



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Council conclusions on Climate Diplomacy

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on Climate Diplomacy adopted at the 3742nd meeting of the Council on 20 January 2020.

Draft Council conclusions on Climate Diplomacy

1. Climate change is an existential threat to humanity and biodiversity across all countries and regions and requires an urgent collective response. The European Union is showing leadership, and assuming its responsibility. The European Council conclusions of 12 December 2019 endorsed the objective of achieving a climate neutral EU by 2050, in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Also taking into account the IPCC Special Report on global warming of 1,5°C, the European Commission presented its European Green Deal which puts forward proposals for an economy-wide transition and a sustainable growth strategy, striving to be both just and inclusive, and which aims to safeguard prosperity while protecting our planet. EU leadership through example is crucial for raising the global ambition as a whole.

2. The latest scientific evidence, including the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), shows that, despite global efforts, worldwide emissions continue to increase. The finding that the Arctic is warming at more than twice the global average is a particular concern resulting in serious global consequences. Recent reports that the Mediterranean region is a hotspot of climate change impacts, with decreasing precipitation and increasing temperatures are another source of grave concern, as well as the warming of the Baltic, Black and North Seas at a higher pace than average. The gap between the present level of global action and ambition, and the agreed goals of the Paris Agreement is growing. This disconnect is reflected in a youth-led movement calling for action to catch up with science. The Council underlines that 2020 will be a crucial year for ambition. The EU calls on all parties to update their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in line with the Paris Agreement and to increase clarity, transparency and understanding (ICTU) of their NDCs, and to communicate Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies, in line with the Paris Agreement and reflecting the highest possible ambition in response to the urgency of addressing climate change.

3. It is therefore a matter of extreme urgency to strengthen the global response to the climate emergency. The European Union is determined to help raise global ambition and will use all tools at its disposal to tackle the climate challenge. Efforts beyond the EU must urgently be scaled up. The December European Council called on the Commission and the High Representative to pay particular attention to climate diplomacy. This international engagement will build on the European Union's own high ambition in all relevant sectors and will be a key priority for European diplomacy in 2020.
4. Enhanced and sustained international engagement is crucial for the success of addressing climate change. The Paris Agreement continues to be the indispensable multilateral framework governing climate action. However, the outcomes of the 25th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) in Madrid underline the urgent need for more action by states, local and regional authorities, civil society and the private sector, including financial institutions.
5. The European Union needs to urge third countries to intensify their efforts alongside the European Union. The European Union will strengthen its support for relevant Parties in revising and implementing Nationally Determined Contributions, including through the NDC Partnership, and in devising ambitious long-term strategies, including ahead of COP 26 in Glasgow, with a view to generating the highest possible ambition. The European Union will continue to act as a constructive but also an assertive partner. This will be underpinned by all our external policy instruments, including sustainable financial instruments and trade policy, to promote safe and sustainable low greenhouse gas emission and climate-resilient development. Recalling the need to achieve climate-neutrality in a way that preserves the EU's competitiveness, including by developing effective measures to tackle carbon leakage in a WTO compatible way, the Council notes the Commission's intention to propose a carbon border adjustment mechanism concerning carbon-intensive sectors. The Council recalls that EU agreements with third countries and regions also provide opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with partner countries regarding climate and environment. Facilities in third countries need to adhere to the highest international environmental and safety standards.

6. The Council recalls the EU's and its Member States' continued commitment to scale up the mobilisation of international climate finance. This is part of the collective developed countries' goal to jointly mobilise USD 100 billion per year by 2020 and through to 2025 for mitigation and adaptation purposes in developing countries from a wide variety of sources, instruments and channels in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and stresses the need for participation of a broader range of contributors. The Council welcomes initiatives at the national and international level regarding sustainable finance and climate neutrality such as the recently launched Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action and the International Platform for Sustainable Finance.

7. In parallel, the Commission, High Representative and Member States will strengthen bilateral engagement on climate action with partner countries and regional organisations. We will work as a matter of priority with non-EU G20 economies that account for three quarters of global greenhouse gas emissions, as well as with the most vulnerable countries particularly affected by climate change, including the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States in adapting to the new realities of climate change and strengthening resilience to its negative impacts, and promoting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the EU will continue to uphold, promote and protect human rights as well as gender equality and women's empowerment.

8. The Council underlines the importance of pursuing tailor-made approaches for cooperation with third countries, taking into account the need for a just, as well as socially balanced transition as an enabler of climate action. This means advocating for specific actions from others, based on robust analysis of where results can be achieved, and by demonstrating environmental and economic gains as well as the global good of halting temperature rise. Actions to accelerate climate action in partner countries, through both mitigation and adaptation measures, will involve all sectors of the economy – as in the EU – necessitating the strengthening of existing bilateral dialogues and technical cooperation. Member States with existing climate and energy programmes with non-EU G20 countries will share experiences on their bilateral engagement to ensure cohesive and efficient EU Climate Diplomacy, which could also include efforts at tackling deforestation, promoting integrated water resources management and preserving biodiversity. Innovative involvement of decision-makers, civil society and business, in close coordination with existing frameworks, should also be explored.

9. The EU-China Summit in Beijing and the Leaders' meeting in Leipzig, the EU-Japan Summit, the EU-African Union Summit and the EU-India Summit and other major international events in 2020 such as the United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon and the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming offer good opportunities for strengthening alliances and action on climate and environment, during a critical year in the international discussions on climate, oceans and biodiversity. The Commission, High Representative and the Member States will also place increased emphasis on supporting the efforts of the EU's immediate neighbours – in the Southern neighbourhood, the Eastern Partnership Countries and the Western Balkans, notably their regions and sectors most affected by the transition.

10. The European Union is acutely aware that climate change multiplies threats to international stability and security in particular affecting those in most fragile and vulnerable situations, reinforcing environmental pressures and disaster risk, contributing to the loss of livelihoods and forcing the displacement of people. The High Representative, Commission and Member States will continue to take climate and environmental factors and risks, including on water, into account in our strategic engagement with partner countries and work on preventive measures such as early warning systems. The Council continues to encourage the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the United Nations system to create a comprehensive information basis for the UNSC on climate-related security risks, to fully integrate short and long-term climate and environmental risk factors in the assessment and management of threats to peace and security, at country, regional and international levels, and to draw on the expertise of the whole UN system in order to find operational responses to these risks and strengthen UN missions on the ground.

11. The Council recalls its conclusions of 17 June 2019 on security and defence acknowledging the relevance of environmental issues and climate change for CSDP missions and operations, including their impact on military capability planning and development in relation to the climate-security nexus. The Council calls for taking this work further and enhancing cooperation among different actors without prejudice to the decision-making autonomy of the EU.

12. To follow up on the European Council Conclusions of 12 December 2019, the Council calls on the High Representative, Commission and Member States to work jointly and urgently towards a strategic approach to Climate Diplomacy by June 2020 that identifies concrete, operational ways forward to achieve the aims set out in these Council conclusions. The task will be supported by the EU Green Diplomacy Network, ensuring full synergy with EU energy diplomacy, and will mobilise the combined resources of the European Union's delegations and Member States' embassies in third countries. The Council will revert back ahead of COP26 in 2020 in Glasgow.