

European Commission seeks 2030 CO₂ reduction target of 40%

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Steam rises from the Prosper coking plant on October 11, 2010 in Bottrop, Germany

EU member states should cut their carbon dioxide emissions, widely blamed for global warming, by 40 percent by 2030, the European Commission said Wednesday.

Member states should also ensure that renewables count for 27 percent

of their energy mix by the same date, it said, unveiling its 2030 climate change package.

The package replaces a 2020 programme that set a CO₂ reduction target of 20 percent, when compared with 1990 levels, coupled with 20 percent each for renewables and an energy efficiency gain.

The 2030 targets set by the Commission have to be approved by all 28 member states to enter into law and its recommendations come amid sharp differences over priorities as the EU struggles to get back on a growth path.

There are complaints by some, led by Britain, that member states must be allowed to decide how best to adjust their energy mix in the face of increasing global competition.

US gas prices, for example, are just one third of those in Europe and industry groups have opposed measures they believe could undermine their competitive standing.

Meanwhile Germany, which is closing down its [nuclear power plants](#), has pushed for renewables to be given greater prominence and so wanted a binding 30 percent target so that its peers would have to make the same commitments and avoid it being put at an [economic disadvantage](#).

The 27-percent renewables target is binding at the overall EU level of 28 states, not at national level, meaning how it works in practice will have to be decided in what are likely to be tough talks.

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