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## OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3815th Council meeting

### Environment

Luxembourg, 6 October 2021

President

**Andrej Vizjak**

Minister for the Environment and Spatial Planning of  
Slovenia

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<sup>1</sup> • Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.  
 • Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).  
 • Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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## **ITEMS DEBATED**

### **COP26 climate summit**

The Council adopted conclusions on the preparations for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meeting to be held from 31 October to 12 November in Glasgow (COP26). The conclusions lay out the EU's position at the meeting.

The conclusions call upon all parties to come forward with ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and recognise the need to step up adaptation efforts collectively.

The Council recalls that the EU and its Member States are the world's leading contributors to climate finance. The conclusions reconfirm their commitment to step up the mobilisation of international climate finance and invite other developed countries to scale up their contributions.

The Council also lays down the EU's position as regards the finalisation of the Paris Rulebook, in particular the voluntary cooperation under Article 6 and a common timeframe for NDCs.

[Council sets EU's position for COP26 climate summit \(press release 6 October 2021\)](#)

[Climate change: What the EU is doing \(background information\)](#)

### **Fit for 55 package**

Ministers held their first exchange of views on the proposals presented by the Commission under the Fit for 55 package that fall under the remit of the Environment Council:

1. Revision of Directive (EU) 2003/87/EC establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading to implement the ambitions of the new 2030 climate target and related proposals
2. Revision of Regulation (EU) 2018/842 on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement
3. Revision of Regulation (EU) 2018/841 on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 climate and energy framework

4. Revision of Regulation (EU) 2019/631 setting CO<sub>2</sub> emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles
5. Regulation establishing a Social Climate Fund

The Fit for 55 package aims to bring EU climate policies into line with the EU's objective of reaching climate neutrality by 2050 and its target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

The package consists of a series of closely interconnected proposals either amending existing pieces of legislation or establishing new initiatives across a range of policy areas and economic sectors.

The debate focussed on the balance and interlinkages between the various proposals, as well as on their contribution to the EU's increased climate ambition.

[Watch the recording of the public debate](#)

[Commission proposal on the revision of the EU Emissions trading system \(ETS\)](#)

[Commission proposal on the revision of the Effort Sharing Regulation \(ESR\)](#)

[Commission proposal on the revision of the LULUCF Regulation](#)

[Commission proposal on the revision of Regulation \(EU\) 2019/631 setting CO<sub>2</sub> emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles](#)

[Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing a Social Climate Fund](#)

[Presidency background paper for the exchange of views](#)

[Fit for 55 \(background information\)](#)

### **New EU forest strategy for 2030**

Ministers held an exchange of views on the new EU forest strategy for 2030. The strategy is one of the flagship initiatives of the European Green Deal and builds on the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030. It aims to contribute to achieving the EU's climate and biodiversity objectives.

The debate focussed mainly on whether the new EU forest strategy reflects the Council conclusions on the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and whether it provides a good basis for the EU to lead globally by positive example on sustainable forest management.

The Council will adopt conclusions on the new forest strategy in the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in November 2021.

[Watch the recording of the public debate](#)

[New forest strategy 2030 – exchange of views](#)

[Council adopts conclusions on the biodiversity strategy for 2030 \(press release 23 October 2020\)](#)

### **Any other business**

#### **Increase in energy prices**

At the request of Greece, Spain and Poland, supported by a number of delegations, ministers discussed the increase in energy prices in Europe.

The issue has been put on the agenda of the European Council to be held on 21-22 October. The Commission will come forward with a Communication on rising energy prices ahead of the discussions in the European Council.

[Information from Greece](#)

[Information from Spain](#)

[Information from Poland](#)

#### **Report on implementing the biocidal products regulation**

The Commission informed environment ministers on a report on the implementation of the Regulation on biocidal products.

Biocidal products are designed to control organisms that are harmful to human or animal health or materials. The Regulation controls their authorisation and access to the EU market.

The Commission has to submit a report on the implementation of the Regulation to the European Parliament and the Council every five years.

