



Climate change: Projections show EU on track to meet Kyoto Protocol emissions targets

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Climate change: Projections show EU on track to meet Kyoto Protocol emissions targets

The EU and most individual Member States should be able to achieve their greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol on the basis of policies, measures and third-country projects currently planned, a progress report just adopted by the European Commission concludes. The EU-15 has committed itself to reducing emissions by 8% from 1990 levels by 2008-2012, while most of the new Member States have individual reduction targets of 8% (6% for Hungary and Poland) under the Protocol. By 2002 emissions had been reduced by 2.9% in the EU-15 and by 9.0% in the EU-25. The latest emission projections from Member States suggest that a combination of existing domestic policies and measures, additional policies and measures which are already in an advanced state of planning, and emission credits gained through the Protocol's project-based mechanisms will deliver a total EU-15 emissions cut of 8.6% by 2010. This is despite the fact that some EU-15 Member States are projected to have emissions in 2010 exceeding their legally-binding targets. All new Member States with targets are on track to meet their Kyoto Protocol targets on the basis of existing and additional policies and measures.

Stavros Dimas, European Environment Commissioner, said: "This progress report gives grounds for optimism that both the EU-15 and the new Member States are well on course to meet their Kyoto targets. This is vital if the EU is to maintain its leading role in combating the global challenge of climate change.

But the report also reminds us that emission reductions by 2002 were insufficient. Policies and measures, both the existing ones and the additional ones planned, have to be effectively implemented if we are to achieve the further cuts needed. Since 2002, important new EU legislation has been adopted including directives on combined heat and power and the EU emissions trading scheme and its linking directive. Effective implementation of these new directives is especially urgent in those Member States that are still projected to exceed their targets. Additional legislation, particularly the fluorinated gases Regulation and the Directive on mobile air conditioning, needs to be swiftly adopted by the Council and the European Parliament."

The projected EU-15 emissions reduction reaches 8.6% when account is taken of plans by six EU-15 Member States to obtain emission credits through the Protocol's project-based mechanisms, Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism. These mechanisms enable industrialised states to invest in emission-saving projects in the more than 100 non-EU countries that have ratified the Protocol. The resulting credits can be used towards meeting their Kyoto targets. More Member States are currently finalising plans to use the mechanisms.

The projections for 2010 do not take account of some important measures that will soon start to bring further emission reductions, such as the emissions trading scheme, nor of the use of carbon "sinks" such as forests to offset emissions.

However, progress in reducing emissions in the energy sector (excluding transport), industry, agriculture and waste risks being jeopardised by rising emissions in the transport sector. Transport emissions in 2002 were almost 22 % higher than in 1990.

The report will be available at

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/climat/gge.htm>

See also a detailed press release from the European Environment Agency at

http://org.eea.eu.int/documents/newsreleases/ghg_emissions-trends2004-en

Annex

Situation in individual Member States

On the basis of existing policies and measures alone, the **Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Sweden and the United Kingdom** should reach their individual targets. The **Netherlands** and **Luxembourg** will achieve their targets with the help of credits from the project-based mechanisms.

Most Member States have already identified additional policies and measures, some of them based on EU directives, to cut emissions further. According to the projections, **Austria, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland** and **Slovenia** will meet their targets when existing and additional policies and measures as well as use of the mechanisms are taken into account.

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