

COP25 'critical' in ensuring 2015 Paris Agreement put in place, says senior MEP

Written by Martin Banks on 8 November 2019 in News
News

Senior UK Greens MEP Molly Scott Cato says the upcoming COP25 climate conference in Madrid "must pave the way for more ambitious commitments next year."



Photo credit: Press Association

The Spanish capital will now host the keenly-awaited event in mid-December due to civil unrest in Santiago, the original venue.

Speaking to this website, Scott Cato said, "For Greens, key to ensuring that we tackle the climate emergency is implementing a Green New Deal and we hope to see backing for this at these [COP25] climate talks."

“This deal would involve large-scale public investment in areas such as home insulation, public and active transport and renewable energy technologies.”

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She says this would create “hundreds of thousands of new quality jobs” and allow for the transfer of skills from the “dirty industries of old to the new green businesses of the future.”

Scott Cato, who represents the south west of England, added, “It is also time to stop aviation free riding on the global climate. The sector needs to be taken under the wing of the Paris Agreement. Its emissions must count and we must find ways to curtail the perpetual growth in flights and send them into freefall.”

“A frequent flier levy would be a fair way to address this as the vast majority of flights are taken by a minority of people.”

She also told The Parliament Magazine, “The move of the COP25 event from South America to Europe is a poignant reminder that social and environmental justice must go hand in hand in tackling the climate emergency.”

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Molly Scott Cato MEP

“COP has moved first from Brazil, where Bolsonaro is trashing the Amazon rainforest, and then from Chile due to civil unrest over inequality. Here again, we believe the Green New Deal holds the answer as it aims to address social inequality and poverty while drastically cutting emissions.”

Meanwhile, a leading environment group has voiced concern about switching the COP25 climate conference at short notice to Madrid.

Speaking to this website, Susann Scherbarth, climate justice campaigner for Friends of the Earth Europe, said, “This last-minute move of the UN climate talks to Spain risks excluding voices from the Global South - what with wasted travel tickets and last-minute EU visas.”

“With four consecutive COPs now in Europe, attention could shift away from the regions most impacted by the climate crisis. We’re also concerned that brutal repression of demonstrations in Chile could now increase.”

She added, "For the EU, however, this move to Spain puts extra pressure on EU leaders to step up climate leadership, especially on the just transition to fossil-free energy."

"With four consecutive COPs now in Europe, attention could shift away from the regions most impacted by the climate crisis" **Susann Scherbarth, Friends of the Earth Europe**

Elsewhere, the European Union has been accused of "knowingly missing the opportunity" to boost global climate ambition.

Climate Action Network Europe says that by failing to increase the EU's 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target the EU has "turned a blind eye to the clear call from science that highlights the dangers of any further delay."

Wendel Trio, director of CAN Europe, based in Brussels, told this website, "This failure ignores the increasingly enraged nature that is claiming ever more lives and livelihoods with fires, droughts and hurricanes, also in Europe."

Trio added, "And it goes against the calls from the millions of European citizens, notably young people, who have taken to the streets to demand that climate action be treated with real urgency and seriousness."

CAN Europe insists that the global emissions need to, at minimum, be halved by 2030 to keep temperature increase below 1.5°C.

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"The earlier the EU will do this the bigger impact it will have on the global climate ambition by incentivising further action from others."

The group says that adopting an "ambitious and forward-thinking" position on climate finance is "crucial to the success" of the COP25 negotiations.

Its demand comes after a recent Eurobarometer survey said that 93 percent of Europeans are concerned or very concerned about climate change and support action across the EU to tackle it.

About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter at The Parliament Magazine

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