

## Socialists urge European Parliament to declare 'climate emergency'

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News

The S&D group has called on Parliament to “put pressure” on Member States and the European Commission to “take the lead” and propose concrete actions to address climate change.



*Photo credit: Greenpeace*

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The group's plea comes just ahead of the keenly-awaited COP25 climate conference in Madrid from 2 to 13 December, where world leaders will discuss the next steps in the fight against global warming.

S&D deputy leader Miriam Dalli said, “COP25 will mark a decisive turning point in the fight against climate change. The Socialists and Democrats will not stop fighting for this cause.”

“With US President Donald Trump formally initiating the process to withdraw from the Paris

Agreement, citizens in Europe and beyond are now turning to the EU for direction.”

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The Maltese member said her group planned to table an amendment requesting that Parliament declares a climate emergency, adding, “The EU must act together and lead by example in international climate negotiations through concrete actions and measures.”

In Parliament’s recently-adopted COP25 resolution, the S&D group requested that the EU adjusts its economy-wide target of domestic greenhouse gas emission reductions to 55 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, in order to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

The resolution adopted by the environment committee earlier this month says the EU should commit to net-zero CO2 emissions by 2050 at next month’s UN conference and step up its emissions’ reduction ambition for 2030.

The committee also highlighted the need for the EU to raise its ambition level for 2030 in order to reach the 2050 target.

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**Miriam Dalli MEP**

Committee members said they expect the European Green Deal, announced by European Commission President-elect Ursula von Der Leyen, to include a target of 55 percent emissions reductions by 2030.

French Renew Europe member Pascal Canfin, the committee chair, said Parliament was “showing the way for Europe to be the first carbon-neutral continent in 2050,” adding, “While the United States confirmed its exit from the Paris Agreement, we have reaffirmed that we want Europe to be serious about the fight against climate change.”

But S&D coordinator on the environment committee, Jytte Guteland, a Swedish MEP, says Parliament and the EU should be even more ambitious.

Looking ahead to the climate conference in Madrid, she said “Parliament will take a strong and progressive mandate to COP25. People all over the world demand action to reduce climate emissions. We share the sense of urgency and are fighting for tougher and immediate EU action to mitigate the climate crisis.

“We know from experience that the European Parliament plays an important role at the COP conferences to push the parties to reach ambitious agreements” **Jytte Guteland MEP**

“We know from experience that the European Parliament plays an important role at the COP conferences to push the parties to reach ambitious agreements.”

“The EU has both the economic means and a responsibility to lead by example in this global process. The first step is to sharpen our climate targets for 2030. By aligning our own emissions in line with the Paris Agreement we can show the rest of the world that the Green New Deal is not just possible but in fact has huge potential for society.”

Further comment comes from S&D rapporteur on COP25 resolution, Mohammed Chahim, who noted, “There is a climate emergency; we now must be ambitious and act accordingly. Europeans do not need more words from politicians; what we need are concrete plans to ensure that this transition leaves no one behind.”

“It is crucial that all sectors contribute their fair share to meet objectives of the Paris Agreement. Therefore, it is important that we also transform the maritime sector, the aviation sector, as well as the agricultural sector.”

“Europeans do not need more words from politicians; what we need are concrete plans to ensure that this transition leaves no one behind” **Mohammed Chahim MEP**

Meanwhile, it has emerged that contributions from the EU and its Member States to help developing countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and cope with the impacts of climate change have more than doubled since 2013.

According to the Council, the EU and its Member States remain the largest provider of public climate finance. Their total contributions amounted to €21.7bn in 2018, up from €20.4bn in 2017.

## **About the author**

Martin Banks is a senior reporter at The Parliament Magazine

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