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Plenary Flash 17-20 April, 2023

GREENS/EFA priorities for the plenary session

Fit for 55: CBAM, ETS & Social Climate Fund

Following trilogue negotiations with the Council and Commission, the European Parliament will vote on the final outcome of the following Fit for 55 files: the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), and Social Climate Fund (SCF). These votes represent the final step in the process of finalising these three interlinked pillars of the Green Deal.

While the EU is reducing emissions from its own industries, emissions associated with goods imported into the EU have increased in recent years. With the introduction of the CBAM, the EU has finally agreed to end 'free pollution permits' as importers pay a pollution price, EU industry can no longer claim discounts on the EU ETS price. By pricing the emissions from the manufacturing of the imported goods, the EU will encourage third countries' industries to decarbonise, thereby contributing to the achievement of the 1.5 C Paris target. The CBAM decarbonisation incentive will increase over the next few years, as CBAM will eventually cover all most-polluting sectors and possibly all types of emissions. As the CBAM scope is expanded, the Greens/EFA Group will push for the EU to increase its financial support to poorer countries, which do not bear historic responsibility for climate change and should not be unfairly hit by the EU external carbon price.

The reform of the EU carbon market (EST II) will incentivise the energy and industrial sectors to fully decarbonize. Although the Greens/EFA Group pushed for a more ambitious phase out of free CO2 certificates, the annual number of CO2 certificates to be distributed will be reduced gradually to zero by 2040. In return, industries that modernise and transform will get more support through the increased Innovation Fund and Modernisation Fund. The prospect of this change has already led to a surge in the market carbon price, which, if sustained, is likely to phase out coal in the EU already before 2030. The reform also sends a clear signal that everyone will eventually have to invest in decarbonisation technologies and processes, or pay a high price for their emissions.

Debate: Monday 17th April
Vote: Tuesday 20th April
Greens/EFA MEPs:

CBAM: Yannick Jadot
ETS: Michael Bloss
SCF: Sara Matthieu (ENVI), Katrin Langensiepen (EMPL)

Ridding the EU of forever pollutants and strengthening EU chemical legislation

On Wednesday, MEPs will debate the urgent need to ban PFAS, a class of thousands of persistent synthetic chemicals as well as the need to revise EU chemical legislation (REACH). Studies highlight that Europe is widely contaminated by these chemicals which negatively affect people's health and the environment. The wide contamination with such substances points to a massive failure of EU chemical legislation. While a far-reaching proposal has been put forward in the context of REACH in January 2023, it will still take three years to 15 years before the proposed restrictions, if adopted, are applicable.

The Greens/EFA Group has called for a debate to assess what the EU can do in the meantime to protect human health and the environment against PFAs, as no reparation for ecosystems or human health is currently planned and it is estimated that more than 17 000 sites all over Europe are contaminated and that 21 000 others are presumed to be due to current or past industrial activity. The Group is also calling for the Commission to deliver its proposal for a revision of REACH by June 2023 at the latest so that the European Parliament can still adopt a position before the end of the current mandate. This proposal needs to fully implement the Commission's commitments included in the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability of 2020, including the stipulation that all consumer products should be free from substances of very high concern.

Debate: Wednesday 19 April
Greens/EFA MEPs: Marie Toussaint, Jutta Paulus

Imported deforestation Regulation

The European Parliament will vote to endorse the final trilogue outcome on a new EU regulation against imported deforestation. Through the new law, companies will be required to guarantee that certain commodities and products sold in Europe are not linked to deforestation. It is the first law of its kind globally, and covers soy, beef, palm oil, wood, rubber, cocoa and coffee, as well as products such as leather, chocolate and furniture.

The regulation is a major step forward in the fight against environmental destruction caused by EU consumption. The text submitted to the plenary vote improves the initial Commission proposal by extending the scope to additional products and commodities, based on the Parliament position. It sets deadlines for further improvements at a later stage.

Debate: Monday, vote Wednesday.
Greens/EFA MEPs: Marie Toussaint (ENVI shadow)

Crypto: Markets in Crypto-Assets (MiCA) & the Transfer of Funds Regulation (TFR)

Next week, MEPs will vote on the outcome of negotiations on two crypto key files, which will bring for the first time crypto-assets under a comprehensive regulatory framework and oversight. The crypto-sphere is vulnerable to a huge amount of risk of losses for investors, fraud and market abuse, as well as being at high risk of money laundering and sanctions evasion. The new crypto rules under the MiCA and TFR files will ensure that the crypto sphere is a safer place for investors with consumer safeguards and liability requirements for crypto companies, while strengthening the fight against money laundering and criminality. The revised Transfer of Funds Regulation in particular, will ensure that all crypto asset transfers will be linked to a known beneficiary and originator, which will be a bold step in preventing crypto from being abused by money launderers, criminals and terrorist networks. This will also help the EU enforce targeted financial sanctions on Russian oligarchs and others by stopping them from circumventing sanctions through crypto assets. To improve privacy and safety for consumers this regulation will ensure that crypto exchanges will have to adopt policies and procedures in line with GDPR.

