compared to 2.210 Mt had the sectors covered remained the same). This represents 51% of the 1990 emissions including LULUCF and 53% of the 1990 emissions excluding LULUCF.

The Commission is creating confusion and is assuming decision-makers, the media and the public will not understand that their -55% proposal has a different baseline than the existing -40% target.

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