

Greta Thunberg brands EU's new climate law 'surrender'

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Greta Thunberg accused the EU of "pretending" to tackle climate change

Swedish teen activist Greta Thunberg has rebuked the EU's plan for tackling climate change, telling MEPs it amounts to "surrender".

Ms Thunberg spoke in Brussels on Wednesday as the EU unveiled a proposed law for reducing carbon emissions.

If passed, the law would make it a legal requirement for the EU to be carbon neutral by 2050.

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed the law as the "heart of the European Green Deal".

But 17-year-old Ms Thunberg dismissed the law as "empty words", accusing the EU of "pretending" to be a leader on climate change.

"When your house is on fire, you don't wait a few more years to start putting it out. And yet this is what the Commission is proposing today," Thunberg told the European Parliament's environment committee.

She said the law, which would give the EU Commission more powers to set tougher carbon reduction goals, did not go far enough.



Ms Thunberg is well-known for criticising politicians on climate change

The law, Ms Thunberg said, was an admission that the EU was "giving up" on the Paris agreement - **a deal which committed 197 nations to greenhouse gas reductions.**

"This climate law is surrender. Nature doesn't bargain, and you cannot make deals with physics," the activist said.

She said its Green Deal package of measures would give the world "much less than a 50% chance" to limit global warming to 1.5C.

What is in the Paris climate agreement?

Countries signed up to the Paris climate deal have agreed to "endeavour to limit" global temperatures below 1.5C.

What is the EU's Green Deal?

The European Green Deal includes:

A €100bn (£86m) Just Transition Mechanism to help countries still heavily dependent on fossil fuels and "carbon-intensive processes" to move to renewable energy sources

Proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 50% of 1990 levels or even lower by 2030 - instead of the current target of a 40% cut

A law that would set the EU "on an irreversible path to climate neutrality" by 2050

A plan to promote a more circular economy - a system designed to eliminate waste - that would address more sustainable products as well as a "farm to fork" strategy to improve the sustainability of food production and distribution

Read more about the deal on the **EU Commission's website**

"Your distant targets will mean nothing if high emissions continue like today, even for just a few more years, because that will use up our remaining carbon budget before we even have the chance to deliver on your 2030 or 2050 goals," Ms Thunberg said.

Known for her impassioned speeches to politicians, Ms Thunberg has become a figurehead for the global climate change movement.

Her solo protest outside Sweden's parliament in 2018 inspired millions of young people to join her school climate strike campaign, Fridays for Future.

She appeared in front of a 15,000-strong crowd in Bristol in western England last week. She warned "those in power" she would "not be silenced when the world is on fire".

ExxonMobil 'tried to get European Green Deal watered down'

Climate lobbying watchdog claims US oil giant met EC officials in run-up to policy

Jillian Ambrose Energy correspondent

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The European commission stopped short of proposals to phase out combustion engine vehicles and has plans to consult on whether to include vehicles in its carbon-pricing scheme. Photograph: Alamy

The US oil firm ExxonMobil met key **European commission** officials in an attempt to water down the European Green Deal in the weeks before it was agreed, according to a climate lobbying watchdog.

Documents unearthed by InfluenceMap revealed that Exxon lobbyists met Brussels officials in November to urge the EU to extend its carbon-pricing scheme to “stationary” sources, such as power plants, to include tailpipe emissions from vehicles using petrol or diesel.

Green groups believe this would be the least effective way to disincentive fossil fuel vehicles, and would rather allow countries to set their own emissions standards and targets for road emissions.

The move appears to be an attempt to stall **the rollout of electric vehicles** by keeping a lid on the cost of driving a traditional combustion engine vehicle running on fossil fuels. The European commission stopped short of proposals to phase out combustion engine vehicles and has plans to consult on whether to include vehicles in its carbon-pricing scheme.

Edward Collins, a director at InfluenceMap, said the document “represents yet another evidence piece” of ExxonMobil’s long-term strategy of delaying climate action by focusing on “long-term technical solutions” to try to avert “decisive regulatory action” that is urgently required to tackle the climate crisis.

A Guardian investigation last year found that Exxon has spent **€37.2m (£32.4m)** lobbying the EU since 2010, more than any other major oil company, according to the EU’s transparency register. It revealed that Shell spent €36.5m and BP spent €18.1m lobbying Brussels officials to shape EU climate policy.

Exxon is also facing legal action in the US courts after accusations that it misled investors over the business risks caused by regulations aimed at addressing the climate crisis.