

The logo for Sandbag, featuring the word "sandbag" in a bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font.

Brussels, 15 December 2017

Statement on behalf of Climate Action Network Europe, Carbon Market Watch, European Environmental Bureau, Sandbag, Transport & Environment, and WWF European Policy Office.

EU governments must step back from irreparably weakening Europe's biggest climate law, six of Europe's leading environmental NGOs have said, after talks between member states and the European Parliament ended in deadlock this week. The proposed Effort Sharing Regulation sets binding national emission reduction targets for the 2021-2030 period, but governments are insistent on loopholes that would actually result in hundreds of millions of tonnes in additional CO2 emissions.

Three days ago European leaders flocked to the One Planet Summit to reaffirm their commitment to the Paris Agreement and call for more decisive action. Yet when it comes to implementing the global climate deal, national officials cannot even commit to a 30% cut in emissions in 2030, even while much steeper emission cuts would be needed to stay well below 2 degrees as required by the Paris Agreement. In fact, the position of EU governments would amount to a reduction of less than 25%. The European Parliament's position to strengthen the 2030 climate law would at least come closer to delivering the 30% cut and it was backed by more than three-quarters of the parliament last June.

By not accepting the European Parliament's proposal on a starting point which confers environmental integrity to the scheme, countries are using pre-2020 efforts to weaken the post-2020 need for action. The Paris Agreement, however, requires the complete opposite approach: pre-2020 action enhanced and a constant downward path to ensure emissions are constantly decreasing.

The Parliament is right to insist that EU governments do not only talk big but also deliver. The EU has a unique opportunity to strike a deal that would be far better for the economy, people and the planet. But that means EU governments meeting today need to step back from loopholes and accounting gimmicks, accept the European Parliament's position and strengthen the 2030 climate law.