

Paris Climate Agreement

Bundesrat also approves ratification

The UN Climate Agreement is also coming to Germany. Following the Bundestag, the Bundesrat decided to ratify the Convention. It is expected to come into effect in early October.

"We share a common goal to implement the agreement as soon as possible and Germany will be engaged at every step of the way", Federal Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks said Thursday in her speech to the German Bundestag. "We fought many years for this agreement. Let us now make a contribution that makes a lasting change."

Following in the footsteps of the Bundestag, the Bundesrat has also adopted the draft law on ratification of the climate agreement from the federal government. Once the President has given his signature and the agreement has been published in the Federal Gazette, it can start going into effect tentatively in early October.

Ratification procedures are regulated differently in each country. In Germany the constitution stipulates that the Bundestag and Bundesrat must agree to an international treaty by ratification law. The process is completed when the instrument of ratification is filed with the United Nations in New York.

Protecting the climate, promoting innovation

The Minister of the Environment said that the U.S. and China's decision to support the agreement will have an effect on the economic development of Germany. "We should not behave as if electricity produced from fossil fuels is sustainable in the long term. Or as if cars will still be able to run on diesel and gasoline for a long time."

The success of the German economy has always been linked to its ability to innovate. "We don't have the cheapest products, but we have the best, highest quality, and most innovative products," said Hendricks. "Our future lies in a climate-neutral world".

EU States to follow

The Minister expressed confidence that the EU may file its ratification with the UN in the coming weeks. "We will arrange for a prompt ratification at a special environmental council on 30 September and hope for the consent of the European Parliament in the following week," Hendricks said.

The first hurdle is cleared

As of 22 September, a total of 60 countries have filed their instruments of ratification with the Secretary General of the United Nations in New York. As such, the first hurdle on the path to implementation of the climate agreement has been overcome. When 55 countries with greenhouse

gas emissions of at least 55 percent have ratified the agreement, it automatically goes into effect 30 days later.

"Large parts of the international community are ready to put their promise into action," Hendricks told the Bundestag. "We expect to reach the quorum already in the coming weeks."

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon spoke of a "significant step" on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. Taken together, these countries represented 47.76 percent share of all emissions. Many leaders have pledged to ratify the agreement by the end of the year.

The Paris Agreement serves as the first-ever internationally binding framework for a global energy revolution. The international community wants to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius. The aim is actually to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees compared to pre-industrial levels. In addition, carbon neutrality is to be achieved in the second half of the century. Rich industrialized countries need to establish a concrete financial plan by 2020 to support the regions most affected by climate change.

Protecting the environment, providing security for future generations

"We will limit global warming to a maximum of two degrees, preferably 1.5 degrees. We will make our world economy carbon-neutral during this century. And we will support poor countries in their efforts to also achieving greenhouse gas neutrality" said Hendricks. The agreement of the 195 States in Paris was a great gift. "A gift for those who come after us, because it gives them hope for a better life."