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| **ENVE-VII/007** | |
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| **3rd commission meeting, 8-9 June 2020 (tbc)** | |

**WORKING DOCUMENT**

**Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy**

**The European Climate Pact**

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| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Rapporteur: **Rafał Kazimierz TRZASKOWSKI (PL/EPP)**  President of the capital city of Warsaw  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

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| This document will be discussed at the meeting of the Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy to be held from 11 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. on 8-9 June 2020 (tbc). |

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| Reference document  Letter from Maroš Šefčovič of 11 March 2020 , Vice-President, European Commission, |

**Working document of the Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy  
The European Climate Pact**

1. **Introduction**

The Green Deal, presented by the Commission's Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans on 11 December 2019, can be defined as a "*new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy*"[[1]](https://poczta.um.warszawa.pl/owa/projection.aspx" \o "" \t "_blank). It has the aim of bringing Europe to become climate neutral by 2050. The idea has been supported by the European Parliament – in its resolution of 29 November 2019 it urges the EU to submit its strategy to reach climate neutrality as soon as possible, and by 2050 at the latest, to the UN Convention on Climate Change. Finally, the European Council agreed on 13 December 2019 on a commitment to make the European Union climate neutral by 2050.

This ambitious programme will require major changes across all EU policies, going well beyond what we usually consider as climate action, and changing all aspects of the daily lives of European citizens.

The success of the Green Deal will be heavily dependent on the work of local and regional authorities on the ground, as they will be in charge of the implementation of:

* 70% of all EU legislation;
* 70% of climate mitigation measures;
* 90% of climate adaptation policies;
* 65% of the Sustainable Development Goals;

as well as being responsible for one third of public spending and two thirds of public investment.

The fight against climate change is no longer one area of sustainable policies, but the ultimate objective of all policies: huge changes must be implemented by all administration levels and in all fields of the economy and everyday life. This should be reflected in financial arrangements accompanying the Green Deal, with particular focus on direct funding opportunities for pro-climate measures implemented by LRAs. The communication on the Green Deal[[2]](https://poczta.um.warszawa.pl/owa/projection.aspx" \o "" \t "_blank) includes an important list of legislative and not legislative initiatives aimed at mainstreaming the climate neutrality objective throughout all relevant sectors.

Nevertheless, all the top-down efforts are not likely to achieve the goal unless they are accompanied and supported by the effective involvement of all levels of government and all stakeholders and citizens. The Climate Pact is the tool that the Commission is creating to ensure and foster this involvement

The context of these efforts has however changed dramatically - today, in spring of 2020, the world faces what can become one of the most difficult challenges of the 21st century. Without delay it needs to answer these fundamental questions:

* how to overcome a health crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic?
* how to overcome an economic crisis that will inevitably follow the health crisis?
* how, in these new circumstances, should we tackle the progressing climate crisis?

Answer to all of these challenges should be given simultaneously and will lead us to a more general reflection on what kind of European economy and societies do we want in the post-pandemic era. New instruments stimulating the economy could take into account the implementation of the principle of climate neutrality, while maintaining the European social model. The EU should build an economy that creates high-quality jobs and at the same time protect the environment.

**2.**   **The Climate Pact**

In the communication on the European Green Deal, the European Commission declared that the Climate Pact will aim at the following objectives:

1. Encouraging "**information sharing, inspiration**, and **foster public understanding** of the threat and the challenge of climate change and environmental degradation and on how to counter it. It will use multiple channels and tools to do so, including events in Member States, on the model of the Commission’s on-going citizens’ dialogues".
2. Creating "both real and virtual spaces for **people to express their ideas** and **creativity** and work together on ambitious action, both at individual and collective level. Participants would be encouraged to commit to specific climate action goals".
3. Working on "**building capacity** to facilitate **grassroots initiatives** on climate change and environmental protection. Information, guidance and educational modules could help exchange good practice".

On 4 March 2020, the Commission released a survey on the Climate Pact to explore the views of all the different stakeholders on the Climate Pact and use it as a basis to shape the Climate Pact. On 11 March 2020 the Commission consulted the CoR on the same subject through an outlook opinion request.

In the introduction to the public consultation, the Commission described the European Climate Pact as a tool to encourage broad societal engagement on climate and environment through:

Talking about climate change

*"Through communication activities and events, and by using multiple channels and tools, the Pact will raise awareness and build understanding of climate change based on reliable scientific evidence, inspire people and organisations to become involved and encourage sustainable behaviours."*

Triggering action

*"The Pact will encourage people and organisations to commit to concrete actions, designed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and/or adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change.*

*The Commission will promote pledges (public commitments) and support relevant initiatives with knowledge/capacity-building, to boost their impact and inspire further action across Europe and globally. In selected areas, the Commission could provide targeted support. At the start, these areas could cover:*

* *buildings, by stimulating advisory services, facilitating smart financing and assisting local authorities for energy efficient housing;*
* *mobility, by supporting cities and towns with knowledge, raising awareness, and possibly targeted financial support for sustainable urban mobility plans; and*
* *tree-planting, nature regeneration and greening of urban areas."*

Working together

*"The Pact will provide opportunities for communication, learning and networking, online and offline. It will help to bring together people and organisations to share ideas and experience, and to work together.*

*Direct citizen consultations could be organised using formats such as citizen dialogues, citizen assemblies, and more. As appropriate, these platforms will link to existing initiatives, such as the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy or CITIZENV dialogues with young people across Europe."*

Notwithstanding the above, a growing economic uncertainity caused by the coronavirus pandemic should lead to revising the initial idea of the Climate Pact.

