

## A Climate Policy that delivers on the Paris Agreement

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Athens, Greece, on 24-26 October 2019:

### Taking note of:

- the alarming trends of climate change and environmental deterioration in the last couple of decades;
- the fact that the rate of Antarctica ice mass loss has tripled in the last decade and that the rate of sea level rise in the last two decades, however, is nearly double of that of the last century and is accelerating every year;
- that according to the European Environment agency, EU greenhouse gas emissions increased by 0.6% in 2017, following a 0.4% decrease in 2016, and projected reductions fall short of the 40 % emissions reduction target for 2030;
- that human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels and global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate;
- that shipping emissions are predicted to increase between 50% and 250% by 2050, depending on future economic and energy developments, and that global international aviation emissions are projected to increase 300-700% by 2050;
- that global warming is a phenomenon witnessed in most land and ocean regions, causing hot extremes in most inhabited regions, heavy precipitation in several regions and the probability of drought and precipitation deficits in some regions. That this poses the rising concern of access to water and food security and climate migration;
- that according to the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change published in 2006, estimates that the costs and risks of climate change inaction will be equivalent to losing from 5% to 20% or more of the global GDP each year, while the estimate for the annual cost of achieving stabilisation of the levels of CO2 emissions is amounting to around 2% of global GDP per year;
- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol;
- the Paris Agreement and the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the UNFCCC and the 11th Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP11) held in Paris, France from 30 November to 11 December 2015;

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- the commitment of all countries under the Paris Agreement to limit the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C;
- the IPCC 1.5°C Special Report from October 2018 in which the world's leading climate scientists warn there is only a dozen years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5°C, and call for urgent action to require unprecedented efforts to cut fossil-fuel use in half in less than 15 years and eliminate their use almost entirely in 30 years;
- the UN Climate Action Summit held in New York 23 September 2019;
- the growth of employment in the environmental goods and services sector in the years 2007-2011 by 20% in spite of the crisis;
- the global market for environmental goods and services is estimated at €1,000 billion per year and is growing fast;
- that according to the Commission, better eco-design, waste prevention, recycling and reuse could bring net savings for EU businesses, estimated to represent up to €600 billion, or 8% of annual turnover, while also reducing total greenhouse gas emissions by 2-4%;
- the crucial role of non-state actors, and especially the private sector, in decarbonising our economy and combating climate change;
- the crosscutting nature of climate change, calling for a multi-level and multi-stake holder governance approach;
- the collective nature of environmental threats, meaning that no country goes unaffected by the actions of another;
- the moderate progress for the preparatory work ahead of the 25th Conference of the Parties (COP25) to the UNFCCC;
- the European Council's failed attempts to commit to climate neutrality by 2050;
- the efforts of certain European cities and regions, part of the leading, increasingly global movement Covenant of Mayors, to step up their ambitions on sustainable energy and climate change in order to lead by example;
- the student-led climate change marches across the world against government inaction on climate change, inspired by Greta Thunberg;
- the fact that carbon capture and storage (CCS) and negative emissions measures such as bio-CSS could be complementary to achieve decarbonisation for a number of industries that have no other options to significantly reduce emissions.

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**Welcomes:**

- the Commission's strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate-neutral economy by 2050;
- the new Commission president Ursula von der Leyen's promise to within her first 100 days to deliver a European Green Deal to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050;
- the adoption of European Union climate and energy legislation such as Emissions Trading System (ETS), Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR) and the Governance Regulation;
- the adoption of the agreement reached at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) on an initial strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping.

**Believes that:**

- the Paris Agreement and the outlined path towards decarbonisation will give reliable guidance for decision-making, avoid costly lock-ins to high-carbon investments, provide certainty and predictability to business and investors, and encourage a shift from fossil fuel investments towards more sustainable alternative investments;
- pursuing the full and correct implementation of existing European legislation on climate and energy measures that sets targets for 2030 and 2050 is crucial;
- the adoption of the revision of the EU Emissions Trading System for the period 2021-2030 and the Effort Sharing Regulation for the same period is an important step that needs to be followed by higher ambition within a mid-term review if the Union will stay on track to meet the Paris Agreement;
- raising the ambition, as was done in the revision of EU legislation regarding energy efficiency and renewable energy, was important in order to show that higher ambition is not only needed but also very much possible;
- a sustainable bioeconomy and circular economy will be a crucial part of the green transition notably including the European agriculture and food sector and a reformed Common Agriculture Policy (CAP);
- the role of private actors in ensuring the achievement of environmental goals cannot be understated, and that it is crucial that the necessary frameworks, stability for investments and long term goals exist for the private sector to fulfil their full potential in the environmental area;
- youth engagement plays an essential role in climate policy, as it is the youth that will have to face the results of the decisions of today;
- facilitating the development of market solutions, new technology, and green private investment is crucial if we are to reach our common environmental goals;

