

THE EU'S CLIMATE LAW SURRENDER

An explainer

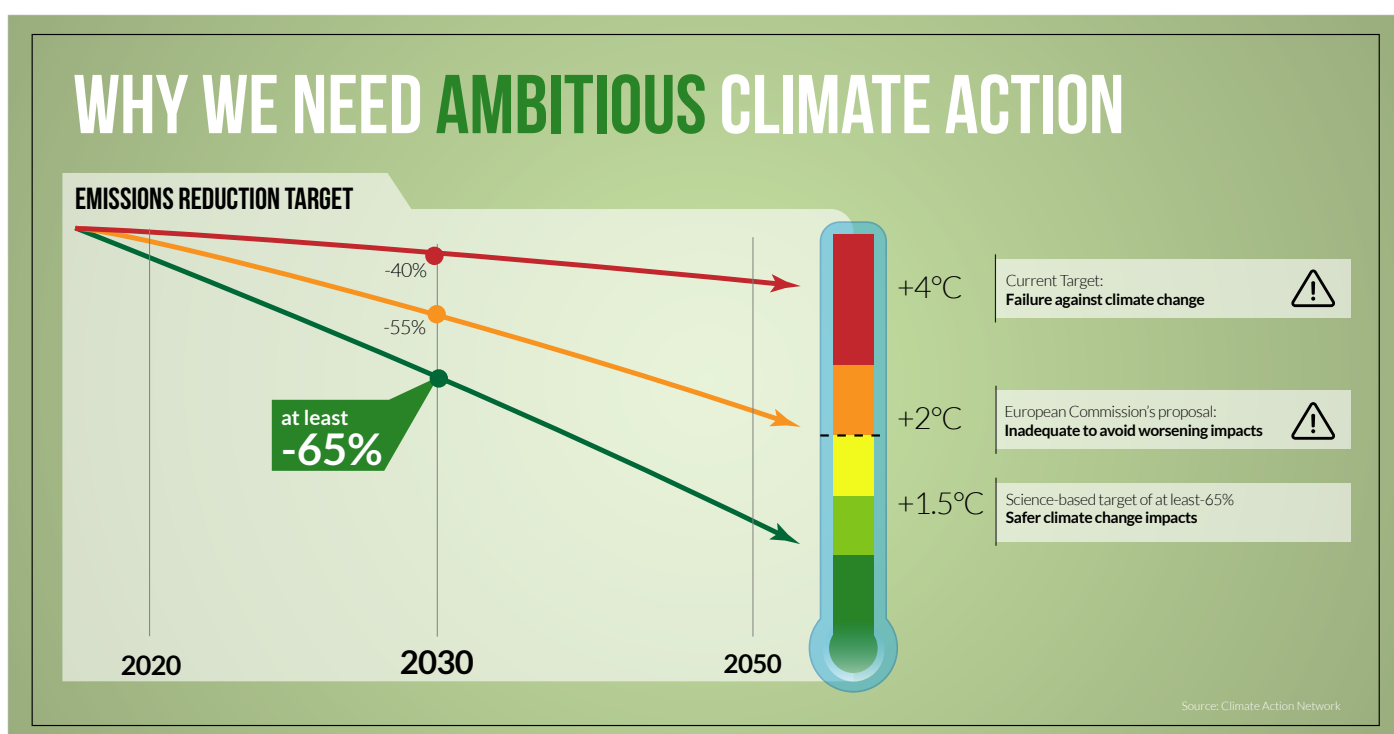
Background

The Commission's proposal for the first European Climate Law aims to write into law the goal to make Europe's economy and society climate-neutral by 2050.

According to the UN Emissions Gap Report 2020, the planet is on track for a 3.2°C global temperature rise even if countries were to abide by their commitments in the 2005 Paris Agreement.

As countries prepare to submit their updated emissions reduction targets, [the Commission's impact assessment](#) has concluded that a 55% greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2030 "would not only put the EU firmly on track to achieve climate neutrality but would also make EU business and industry global trailblazers".

Therefore achieving an ambitious intermediate 2030 emissions reduction that is in line with science is crucial to safeguarding the planet from the most destructive consequences of global warming.



What our MEPs say



Silvia Modig

(Vasemmistoliitto, Finland)

“The vote on the EU Climate Law is a vote on the future of our planet. The world’s richest ten percent produces more than half of the world’s total emissions. Since the very beginning, our group has been calling for a 70% emission reduction target for 2030. We also need binding targets and concrete action to fight the climate crisis and climate injustice. A 55% emission reduction target for 2030 is not enough.”

The Mirage of Climate Neutrality

While the Commission aims to update its 2030 emissions reduction target compared to 1990, some countries like Poland and Ireland are already struggling to achieve the current 40% target. The long-term impacts of COVID-19 are likely to affect the ability of member states to reach higher 2030 climate ambitions, offering another excuse to delay climate action even further.

The fossil fuel lobby has launched an intense lobbying campaign to dilute the European Green Deal (EGD) using their privileged access to decision-makers in the Commission. In the first 100 days of shaping the EGD, top Commission officials have [met 151 times with business lobbyists](#), more than eleven times a week, and only 29 times with public interest representatives.

The Commission has refused to [follow science](#) by adopting at least 65% emissions reduction by 2030, settling on an insufficient 55%.

Youth activists & NGOs call for real immediate action

Climate youth leaders, including Greta Thunberg, called the [EU Climate Law](#) a “surrender”. Greenpeace [explained that the EU’s 2030 emissions reduction target](#) needs to be increased to at least 65%, and underlined the requirement of targets to be set for 2035 onwards in line with the science. At the same time, WWF argues that the “[Climate law sets direction but lacks urgency](#)” as the proposal neither lives up to what the climate emergency requires nor includes measures that would reduce emissions drastically in the short-term.

The View of The Left

To prevent climate chaos and guarantee sustainable growth for a healthier and fair society - for us and the generations to come - we believe that transition must be socially just and inclusive, ensuring that no one is left behind. To make this possible, the latest independent scientific evidence must be prioritised over business interests.

We support the introduction of 2030 and 2040 reduction targets that are aligned with a 1.5° pathway (we call for a 2030 emissions reduction of 70%), a Union carbon budget that was a demand from civil society, an independent scientific body, a phase-out plan for fossil fuel subsidies.

Moreover, the Left group in the European Parliament is pushing for climate neutrality by 2040, we want a Common Agricultural Policy that reinforces the climate law, rather than being contradictory to it, an increase in natural carbon sinks, to tackle the issue of imported emissions via trade and a ban on fossil fuels industry lobbying.