

# EU agrees to ratify Paris climate deal

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Earth's average land and ocean surface temperatures warmed to record levels in 2015

EU environment ministers agreed Friday to fast-track the ratification of the landmark Paris agreement on climate change, despite the fact that some national parliaments have yet to approve the deal.

"All member states greenlight early EU ratification of Paris agreement. What some believed impossible is now real," European Union President Donald Tusk said on Twitter.

"Victory!" tweeted French Environment Minister Segolene Royal.

Fears that the United States and China, the world's two biggest polluters, were leaving the EU behind on ratifying last year's historic deal pushed the bloc's 28 ministers to rush through the collective measure.

Around 60 countries have now committed to the landmark agreement designed to stem the planet's rising temperatures, which was sealed in December 2015 in the French capital.

The European Parliament must now give its approval before the EU actually ratifies the agreement, an EU statement said.

The Paris accord requires all countries to devise plans to achieve the goal of keeping the rise of temperatures within two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels and strive for 1.5 C (2.7 F) if possible.

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