



Beyond CO2: MEPs demand stricter rules on greenhouse gases

Plenary sessions

The EU should speed up efforts to reduce emissions of fluorinated gases, such as those used in fridges, says a resolution approved by Parliament on Wednesday. While climate policy often focuses on carbon dioxide, MEPs say tougher measures against other greenhouse emissions could be relatively cheap and deliver quick results.

."The F-Gas regulation has fallen far short of expectations", says the resolution, which was drafted by Richard Seeber (EPP, AT) and Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE, HE) and approved with 578 votes in favour, 51 against and 22 abstentions.

MEPs say the Commission should propose changes to existing rules to speed up the reduction in emissions of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and and the phasing out of ozone-damaging hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs). These gases are used in some fridges and air conditioning systems.

Parliament also wants the EU to reduce emissions of "black carbon" (or soot), e.g. through stricter testing of car emissions. Black carbon particles have a potent effect because in the air they absorb heat from the sun, and on the ground they speed up melting of snow and ice.

Action on HFCs and black carbon could begin within 2-3 years and be substantially under way within 5-10 years, say MEPs. Targeting these emissions could be highly cost-effective, they add, since HFCs can be reduced at a public cost of 5-10 cents per tonne, compared to €13 per tonne for carbon.

Procedure: Oral question + resolution

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Vote: 14.09.2011

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