

## EU approach to the Paris climate conference

The 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be held in Paris in less than two months, from 30 November to 11 December 2015. As decided in 2011 (COP 17 in Durban), the Paris Conference should agree on a legally binding climate change agreement applicable to all Parties, which should come into effect in 2020. The Paris Conference is considered as decisive for the future of international climate action.

### State of the negotiating process

Building on the outcome of [COP 20 in Lima](#), negotiators met in 2015 to draw up a negotiating text for the Paris agreement. A consolidated [draft negotiating text](#) was published on 5 October 2015. As [key issues](#) regarding fairness, responsibility and finance remain open, the text will include many options, reflecting the positions of the various Parties. The next negotiating session will take place on 19-23 October 2015 in Bonn. Observers expect a number of contentious issues will not be resolved before COP 21.

In parallel with the negotiations, national governments laid out their plans for future climate action in the form of 'Intended Nationally Determined Contributions' (INDCs). 147 out of 196 Parties had [submitted](#) an INDC by the 1 October 2015 deadline. [Preliminary analysis](#) indicates that the commitments in the submitted INDCs are insufficient to achieve the target of keeping global warming below two degrees Celsius.

### EU approach and commitments

The EU was among the first Parties to submit its [INDC](#) in March 2015. Based on the October 2014 [European Council conclusions](#) on the 2030 EU climate and energy framework, the EU commits to a binding target of at least 40% domestic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, compared to 1990. In July 2015, the Commission [proposed](#) legislation to limit the supply of allowances in the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) after 2020, in line with its submitted emissions reduction target.

In February 2015, the Commission issued a [communication](#) on the 'Paris Protocol'. It proposes a transparent and dynamic legally binding agreement, whose long-term goal should be to reduce global emissions by at least 60% below 2010 levels by 2050. Mitigation commitments should be binding on all Parties; countries with the highest responsibilities and capabilities would have the most ambitious commitments. The communication advocates a five-year cycle for reviewing and strengthening mitigation commitments. Linking of carbon markets and transfers of mitigation commitments between countries should be allowed. The EU considers that the agreement should provide a framework for shifting investment towards low-emission climate-resilient programmes and policies, and improve the environment for climate-friendly investments.

On 18 September 2015, EU Environment Ministers adopted [conclusions](#) on the COP 21 preparations, calling for a durable, legally-binding, agreement, preferably a protocol. The agreement should include mitigation commitments for all Parties, to be updated every five years. Concerned about the slow progress of the negotiations, the Council proposes early ministerial engagement before COP 21 as a way forward.

### European Parliament

On 23 September 2015, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) adopted a [report](#) (Gilles Pargneaux, S&D, France) that recommends phasing out global carbon emissions by the middle of this century and calls for a five-year review and reinforcement cycle. It calls for a reinvigoration of EU climate policy and urges Member States to consider commitments complementary to the 2030 target, including action outside the EU. It calls for a roadmap for scaling up EU climate finance and for earmarking revenues from emission allowances and from future taxes on aviation and shipping emissions for that purpose. The vote in plenary is expected on 14 October 2015. A European Parliament delegation will take part in COP 21.