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European Commission proposes 2030 member state climate targets

New proposal sets how member states would achieve emission reductions in transport, buildings and agriculture by 2030.

EU leaders decided in 2014 that the sectors of the EU economy not covered by the EU ETS - namely buildings, transport and agriculture- would have to cut their emissions by 30% below 2005 in 2030. On July 20, the European Commission presented its proposal on how to achieve this target.

The proposal, which has to be agreed by the Council and the European Parliament before it becomes law, revises the so called Effort Sharing Decision, establishing

binding annual greenhouse gas emission targets for Member States for the period 2021-2030. The idea is that each member state will contribute towards the 2030 target via a binding, national reduction goal, calculated on the basis of their GDP per capita. This means that wealthier member states are expected to do more; for instance, the division of labour ranges from a 0% cut on 2005 levels for Bulgaria to a 40% reduction for Luxembourg and Sweden.

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In doing so, national governments will enjoy some flexibility, as the proposal allows them to bank emissions to be used against targets in future or sell and buy annual emission allocations among themselves. In addition, member states are allowed to credit emissions reductions from land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) against the non-ETS targets, which is particularly beneficial for member states with large agriculture and forestry sectors.

The Commission will evaluate progress towards achieving the targets annually and report on this. A review of Member States' GHG emissions reports and a more formal compliance check will be organised every 5 years. The first such review will be in 2027 for the years 2021-2025, followed in 2032 for the years 2026-2030.

Together with the Effort Sharing proposal, the European Commission presented a Strategy for low emissions mobility with a focus on road transport and a proposal to integrate the land use sector into the EU 2030 Climate and Energy Framework. All the initiatives form part of the EU's Energy Union strategy, which aims to accelerate Europe's transition to a low carbon economy.
