

Climate Ambition Summit: President Hoyer calls on partners to become global climate leaders



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On 12 December 2015, the international community made history when it adopted the Paris Agreement. Five years on, the United Nations, United Kingdom and France are organising the [Climate Ambition Summit 2020](#), in partnership with Chile and Italy. Leaders from governments and non-state actors will present new commitments to deliver on the Paris Agreement. The summit marks an important milestone ahead of next year's COP 26 conference in Glasgow.

"The new UN GAP Report confirms that the world is heading towards more than 3°C global warming by end of the century. This will have severe consequences for the planet and people," said **EIB President Werner Hoyer**. "The agreement by EU Member States to reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030, is a powerful signal that Europe can come together to deliver climate leadership. However, it will not be enough. Europe only accounts for 10% of global emissions. I welcome the new pledges from countries and institutions at the Climate Ambition Summit and I call on all our partners to step up their ambition ahead of COP 26 to become global climate leaders. The EIB stands ready to increase its activities, in particular in developing and emerging economies. We will work closely with governments, business, the private sector and multilateral and national development banks to deliver a green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis."

EIB President Werner Hoyer will address the Climate Ambition Summit. This is his speech, which is embargoed until 12 December 6 am CET.

Dear Friends,

As we eye the end of this terrible pandemic, I am convinced this is a defining moment:

- for our fight against climate change and environmental degradation
- and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the EU Bank we have taken Europe's decarbonisation objectives as our guidance for the critical years ahead and our Climate Bank Roadmap. This is why the European Investment Bank has decided:

- to put climate in everything we do: we have stopped financing fossil fuel energy, including natural gas, and we will be the first Multilateral Development Bank to be fully Paris-Aligned by the end of this year.
- and to boost investment in climate, the environment and clean technology: 50% of our investment will be in climate and environment by 2025. We aim to mobilise investment in this field by over USD 1.2 trillion by 2030.

We have surpassed our climate commitments so far, but operationalizing net zero requires a giant leap for everybody! We stand ready to partner globally. Together we will work to ensure the scale and the solidarity needed to accelerate the green transition and progress towards the SDGs. Thank you very much!

Media interviews

If you are interested in interviewing our experts or would like to receive additional information, please get in touch.

Background information

The European Investment Bank is active in around 160 countries and is the world's largest multilateral lender for climate action projects. The EIB Group has recently adopted its Climate Bank Roadmap to deliver on its ambitious agenda to support EUR 1 trillion of climate action and environmental sustainability investments in the decade to 2030 and to deliver more than 50% of EIB finance for climate action and environmental sustainability by 2025. Also, as part of the Roadmap, from the start of 2021, all new EIB Group operations will be aligned with the goals and principles of the Paris Agreement.

Download the [Climate Bank Roadmap](#)

Read our blog article about our [Climate Bank Roadmap](#), outlining our bold ambitions for climate finance to back the European Green Deal and make Europe carbon-neutral

Intervention du président Charles Michel lors du sommet 2020 sur l'ambition climatique



Cinq ans depuis les accords de Paris! Et je suis, depuis Bruxelles, heureux de vous retrouver de manière virtuelle, porteur d'une bonne nouvelle, d'un message fort. Hier, les 27 leaders européens se sont réunis et ont pris un engagement ambitieux, clair et précis. C'est l'ambition de réduire de 55% au minimum nos émissions à l'horizon 2030. Il y a un an exactement, au mois de décembre 2019, nous nous engageons pour la neutralité climat en 2050. Nous allons rester totalement mobilisés, parce qu'il s'agit pour nous d'un changement complet de paradigme.

Et c'est le sens aussi de l'accord financier qui a été trouvé sur le plan européen. 1.800 milliards d'euros seront mobilisés tout au long des prochaines années, dont 30% au minimum seront dédiés pour relever ce défi du changement climatique. Pour nous, c'est un projet de société, c'est un projet de prospérité, qui se traduit dans le cadre de ce "European Green Deal". C'est une batterie de mesures ambitieuses afin de développer l'innovation, de soutenir des emplois, de relever le cadre de vie.

Nous voulons aussi agir sur le terrain diplomatique. Nous savons que la mobilisation multilatérale, la coopération internationale sera clé. Et c'est en cela que systématiquement, en matière de partenariats économiques, de partenariats commerciaux, nous voulons encourager tous nos partenaires dans le monde à rejoindre cette même ambition.

Il y a un défi pour notre génération: celui de mettre en avant toute notre intelligence collective, de mettre en avant toute notre détermination pour faire en sorte d'être à la hauteur de ce défi, à la hauteur pour marquer notre respect, notre considération pour l'humanité. Et pour les générations qui nous suivent.

