

Summary of the European Union Zero Emissions Climate Action Plan

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Proposed in Book, “Brighter Climate Futures – A Global Energy, Climate & Ecosystem Transformation,” Regent Press, Berkeley, California, USA, September 2020. This PDF file is also downloadable from the Website:

www.brighterclimatefutures.com

When the proposed plan that follows was written, Britain (UK) was still part of the EU. So, the attached plan is for the EU of 27 nations plus the UK.

European Union

As of 2017, the EU had achieved greenhouse gas emissions reductions of 22% compared to 1990 levels, which compared to 2020 was three years ahead of schedule. Its one of the few entities (like California) that met the targets of the Kyoto Protocol. Then in June 2021, the EU upped its ambitions by agreeing to reduce emissions by 55% compared with 1990 by the year 2030 (although this includes some carbon absorption in natural ecosystems in the accounting). It also endorsed a vision of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The European Green Deal is the declared combination of proposed activities and policies in industry, mobility and transport, energy and finance, to make that happen. There seems to be a big reliance on market and private sector mechanisms to achieve the goals.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/#>

About a dozen proposals drafted in July 2021 which will need the approval of the 27 member nations include a phase out of petrol (gasoline) and diesel vehicles by 2035, a tax on aviation fuel and a tax holiday for low carbon alternatives, a carbon border tariff on import of materials like steel and concrete, more ambitious targets for introducing renewable energy around the block, and a requirement that energy inefficient buildings be renovated.

The EU still does have challenges transitioning out of coal and as the recent tiff with Russia over the price and supply of natural gas revealed, an increasing reliance on natural gas.

It is yet to seen how the EU intends to implement these goals and proposals and the hope is that these are not a lot of greenwashing.

(UK on next page)

The United Kingdom (UK)

In December 2020, after leaving the European Union, the UK government announced that the goal set for the UK was to achieve 68% greenhouse gas emissions reductions below 1990 levels by 2030 and to aim at being carbon neutral by 2050.

The full description of the proposed plan shows how the EU and UK could essentially transition out of fossil fuels (totally on coal) and do it totally out of wind, solar, energy efficiency and renew storage (green hydrogen and ammonia made solely by using renewable energy like solar and wind), while still maintaining a high level of energy use. It proposes a massive expansion of mass transit, high speed rail and bike use throughout Europe so that after one lands in Europe all local travel (including tourism) would be totally zero emissions. Low cost light weight solar powered rail transit and freight transportation would be a good addition, and help spread lower cost rail transit all over Europe.

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