



European Economic and Social Committee | Comité économique et social européen

PERIOD **ACTIVITY REPORT**
2022 **AD HOC GROUP ON THE**
2023 **CONFERENCE OF THE**
PARTIES OF THE UNFCCC

**DIRECTORATE B3 – LEGISLATIVE
WORKS**

CHAIR: PETER SCHMIDT

Introduction

The EESC has actively participated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since 2014. With the establishment of the EESC Ad Hoc Group on the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention in February 2022, the EESC took a step ahead to develop a more strategic, permanent and structured engagement process to influence European co-legislators and strengthen the views of civil society on the international climate agenda.

As stated in the resolution prepared by the Ad Hoc Group, "we are the last generation that can stop climate change, and the EESC, as the voice of European civil society, ought to play a leading role in promoting these transformations towards carbon-neutral, inclusive and socially fair societies".

We need to raise our ambition to ensure that the decarbonisation of the economy goes hand in hand with a just transition and increased well-being. We also need meaningful involvement and broad support of civil society at different levels on the transformation to sustainability; otherwise, this process cannot succeed.

Peter Schmidt

President of the NAT section and Chair of the Ad Hoc Group

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Activities & main findings

In 2022, the year that marked the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Climate Change Convention, the EESC Bureau decided to establish for the first time an EESC Ad Hoc Group on the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to develop a more strategic, inclusive and permanent EESC engagement in the UNFCCC process, and thus weighing in more significantly on the climate change negotiations.

Following its own-initiative opinion [Towards structured youth engagement on climate and sustainability in the EU decision-making process](#) (NAT/788), the EESC included a youth delegate in its UNFCCC COP delegation in 2021 and 2022. The [EESC youth delegate to the COP](#) regularly participated in the Ad Hoc Group meetings. In March 2023, the new youth delegate, selected among over 150 applications from across Europe, was officially appointed as an advisor to the ad hoc Group.

The Ad Hoc Group was established for an initial period of 14 months and had its first meeting on 31 March 2022. The Ad Hoc Group met for a total of eight times during this initial period and carried out the following tasks:

1. Preparing the EESC COP resolution: The Ad Hoc Group **coordinated the preparation of the EESC COP resolution**, "[Jointly tackling an existential threat – social partners and civil society for the implementation of ambitious climate action](#)", aligned with the COP's priorities and UNFCCC negotiation processes, which was adopted at the EESC Plenary session in October 2022.

The EESC resolution called on the EU institutions and governments of the Member States to step up their climate ambition, following science and scientific information, and placing a particular focus on the role of organised civil society to accelerate climate action. The EESC resolution also called for the need to set up a new fund for "loss and damage", an item that was raised by the EESC delegation in the bilateral meeting with Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans at COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, and which became one of the primary outcomes of the COP27 decision. This is a clear sign that the EESC was timely and relevant with its contribution.

2. Gathering views from stakeholders and civil society: Ahead of the COP27, the Ad Hoc Group provided a space for presentations and interaction with stakeholders and selected experts to feed into the EESC resolution. The Ad Hoc Group met with relevant organisations and institutions, such as the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, the High-Level Climate Champions office and Climate Action Tracker, as well as representatives from the civil society constituencies – young people, businesses, farmers, trade unions and environmental NGOs.

3. Coordinating the preparation of the COP delegation (six EESC Members plus youth delegate), including communications: The Ad Hoc Group contributed to the preparatory work for the COP delegation and the agenda for the mission. The EESC organised five side events, participated as speakers in several other side events, and held a large number of bilateral meetings in order to exert as much influence on the negotiations as possible. The EESC was also active through its various communications channels, and it was the first mission for which the new EESC communication strategy was put in motion. Some of the deliverables were:

- [EESC COP27 dedicated webpage, including details on the five side events](#), as for example an UNFCCC side event.
- [COP27 video messages from members](#)
- [A podcast](#) - The Grassroots view – S3 Episode 22 – COP27: challenges and expectations from the organised civil society point of view
- [Twitter roadmap](#) on #COP27

4. Ensuring cooperation with other EESC bodies: The Ad Hoc Group ensured a strategic cross-sectoral approach through close cooperation with different EESC groups and **bodies, notably the Sustainable Development Observatory**. It maintained regular communication with the NAT and EESC Bureaus and relevant EESC bodies to ensure the centrality of the COP process in the EESC decision-making. Ad Hoc Group members informed the section and the groups on the outcomes of COP27.

Appendix I – List of meetings and events

Ad Hoc Group meetings	<p>31 March 2022, inaugural meeting, setting the objectives</p> <p>03 May 2022, including the following speakers: Stella Brožek-Everaert from DG CLIMA.D.1, European Commission</p> <p>07 June 2022, including the following speakers: Teresa Garcia Perez & José Fonseca Lavado, Secretariat ENVE, Committee of the Regions; Freek</p>

	<p>van Eijk, Managing Director Holland Circular Hotspot and Co-Chair of the Coordination Group of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform; Sophia Wiegand, youth delegate for the EESC delegation to COP27, and youth representative on behalf of YOUNGOs constituency</p> <p>07 July 2022, including the following speakers: Mia Moisis, NewClimate Institute, Climate Action Tracker; Alexander Shevelov, Sustainability Manager, Adolf Würth GmbH & Co. KG & Mag. Cornelia Daniel, Founder/Managing Director, Dachgold e.U. & Tausendundein Dach; Bert de Wel, Climate Policy Officer, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC); Marie Bondu, from DG CLIMA.D.1, European Commission</p> <p>18 July 2022, including the following speakers: Emma Pinault & Fiona Macklin, High-Level Climate Champions for Climate Action office; Rachel Simon, Climate & Development Policy Coordinator, Climate Action Network Europe (CAN-Europe); and Ambra Raggi, Policy Officer, World's Farmer Organization (WFO) & Ceris Jones, Climate advisor of NFU UK (British Farmers) and focal point of the farmers' constituency for the WFO</p> <p>02 September 2022, finalizing the resolution</p> <p>28 October 2022, preparing mission to COP</p> <p>12 January 2023, taking stock of COP27 and discussing the next steps</p>
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