CoR and German environment minister discuss how to achieve a green, resilient and just recovery



□□ Local leaders: EU Member States must raise climate ambitions and agree at least 55% carbon emissions reduction target for 2030

Local and regional leaders stressed today that Europe must draw the right lessons from the COVID-19 crisis and pave the way for a green recovery by empowering its cities and regions to lead the fight against climate change. This message emerged from the debate of the Members of the European Committee of the Regions with Svenja Schulze, German Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. The European Committee of the Regions also called on all the EU27 Heads of State and Government to raise their ambition and agree this week on at least a 55% emissions reducing target for 2030.

At this week's European Council meeting, leaders of the 27 EU Member States will seek agree on a new EU emissions reduction target for 2030. The European Commission's proposes to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 in relation to 1990 levels, a position supported by the European Committee of the Regions. During the Committee's virtual plenary debate, leaders of EU regions, cities and villages highlighted that the COVID crisis should not hinder the EU's commitment to tackling the climate and biodiversity crises by setting a new more ambitious 2030 target. The successful implementation of the European Green Deal – the EU's new growth strategy – must be turned into [concrete projects locally](#) and be based on a decentralised approach.

Apostolos Tzitzikostas , President of the European Committee of the Regions, and Governor of Central Macedonia in Greece, [said](#) : "Our economy and our climate are at breaking point: we need a balanced, just and green European recovery for every region, city and village. EU member states must agree to cutting carbon emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and approve the EU's long-term budget and recovery plans without delay. This is crucial to pave the way to a carbon-neutral Europe by 2050 and to guarantee a rapid transition to more sustainable economies, protecting jobs and creating new opportunities."

Speaking at the CoR plenary session on 8 December, **Federal Minister Svenja Schulze** said: "Just as in the fight against COVID-19, we know a key success factor in environmental and climate policy: good cooperation between all political levels – European, national, regional and local. The Green Deal is the strategy for the economic relaunch of Europe, making it more resilient, competitive and liveable. It is essential that the Member States reach an agreement soon on the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, which includes huge expenditure on climate protection and biodiversity."

Mayor of Seville **Juan Espadas (ES/PES)** , chair of the CoR's [ENVE Commission](#) and the [Green Deal Going Local working group](#) , said: "The recovery from the COVID-19 crisis is an opportunity to rebuild Europe in a sustainable way and to accelerate the much needed ecological transition. We have no time to waste, whether it be to save our economies with a strong European budget or to implement bold climate actions. The 2030 Climate Target Plan can become one of the major achievements of this Presidency this week. Cities and regions are ready to act."

Showing the German government's commitment to a strong local and regional involvement in climate policy, the current Council Presidency – which will end its 6-month term on 31 December – requested two opinions from the CoR.

The [first of them](#) assesses the opportunities of precautionary adaptation to climate change and urges the European Commission to develop a new EU Adaptation Strategy with clear goals and indicators in line with the principles of active subsidiarity and proportionality.

Rapporteur **Markku Markkula (FI/EPP)**, Chair of Espoo City Board and former CoR President (2015-2017), said: "Political leadership should treat climate change as an emergency that needs to be tackled collectively with innovative measures breaking down silos and barriers and integrating mitigation and adaptation policies. This means raising the climate ambition bar much higher than the EU is discussing today and providing cities and regions with the tools necessary to develop territory-based solutions. No adaptation policy will work unless it takes into account the needs, views and expertise of regions and cities."

The [second opinion](#) , which focuses on the impact of climate change in regions and provides a first assessment of the Green Deal, will be presented on Wednesday by rapporteur **Andries Gryffroy (BE/EA)**. The member of the Flemish parliament said: "The Green Deal will be successful only if it regions and cities are at its core. Although several regions and cities have adopted energy transition plans or Local Green Deals, these are rarely reflected in national plans and strategies. We stand ready to work with the Commission and its Joint Research Centre to set up a Regional European Scoreboard to monitor and track progress in the implementation of climate and Green Deal related legislation, policies and financing at regional level."

Background information

At the European Council meeting this week (10-11 December), the leaders of the 27 EU Member States will seek agree on a new EU emissions reduction target for 2030. This would allow the EU to submit its updated nationally determined contribution to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change before the end of 2020. The European Commission's Climate Target Plan for 2030 proposes to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% in relation to 1990 levels, a position supported by the European Committee of the Regions.

