
EUROPE RISKS EXCLUSION FROM KEY UN CLIMATE BODY

-

23.09.2016

23.09.2016

EurActiv

The swift ratification of the Paris Agreement by the USA and especially by China caught the EU off guard and risks excluding the bloc from a key decision-making body that will be instituted at the next Conference of the Parties in Marrakesh (COP22), diplomats told EurActiv.

The EU was until now seen and often decried at home for being the undisputed leader in the global push to address climate change.

But European diplomats today agree there is a real risk that the bloc will be excluded from decision-making related to the implementation of the agreement, once it comes into force.

This would be a major humiliation that the vast majority of EU countries want to avoid.

CMA without the EU?

In a stunt never attempted before, EU countries will make efforts to speed up the ratification of the Paris deal through national parliaments by 7 October.

EU ambassadors met on Wednesday (21 September) to discuss the embarrassing situation the EU got itself into and forge the way forward.

EU WANTS TO SPEED UP APPROVAL OF PARIS CLIMATE DEAL

European Union environment ministers will try next week to overcome an embarrassing delay in the blocs approval of the landmark Paris accord on global warming that Europe has long championed, Slovakia said on Wednesday.

EurActiv.com

The stakes are higher than they seem. Once the Paris deal enters into force, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, known as the CMA, will make decisions under the agreement.

The CMA will formally take office at the COP22 in Marrakesh, on 7-18 November. Put simply, it will be the group responsible for supervising the Paris deal. But if EU countries dont ratify the Paris Agreement on time, it might well be founded without a European representative in it.

In short, this means that countries which have ratified including China and the US be

making decisions on implementing the Paris Agreement that have a direct impact on Europe, without the bloc being represented.

China ratification took EU by surprise

As one senior EU diplomat explained, it was the ratification of the Paris deal by China that took Europe by surprise.

The Paris deal on slashing greenhouse gas emissions, which has the backing of nearly 200 countries, takes effect once at least 55 nations making up at least 55% of global carbon dioxide emissions ratify it.

By Wednesday the total number of ratifications had reached 60, representing more than 47.5% of emissions. Those that have ratified include China and the United States, the worlds two biggest carbon dioxide emitters.

The US has strived to ratify the Paris Agreement while Barack Obama was still in office, avoiding the risk that Donald Trump, who has denied the man-made causes of climate change, comes to the Oval office.

But more surprisingly for the EU, China, a not-so-green country, also ratified the Paris deal.

US AND CHINA RATIFY PARIS CLIMATE PACT, LEAVING EU BEHIND

The United States has joined China to formally ratify the Paris agreement to curb climate-warming emissions, the worlds two biggest economies said on Saturday, which could help put the pact into force before the end of the year.

EurActiv.com

Panic

This has reportedly created panic in some EU capitals, raising fears that the Paris deal could enter into force without the EU.

With Japan and India coming suit soon, the EU finds itself trapped, unless it succeeds a stunt ratification by 7 October, one month before the COP 22 in Marrakesh.

Only four countries have ratified so far: France, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia.

SLOVAKIA BECOMES FOURTH EU COUNTRY TO RATIFY THE PARIS AGREEMENT

The Slovak parliament today voted today (21 September) to ratify the Paris Agreement, the landmark international treaty in the fight against climate change. After France, Hungary and Austria, Slovakia, who holds the rotating presidency of the EU, is the fourth country to ratify the deal.

EurActiv.com

Plenary vote on 4 October

The European Parliament has to ratify the Paris deal too, something that should happen without problem on 4 October.

But some European capitals are not happy that ratification at EU level will come ahead of ratification by the national parliaments. It is expected that a Statement by the Council and the Commission would be adopted, stressing that the European Parliament vote is sui generis and will not constitute a precedent for future EU-decision-making..

The usual suspect who could derail the ratification is Poland, which wants guarantees on how the EU will share out the burden of delivering on the Paris accord before committing to ratify it.

EU unable to keep its promises?

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker last week described the EUs slow ratification of the climate deal as ridiculous and damaging to the blocs credibility.

ONCE THE DRIVING FORCE OF CLIMATE ACTION, THE EU HAS FALLEN BEHIND

The inability of the EUs member states to agree on an effort-sharing deal could delay the ratification of the Paris Agreement until late 2017. This would see the climate deal enter into force without the worlds biggest economic bloc. EurActiv France reports.

EurActiv.com

Although the issues are unrelated, the EU increasingly appears unable to ratify the international agreements it has concluded.

This is the case of the EU-Ukraine association agreement, the ratification of which has been upset by a referendum in the Netherlands, and of CETA, the trade deal with Canada.

DUTCH VOTERS REJECT EU-UKRAINE ASSOCIATION

Dutch voters on Wednesday (6 April) rejected a European pact with Ukraine in a referendum seen as a barometer of anti-EU feeling, dealing an embarrassing blow to the government in charge of the rotating EU presidency, sending shockwaves throughout the Union.

EurActiv.com

EU-CANADA SUMMIT HANGS IN DOUBT, CETA FATE UNCERTAIN

EXCLUSIVE / Bulgaria and Romania find it very difficult to ratify the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada which was concluded in 2014, because of the refusal by Ottawa to lift the visa requirement for their nationals, and propose the accord to be postponed.

EurActiv.com