Debate: Wednesday 19th April
Vote: Wednesday 19th April
Greens/EFA MEPs: **Ernest Urtasun,** Greens/EFA Co-Rapporteur on the TFR and Shadow Rapporteur for MiCA, **Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield**, Shadow Rapporteur for the TFR in LIBE.

The need for a coherent strategy for EU-China Relations

On Tuesday, MEPs will debate relations between the EU and China in light of the recent joint visit of French President Macron and Commission President von der Leyen. This diplomatic embarrassment has shown disunity and contradictions in the EU and the line expressed by Macron does not at all reflect the position on China of most EU Member States, nor of the European Parliament.

The EU urgently needs a credible strategy that deals with the many challenges posed by China, such as the risk of conflict in the Taiwan Strait and China's plan to develop an international order that no longer centres around human rights and individual freedoms. President von der Leyen's landmark speech from the 30th March is a very good basis on which to build such a strategy, which should be further developed in order to safeguard EU economic security.

Debate: Tuesday 18th April
Greens/EFA MEP: **Reinhard Bütikofer**

MORE

- **IPCC debate (initiated by the Greens/EFA Group)**
  The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its latest report which calls for rapid action to limit global warming to below 1.5 degrees, and states that global warming has already reached 1.1 degrees.
  Debate: Thursday 20th April
  Greens/EFA MEP: Bas Eickhout, Marie Toussaint, Michael Bloss, Pär Holmgren, Jutta Paulus

- **Dieselgate (initiated by the Greens/EFA Group)**
  77% percent of European diesel-powered cars produce levels of emissions that indicate the presence of an emissions-cheating device. This has prompted the Greens/EFA to call for a debate on the use of these devices and the impact on pollution control systems.

Debate: Wednesday 19 April

- **Opening statement on the 80th anniversary of the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto (initiated by the Greens/EFA Group)**
  Statement by President Metsola: Wednesday 19th April

- **Budget 2024**
  MEPs will vote on the Parliament's position ahead of the upcoming negotiations for the EU's budget for 2024. Thanks to the efforts of the Greens/EFA Group the Budget Committee voted against the use of EU funds for fences and walls at the external borders.
  Greens/EFA MEPs: Rasmus Andresen

- **This is Europe: Debate with Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Xavier Bettel**
  On Wednesday, Prime Minister of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel will address MEPs. President Philippe Lamberts will take the floor on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group.
  Debate: Wednesday 19 April

LINKS

The **Group co-Presidents Terry Reintke** and **Philippe Lamberts** will hold the plenary session press briefing on Tuesday, 18th April at 10:30.

Location: Daphne Caruana Galizia Press Room, Weiss N-1/201 or online via European Parliament website. Journalists can ask questions remotely, via Interactio.

The full plenary agenda for the week can be found on the Parliament website.

The plenary sessions can be followed live here.

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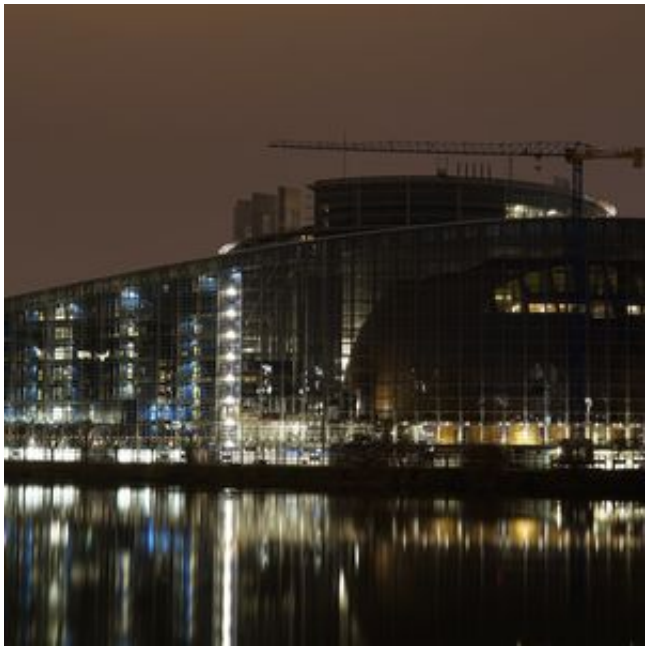

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