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From Farm to Fork: moving towards a sustainable and resilient food system in the EU



□□ In this interview, [Guido Milana \(IT/PES\)](#) answers five questions on [Farm to Fork](#), the new strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system in the EU. The municipal councillor from Olevano Romano and former Member of the European Parliament calls for a radical change in food production and consumption, starting with a shift to greener production systems that respect biodiversity and ecology principles. The rapporteur of the opinion '[From Farm to Fork: the local and regional dimension](#)' stresses that COVID-19 makes it even more urgent to move towards a more sustainable and resilient food system. The opinion is to be adopted during the [December 2020 plenary session](#) of the European Committee of the Regions.

The Farm to Fork strategy proposes ambitious targets in terms of reducing the use of pesticides, chemical fertilisers and antimicrobials, as well as the objective of reaching 25 % of agricultural land in organic farming to promote the transition to sustainable food systems. Is this feasible taking into account the projected population growth rate?

Food systems are responsible for about a third of global greenhouse gas emissions, mostly generated by agricultural production. Reducing carbon emissions from agriculture is certainly the priority. However, we must not overlook the climate impact of all the other areas of food production, such as product packaging, processing and distribution. It is therefore essential that the Farm to Fork strategy proposes ambitious targets for reducing pollutants. We need to steer production systems effectively towards greener forms that respect biodiversity and ecology principles. We need a radical change in food production and consumption and a strong alliance between producers and consumers. However, we cannot bring about this shift overnight, especially if we do not give existing producers enough help to change current production practices into more sustainable ones following new agro-ecological practices. Above all, we must continue funding streams supporting rural development to ensure a sustainable transition. At the same time, we need a strategic focus on research and development. In essence, not only are penalties and constraints needed, but also a package of coordinated policies to promote environmentally- and socially- sustainable forms of production, which are also properly remunerated.

How should the common agricultural policy support the climate and environmental ambitions of the Farm to Fork and biodiversity strategies?

The common agricultural policy (CAP) is a key tool for implementing both the Farm to Fork and the biodiversity strategies. The CAP is intended to ensure

that producers are protected economically and facilitate safe access to agricultural land, in particular for the more vulnerable small and medium-sized producers. It is also supposed to provide appropriate incentive schemes to motivate farmers to move towards greener practices. The lack of ambition in the recent CAP reform is regrettable, especially in the light of the climate and environmental objectives of the Farm to Fork strategy. The climate and environmental objectives cannot be achieved without adequate resources and major investment in sustainable production. The CAP needs to be better aligned with the Farm to Fork strategy, not only environmentally but also in terms of international trade and sectorial policies and instruments. In addition, we must also review the objectives of the common fisheries policy (CFP) in order to change the levy system and start considering the sea as a major area to be cultivated rather than a mine from which fishing resources are simply removed.

How can local and regional governments contribute to building more sustainable food systems? Could you share any examples of initiatives launched at local level?

The local and regional levels of governance are fertile testing beds. They have traditionally been ahead of Europe-wide strategies and deserve to be more involved now. Local and regional bodies across the EU and internationally have been actively delivering local food policies for decades, setting up food policy councils or even bioregions. Cities and regions have shown that they can use local and regional planning tools and integrated local policies to encourage forms of urban agriculture, short supply chains and regional markets, initiating sustainable food procurement for local, seasonal and organic food in public canteens in addition to education and public awareness initiatives to improve local food systems. The Member States and the EU should follow their example and work together with cities and regions to spread emerging good practices at local level. Communication, support and mutual learning between all levels of government are more necessary than ever. For instance, we would like that the strategy proposed by the European Commission draws on the example of participatory models such as the food policy councils that have been set up in many local and regional authorities.

Current patterns of food consumption are unsustainable, from both a health and an environmental perspective. How can this be remedied? Is the onus purely on consumers to change their diets?

Consumption practices are an important driver in the transition of food systems. We can see that change is already taking place. Many more consumers are more attentive and critical in their consumption choices. However, it is important that we move away from catering just for a small section of the public and ensure that healthy and culturally appropriate food choices are accessible to all. It is not acceptable that those who cannot afford to buy "healthy" food are constrained to receive insufficient or highly-processed food. We need to defend everyone's right to access healthy and sustainable food. Consumers, including the most vulnerable and younger generations, need our support, in the form of education and accurate, transparent information, as well as incentives to change consumption patterns. However, we must also

encourage and support change by taking a holistic view of the food production system, encouraging the production and market supply of healthy and affordable food. Social protection measures are also needed to enable the most vulnerable groups to make healthy food choices on their own.

How is the pandemic affecting local and regional food systems? What key initiatives and measures have been put in place to strengthen local and regional food systems in response to this crisis?

