Why wait ? climate emergency

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Climate emergency declaration must lead concrete actions

Today, the European Parliament has just voted to declare a climate emergency and urged the Commission and Member States to act with urgency in order to keep global temperatures rises under 1.5c. However, the text does not propose any measures to achieve this.

The Greens/EFA group are calling for the EU to come out with concrete measure before the climate summit in Madrid (COP25).

Bas Eickhout, Green/EFA Vice Chair of the Environment Committee and head of the European Parliament's delegation to the COP25 in Madrid, comments:

"The climate crisis will have dramatic consequences for all life on this planet and will require a herculean effort to avert its worst effects. That's why it's important to declare a climate emergency however, this must be followed by serious and credible actions if it is to be more than a symbolic gesture. Due to interventions of the conservatives and liberals the declaration was however not linked to specific commitments by the European Parliament.

"The EU must commit to a range of goals including: Achieving climate neutrality by 2040, a 65% reduction in emissions by 2030, and to put the environment and biodiversity at the centre of the EU's agricultural policy to halt biodiversity loss."

Pär Holmgren, Green/EFA delegate to the COP25 in Madrid comments:

"We cannot wait any longer, a climate emergency declaration doesn't equal climate protection. Climate Commissioner Frans Timmermans must present a comprehensive climate law as soon as possible and the Commission must ban any investment from the EU's budget going to fossil fuels.

"The Commission cannot go empty handed to Madrid, they need to propose ideas that will encourage other countries to act. Polluting industries must pay their fair share: Aviation needs to start paying taxes for their climate impact and shipping needs to reduce emissions. The green transition in global trade and cross border industries will need international agreement, which is why the EU must lead the way."

Background
On Tuesday, 26 November), the United Nations published a study warning of a global temperature increase of 3.9c by the end of the century if no drastic efforts were made. For the European Union alone, the recommendations would mean a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 65% by 2030 compared with 1990 levels.

Three central demands of the Greens/EFA Group:

- All legislative and budgetary proposals must be examined for their relevance to climate change. The EU Commission must ensure that all proposals meet the goal of limiting global warming to below 1.5 degrees and that climate neutrality is achieved by 2040 at the latest and that biodiversity is protected.
- The EU Commission is to present a comprehensive climate law with the goal of limiting greenhouse gas emissions by at least 65 percent by 2030.
- The multiannual financial framework must not finance projects that conflict with the Paris climate targets and the protection of biodiversity.

- UN Environnent Programme: Emissions Gap Report 2019
- Green/EFA Group Climate Emergency Plan

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