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- it is important that the EU shows global leadership through established climate frameworks and that they, where appropriate, are open to non-EU actors;
- Europe must take global leadership in combating climate change through reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and the transition to a fossil free economy;
- the EU and its Member States must take action in prevention and necessary adaptation of present and future climate change impacts, for example by strengthening its resilience in all areas and making use of all funding instruments available;
- a robust and credible rule book on how to fully implement the Paris Agreement is needed if the aims of the agreement are to be met;
- that it is of utmost importance that CCS and negative emissions measures such as bio-CCS are used as a complement to achieve ambitious emissions reductions, not prolonging the life of the fossil fuelled economy;
- negative emissions measures such as bio-CCS could be used in order to achieve negative emissions, and this needs to be taken into account when designing policy measures in order to promote negative emissions technologies.

#### **Calls on:**

- the Commission to swiftly propose an ambitious European Green Deal, including at least a trillion Euros of investments over the coming decade, and an effective climate law that raises the targets for the EU greenhouse gas emissions to be at least 55% below 1990 levels by 2030, and to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest, also including considerable economic consequences, for example economic fines or withheld payments from the EU budget, for countries failing to reach their climate and energy targets, ensuring that the Union will meet its commitment under the Paris Agreement;
- the European Council to commit, as soon as possible, to the target of climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest;
- the Commission to come up with a strengthened governance framework to prevent and respond to climate risk and climate-related disasters in the European Union;
- the Commission to promote sustainable agriculture practices and investments including sustainable practices to prevent and control pests;
- the Commission to propose measures to strengthen the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS including third party countries), including to increase the linear reduction factor reducing the number of allowances distributed each year, reducing the surplus more rapidly by keeping the withdrawal rate to the market stability reserve at 24% a year even after

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2023, to include more sectors where possible such as shipping and international aviation and transport in an upstream model, and move to full auctioning of allowances for all sectors, in order to ensure a sufficiently high carbon price and investments in low carbon technologies and innovation to drive down emissions at the rate needed to reach climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest;

- the Commission to propose a framework at the EU level in order to promote technical solutions for negative emissions;
- increased and binding EU energy targets for energy efficiency and renewable energy to at least 40% for 2030 in order to achieve EU climate targets;
- the Commission and the European Parliament to promote an EU-wide ban on fracking;
- the completion of the EU's energy union to make energy more secure, affordable and sustainable, allowing Member States to diversify Europe's sources of energy and ensure energy security, and to remove technical or regulatory barriers to enable energy providers to compete freely and promote renewable energy while providing the best energy prices;
- the Commission to propose a strategy to promote and simplify rail transport across borders to make it more competitive with aviation;
- the Commission to propose a strategy for greener aviation, in particular by promoting technical solutions for aviation biofuel and electric aircraft;
- the Commission to propose a way on how to consider E-Fuels in the emission reduction targets regulation for new vehicles to strengthen the climate ambition;
- the building of bridges and common frameworks between all European countries to promote environmental and climate cooperation towards the agreed international goals of the Paris Agreement;
- the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to agree on a Paris-compatible Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 that rules out fossil fuel subsidies and supports the transition to a more sustainable, competitive European economy;
- all ALDE member parties to work towards ending the \$65 billion (€57.5 billion) fuel tax exemption for international aviation, and insist on an update of Article 24 of the Chicago Convention from 1944 in order to end the obsolete fuel tax exemption for international aviation;
- the Commission to propose a contingency plan on how to handle the consequences of climate change, including natural disasters, climate migration and the projections of its impact;
- all ALDE member parties that substantial progress is needed at the 25th Conference of the Parties (COP25) to the UNFCCC, in particular in finalising the outstanding issues for the rule book on how to

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implement the Paris Agreement from COP24 in Katowice, in particular on cooperative mechanisms under Article 6;

- recognition that cooperation on CCS technology across Europe could be an important compliment to deep decarbonisation of the European economy in order to achieve the Paris Agreement climate targets;
- cooperation between countries willing to develop and deploy CCS technology towards developing storage facilities for CO<sub>2</sub> and/or transportation infrastructure, and contributing to realising the continent-wide uptake of CCS technology, especially in order to achieve negative emissions.

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