The pandemic has certainly led to fractures and short- and long-term changes in local and global food systems. There is much to say about the effects of the crisis. One of the most important consequences is greater inequalities in terms of accessing food and an exponential increase in the number of citizens suffering from economic poverty. This situation definitely requires urgent measures, including action by local authorities and the third sector to ensure food security. As we saw during the 2008 financial crisis, food systems are subject to crisis cycles that test their resilience. The COVID-19 pandemic makes it even more urgent to work towards a more sustainable and resilient food system. In the short term, we need to bring funding and support to recover from the crisis in a targeted and strategic way, but we must not forget the need for a long-term vision to deliver change. We firmly believe that there are valuable lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 crisis. Local authorities have shown that many citizens have benefited from short supply chains and healthy food, and have spent more time during the quarantine period on cooking and preparing homemade recipes. We hope that these healthy practices will continue and even increase after the COVID-19 crisis.

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[CoR and EU Commission launch partnership to help local authorities integrate migrants and implement the New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#)



□□*President Tzitzikostas and Commissioner Johansson announced the agreement at CoR Plenary*

The European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions are joining forces to develop a new partnership to increase support to the work on integration that is performed by EU cities and regions. The partnership was

announced by the President of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), Apostolos Tzitzikostas, and the European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, at today's CoR plenary session.

The new partnership on integration will support cities and regions in the EU through three main strands of work:

- Building an open and regular dialogue between EU institutions and local and regional authorities on integration;
- Building capacity and promoting exchange of experiences for local and regional authorities;
- Improving evidence and data on integration at the local level.

The partnership will build on the well-established cooperation between the European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions under the [Cities and Regions for Integration](#) initiative, which was launched by the European Committee of the Regions in 2019 to offer a political platform for European mayors and regional leaders to share information and showcase positive examples of integration of migrants and refugees.

[Apostolos Tzitzikostas](#) (EL/EPP), President of the European Committee of the Regions and Governor of Central Macedonia, said: " *Migration is not a challenge just for a few Member States: it is a matter for the whole of the European Union . The EU must support regions, cities and islands – such as Lesbos, Lampedusa and the Canary Islands – that are in the frontline to provide support, integration and other services to newly arrived migrants. While local authorities have put in place many successful and innovative practices for integration, they still face challenges in accessing funding, data and knowledge, in particular in small towns and rural areas. The partnership will support their efforts and show concretely that the EU is by their side in addressing the many challenges they are faced with*".

[Commissioner Johansson](#) commented: said: " *Integration happens in every village, city and region where migrants live, work, study and take part in activities such as sports. Local and regional authorities deliver essential services in healthcare, housing and education. They organise sport and cultural activities where newcomers meet people and make friends. I look forward to working more closely with the Committee of the Regions to support cities and regions in their integration efforts. "*

[Mark Speich](#) (DE/EPP), North Rhine-Westphalia's Secretary of State for Federal, European and International Affairs and chairman of the CoR's [Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs](#) (CIVEX), said: " *Local and regional authorities are central to social inclusion and to solidarity, so I am very glad that the European Commission recognises local and regional authorities as key players and that, instead of the EU working in parallel, the Commission wants to put municipalities and regions at the heart of its programmes. "*

The CoR will agree its recommendations on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum at its plenary session in March 2021. The CoR's rapporteur, [Antje Grotheer](#) (DE/PES), Vice-President of Bremen City Parliament, said: "

Addressing migration does not begin nor end with the reception of migrants and refugees. This is why the Action Plan for Inclusion and Integration is an integral part of a holistic approach to migration, putting local and regional authorities at the heart of actions to combat discrimination, boost integration and ensure equal access to public goods and services for migrants. Inclusive societies are not only fairer, but also more prosperous societies, and this begins at grassroots level .”

BACKGROUND

The European Commission’s proposal for a [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) is a “welcome and necessary” initiative that would – if approved – help building resilient communities as well as manage migration, the President of the European Committee of the Regions has said. He was speaking in a debate in which European Commissioner Ylva Johansson urged regions and cities to make use of increased EU funding available to support the integration of immigrants.

A central pillar of the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) , first presented in September 2020, is an [Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion for the period 2021-2027](#) , drafted in November. The EU’s next long-term budget foresees much greater EU funding for integration projects and programs in 2021-27.

The CoR in March 2019 established a [Cities and Regions for Integration](#) initiative – #regions4integration – aimed at bringing together cities and regions that are interested in sharing experience of integration policies and in finding out more about the possibilities of securing EU funding for their work on including migrants into local communities and local economies.

The [latest tranche of funding available from the EU](#) – totalling €37.2 million – was published in late November and will support projects that help migrant children and victims of trafficking, ease access to basic services, include migrants in the design and implementation of integration policies, and support the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Further information:

The photos of the 141st plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions are available in the [CoR Flickr gallery](#) .

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