



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2020)5524 final*

*Mr Robert-Marius CAZANCIUC
Interim President of the Senat
Calea 13 Septembrie nr. 1-3, sector 5
BUCURESTI*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senat for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law Regulation) {COM(2020) 80 final}.

This proposal forms part of a broader package of ambitious actions announced in the Commission's European Green Deal Communication¹. The European Green Deal launches a new growth strategy for the EU and reaffirms the Commission's ambition to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. With its proposal for a European Climate Law Regulation, the Commission proposes to enshrine the 2050 climate-neutrality objective in legislation, to set the long-term direction, to provide predictability for investors, and to ensure transparency and accountability.

In response to the issues raised in the Senat's Opinion, the Commission would like to make the following comments.

The transition to climate neutrality will indeed require significant investment and financing. Europe's climate targets will receive strong support through the EU's future long-term EU budget², temporarily reinforced by the new recovery instrument, NextGenerationEU³. The Commission welcomes the full support for this approach expressed by the European Council on 21 July 2020 and notes with satisfaction the reinforced target of 30% for spending on climate action. The future framework will support the green transition through investment under programmes such as the Recovery

¹ COM(2019) 640 final.

² COM(2020) 442 final.

³ COM(2020) 456 final.

and Resilience Facility, the Common Agricultural Policy, cohesion policy and the Just Transition Fund.

The Just Transition Mechanism is a means to provide targeted support to the regions and sectors that are most affected by the transition towards the green economy. It is a key tool to ensure that the transition towards a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind.

International cooperation to address the global challenge of climate change is very important and the EU will continue to promote and implement ambitious policies. As to the Senat's suggestion to include text relating to international cooperation in Article 3(3), the Commission would like to clarify that international developments would need to be considered when setting the trajectory, as provided for in Article 3(3)(i).

The Commission would like to underline that the climate-neutrality objective set out in the proposal is Union-wide, without prescribing by what date individual Member States should be climate-neutral. Fairness and solidarity among Member States are important aspects of the proposal. The full analysis that the Commission services carried out in November 2018 on the implications of the 2050 climate-neutrality objective in support of the Communication Clean Planet for All,⁴ and the evaluation of the EU adaptation strategy, provide an extensive assessment of the impacts of this proposal.

The “irreversible” nature of the process of addressing climate change is recalled in Article 1 of the proposal, and Article 3.3 recalls the need of ensuring “progression over time” in the levels of ambition. The definition of climate neutrality as a balance between emissions and removals is drafted on the basis of the corresponding provisions of the Paris Agreement. Recital 16 recalls that the transition to climate neutrality would require changes across the entire policy spectrum and a collective effort of all sectors of the economy and society.

The Commission attaches great importance to undertaking a robust and sound impact assessment before proposing a new EU ambition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Therefore, the Commission will present an impact assessed plan by September to raise the EU's 2030 ambitions and cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50-55% compared to 1990 levels. The Commission's proposal for a European Climate Law Regulation provides for a trajectory between the 2030 target for greenhouse gas emission reductions and the 2050 climate neutrality target to be drawn up by the Commission, and allows for including a 2030 target increased to at least 50% and towards 55% in a responsible way. Based on this plan, and after a further and more specific impact assessment, the Commission will, by June 2021, review, and propose to revise where necessary, the relevant climate or energy legislation, to deliver on the increased climate ambition. Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action

⁴ COM(2018) 773.

(Governance Regulation) provides for an update of the national energy and climate plans in 2023/2024 (Article 14).

The Commission's proposal also aims at achieving the climate-neutrality objective by providing for a monitoring and assessment governance framework based on the information that Member States provide under the Governance Regulation, notably the National Energy and Climate Plans as well as the integrated biennial Progress Reports. By making use of plans and reports that Member States already provide to the Commission, the Commission aims at minimising administrative burden for Member States and avoiding duplication. The proposal also includes some targeted amendments to the Governance Regulation to align it with the EU 2050 climate-neutrality objective and the proposal.

The Commission welcomes the support for creating a new EU Adaptation Strategy. Plans for such a strategy were announced in the European Green Deal. Its adoption is now scheduled for the first quarter of 2021, as announced in the adjusted Commission Work Programme 2020⁵.

The points made above are based on the initial proposal presented by the Commission, which is currently being examined by the European Parliament and the Council under the ordinary legislative procedure.

The Senat's Opinion has been made available to the Commission's representatives in view of the upcoming negotiations of the co-legislators and will inform these discussions.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Senat and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Senat in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Nicolas Schmit
Member of the Commission*

⁵ COM(2020) 440.