[Information from the Commission](#)

## **Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)**

The Belgian delegation provided information to ministers on coordinated action against per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

[Information from Belgium](#)

## **Conference on marine litter and plastic pollution**

The German delegation, supported by the Portuguese and Swedish delegations, informed ministers about a ministerial conference on marine litter and plastic pollution held in Geneva at the beginning of September.

[Information from Germany](#)

[Watch the recording of the morning session](#)

[Watch the recording of the afternoon session](#)

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED****ENVIRONMENT****Access to Justice (Aarhus Regulation)**

The Council adopted its position at first reading on an amendment to the Aarhus Regulation on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters.

The adoption of the Council's position follows a provisional agreement reached with the European Parliament in July 2021 and is the final step in the adoption procedure.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

**Submission of EU Adaptation Communication**

The Council approved the submission of the EU adaptation communication to the UNFCCC. This submission follows from Art.7 of the Paris Agreement, according to which Parties should submit and update periodically an adaptation communication, and the Council conclusions on Forging a climate-resilient Union: the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, approved by the Council on 10 June 2021 (for more details, see the [press release](#)).

The adaptation communication will now be transmitted to the UNFCCC by Slovenia, which currently holds the Council Presidency ([11835/21](#)).

**International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River**

The Council authorised the Commission to enter into negotiation on behalf of the EU on a draft ministerial declaration ‘Our Danube: A sustainable future for a shared river basin’ scheduled to be adopted at the occasion of the ministerial meeting of the ICPDR on 8 February 2022 in Vienna, Austria.

The Ministerial Statement constitutes a non-binding instrument that contains political commitments. The Contracting Parties to the ICPDR are Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Ukraine and the European Union ([12071/21](#)).



### **EMAS sectoral reference document for fabricated metal products manufacturing**

The Council decided not to oppose the Commission decision on the adoption of a new sectoral reference document, under the Community eco-management and audit scheme EMAS, which identifies specific environmental performance indicators and benchmarks of excellence for the fabricated metal products manufacturing sector.

The Commission decision is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt the regulation, unless the European Parliament objects ([12002/21](#) ; [10735/21](#) + [ADD 1](#)).

### **EMAS sectoral reference document for ICT**

The Council decided not to oppose the Commission decision on the adoption of a new sectoral reference document, under the Community eco-management and audit scheme EMAS, which identifies specific environmental performance indicators and benchmarks of excellence for the telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICT) services.

The Commission decision is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt the regulation, unless the European Parliament objects ([11999/21](#)).

### **Ecolabel for cosmetic products and animal care products**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission decision on establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for cosmetic products and animal care products. The criteria are based on the main environmental impacts associated with the life cycle of these products. They aim to promote aspects of the circular economy, specifically for products that have limited impact in terms of eco-toxicity and biodegradability.

This Commission decision is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it unless the European Parliament objects ([11998/21](#); [10720/21 ADD 1-2](#)).

### **Ecolabel for indoor and outdoor paints and varnishes**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission decision on establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for indoor and outdoor paints and varnishes.

The EU Ecolabel may be awarded to products with a reduced environmental impact during their entire life cycle. Specific EU Ecolabel criteria are to be established for each product group.

This Commission decision is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it unless the European Parliament objects ([11999/21](#); [10721/21 ADD 1](#)).

### **Ecolabel for tourist accommodation and the related assessment and verification requirements**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission decision on establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for tourist accommodation and the related assessment and verification requirements. The EU Ecolabel may be awarded to products with a reduced environmental impact during their entire life cycle. Specific EU Ecolabel criteria are to be established for each product group. The validity of the criteria for tourist accommodation and the related assessment and verification requirements is to expire on 26 January 2022.

This Commission decision is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it unless the European Parliament objects ([12000/21](#); [10728/21](#)).

## **SPORT**

### **Designation of an EU expert at governmental level on the WADA Foundation Board**

The Council approved the designation of Ms. Anna Krupka, Polish Secretary of State in the Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport, as the expert at governmental level of the EU Member States on the WADA Foundation Board ([11924/21](#)).

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