

# Post-Paris EU climate policy briefings

*At the Paris Climate Summit, 195 governments agreed to reduce man-made greenhouse gas emissions to zero during the second half of this century and to limit average global temperature rise to 1.5°C. As signatories to the Paris Agreement, the EU and its Member States now need to revise and strengthen their climate and energy policies, and all other relevant policies to make them coherent with the Paris objectives. Our briefing papers provide a top line overview of the processes that will contribute to the needed zero-carbon transformation.*

## Review of the 2030

### Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Target

April 2016

#### What?

The European Union agreed on its contribution to the Paris Climate Summit, called the INDC (Intentionally Determined Nationally Contribution), based on the October 2014 Council Conclusions to reduce greenhouse gas emission reductions by at least 40% by 2030. In the Paris Agreement, countries acknowledged that the current INDCs, from all countries, are not in line with the agreed long-term objectives to keep temperature rise well below 2°C or to 1.5°C. Therefore countries agreed to have regular reviews of their targets to assess whether they are in line with the global reductions needed, and provide for regular moments where targets can be improved and resubmitted. The first such moments are the facilitative stocktake in 2018 and the 2020 deadline for resubmitting the post-2020 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

#### What is at stake?

The EU's at least 40% target is inadequate, unclear and inconsistent. As its ETS and non-ETS sub-targets do not contain the 'at least' prefix, the target is in fact a 40% target. At the same time, the EU is heading towards a massive overshoot of its 2020 target and will likely come close to a 30% reduction in 2020. This makes achieving a 40% target everything but ambitious. Furthermore, both the current rules and some of the suggested new rules, will allow the use of the leftover allowances from before 2020 in the period after 2020, and will also allow the use of several loopholes, which all together, and possibly further exaggerated by the inclusion of LULUCF, could lead to no real additional reductions needed to achieve the 40% target.

Furthermore, if the current 40% by 2030 target will be integrated in the legislative procedure in the coming months/years there is a risk of a lock-in of low ambition in the EU. Once the targets are adopted in law, changing them becomes more difficult.

#### Who are the key players?

**For the European Commission:** Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Commissioner for Climate Action Miguel Arias Cañete, as well as the Commission's Secretary-General and DG Clima.

**For the Council:** Heads of State and Governments as the October 2014 Council conclusions clearly indicate that a change of the target will need to be approved by the European Council

As the review will happen outside the regular legislative processes, the **European Parliament** will not play a formal role, but they could add pressure on this issue, definitely by raising the ambition question during the debates on the different legislative files of the 2030 climate and energy package.



## What has happened, will likely happen and when?

The European Commission published on March 2nd a Communication on "Assessing the implications of the Paris Agreement" and the Environment Council on March 4th held a debate on Europe's actions post-Paris. This all fed into a debate and Conclusion at the European Council of March 18. Neither the Communication nor the Conclusions made explicit references to an early review. There is currently no process identified for the review of Europe's 2030 target.

The Commission has already launched its proposal for the reform of the ETS and will in July present its proposal for how to deal with non-ETS emissions. Both processes offer opportunities for Member States and the European Parliament to both raise the need for changing the level of ambition and introducing a review clause in the legislation.

## CAN Europe's position

As current INDCs are inadequate and lead to dangerous warming of more than 3°C, it is critical that all countries, including the EU, improve their targets as soon as possible to be ready by 2018 when the UNFCCC stocktake takes place. For the European climate and energy policies to be consistent with the Paris Agreement, the EU's targets currently foreseen for 2030 must be revised upwards to at least 55%.

The EU need to ensure it is able to comply to the Paris Agreement's five-year review mechanism and needs to ensure all its legislation is coherent with the concept that it could be reviewed and increased every five years.

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