

# European parliament declares 'climate emergency'

November 28 2019

---



The new European Commission has put tackling climate change at the heart of its policies

The European Parliament voted on Thursday to declare a "climate and environment emergency" in a symbolic gesture just ahead of the latest UN global crisis summit.

The legislature, sitting in Strasbourg, backed the motion by a comfortable 429 to 225 majority, increasing pressure on EU capitals and the European Commission to take more drastic action.

The motion urges the commission "to ensure that all relevant legislative and budgetary proposals are fully aligned with the objective of limiting global warming to under 1.5 degrees C (35.7 degrees Fahrenheit)".

"Given the climate and environmental emergency, it is essential to reduce our [greenhouse gas emissions](#) by 55 percent in 2030," said Pascal Canfin, the MEP who heads the environment committee.

Among the dissenters were some members of the right-wing European People's Party, the largest group in the parliament.

"There is an urgency to act, but no state of emergency to declare," said EPP deputy Peter Liese, warning against giving an impression of "panic".

The vote came a day after the same parliament voted to endorse a new European Commission that plans a "European green deal" to transform the bloc's economy for a low-carbon future.

The motion does not legally oblige Brussels to take any specific measures, but environmental groups seized on it to demand practical action.

## **Need for 'immediate action'**

"Declaring an emergency is important, but any such statement needs to be followed by emergency action," said Wendel Trio, director of the Climate Action Network Europe.

"To act at the scale of the climate emergency, the parliament needs to push for real, immediate action," he said.

"The EU needs to increase the climate target to at least 65 percent emission cuts, and adopt policies and measures that can reduce emissions immediately."

The 12-day COP25 UN climate summit will take place in Spain from Monday, with the aim of encouraging governments to increase their commitments to cut emissions and combat [climate](#) change.

On Sunday, the new president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, will take office promising to boost investment in [green technology](#).

But many Green MEPs abstained in the vote to approve her Commission, expressing scepticism the plan would go far enough.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: European parliament declares 'climate emergency' (2019, November 28) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-11-european-parliament-declares-climate-emergency.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.