Originally, the Climate Pact was to be an instrument of building support for the implementation of the idea of climate neutrality. At present, the Climate Pact could be an instrument of cooperation between all those who are determined to achieve the goal of climate neutrality in the post-pandemic era.

It should be remembered that the approaching economic crisis will reduce income of both, private and public sectors. In such case, responsibility of the European institutions in supporting *green* recovery plans leading Europe to climate neutrality, will be even greater. This applies particularly to the European Investment Bank.

The Climate Pact should therefore lead to an enhanced cooperation between LRAs and the European institutions. It could lead to creating a new dedicated European policy - a Climate Neutrality Policy - with its own budget within the MFF, similar to the Agricultural or Regional policies.

LRAs joining the Climate Pact should have access to a dedicated envelope in the EU Budget under the new Climate Neutrality Policy. They should be able to benefit from a co-funding at a level up to *70- 90%* as they will suffer from the economic crisis caused by coronavirus.

**3.**   **The public consultation**

Following the above-mentioned structure, the consultation asks the respondents to express their preference on different aspects.

In the section on *Talking about climate change*the main requests are about:

* Information needed
* Sources of information
* Channels for receiving information
* Type of face-to-face events

In the section on *Triggering action*the main requests are about:

* Preparedness for a new Climate Pact pledge
* Preferred themes of the pledge
* Preferred areas for targeted support

In the section on *Working together*the main requests are about:

* Expected content of the Climate Pact platform
* Main type of collaboration to be enhanced
* Support for existing initiatives
* Suggestions to scale up initiatives

In the section on *Ideas and suggestions* the main requests are about:

* Potential involvement and scope of Climate Pact Ambassadors
* Interest in joint public procurement
* Additional functions of the Climate Pact

In the section on *personal climate action and interests* the main requests are about:

* Personal attitude towards climate-friendly behaviours and availability to change
* Support needed to become climate-friendly
* Personal interest in the Climate Pact
* Activities with more impact on society

**4.**   **Open questions**

The public consultation of the Commission is addressing all kind of authority and stakeholders: this means that the questions are very broad and general. The specific interests, needs and views of LRAs will be discussed in the CoR opinion.

In particular the Opinion will reply to the following questions.

Talking about climate change

* Which is the support that LRAs need in terms of communication of the Green Deal to their citizens?
* Which kind of information, and capacity building do LRAs need to enhance their capacity of achieving climate neutrality?

Triggering action

* What is needed to ensure successful implementation of the current pledges and to go beyond them?
* Would LRAs welcome a new dedicated pledge?
* On which sector a concrete pledge could help?
* Would LRAs welcome a top-down target for the possible pledge?
* Would LRAs wish to use existing platforms/pledges?
* Which kind of targeted support is needed for LRAs to boost their action? (both financial and not financial support) What about direct access to EU funding for LRAs to implement the European Green Deal and based on which criteria? How to enhance local and regional sustainable investment?
* Which are the most urgent sectors?
* Which may be the role of joint public procurement?
* How to formulate a stimulus packages for the European economy in a way that will meet the objective of climate neutrality;
* How to support LRAs in their transformation to achieve climate neutrality in a situation of a declining income;
* How to support local authorities willing to pursue the goal of climate neutrality in their dialogue with external actors, e.g. private energy companies supplying heat and electricity;

Working together

* Which kind of cooperation could be beneficial for LRAs for the implementation of the Green Deal?
* How can LRAs better involve the private sector in climate actions starting from community associations to SMEs?
* How to coordinate and agree on a common set of actions given different interests of different stakeholders?
* Which kind of contents, functionalities and opportunities should contain the Climate Pact Platform?
* How could the CoR work to support EU LRAs in implementing the Green Deal and help bridging the gap between Brussels and EU territories?

Ideas and suggestions

* What could be the role of CoR Green Deal Ambassadors?

Personal climate action and interests

* Are EU LRAs ready to become climate neutral as public institutions? (environmental management, Green/Circular Public Procurement, etc)
* Which kind of support do they need to this purpose?
* How could LRAs communicate their engagement in the Climate Pact to their citizens?
* How could LRAs foster the involvement of citizens, businesses, universities and all other stakeholders in the transition to climate neutrality?

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1. **Procedure**

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| **Title** | The European Climate Pact |
| **Reference** | Letter from the European Commission |
| **Legal basis** | Article 307(4) |
| **Procedural basis** | Rule 41(a) RoP |
| **Date of Commission letter** | 11/03/2020 |
| **Date of president's decision** | 16/03/2020 |
| **Commission responsible** | Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE) |
| **Rapporteur** | Rafał Kazimierz TRZASKOWSKI (PL/EPP), President of the capital city of Warsaw |
| **Analysis** | 14/04/2020 |
| **Discussed in commission** | 8-9 June 2020 tbc |
| **Date adopted by commission** | written procedure |
| **Result of the vote in commission**  **(majority, unanimity)** |  |
| **Date adopted in plenary** | Scheduled for 1 or 2 July 2020 |
| **Previous Committee opinions** |  |
| **Date of subsidiarity monitoring consultation** |  |