

A series of countries such as China, Japan and South Africa has promised to eventually reduce its carbon emissions to zero. A similar promise was made by US President Joe Biden during the election campaign. But the EU is one of the few major economies that has translated this long-term goal into urgent action this decade.

According to a draft document, EU member states are preparing to call for a global shutdown of coal-fired power plants and a cessation of fossil fuel subsidies, given that the EU wants to make climate change an important part of its foreign policy. In this document, which should be presented at the winter session of the Parliamentary Assembly, the EU bloc would take a hard line on climate diplomacy, discouraging other countries from investing in fossil fuels and forging alliances with major economies to achieve faster reductions in pollutant emissions. The document reads that the EU is calling for the global elimination of subsidies for fossil fuels, which are harmful to the environment, over a clearly defined period of time. This includes the elimination of coal in energy production and, as a first step, an immediate halt to all funding for new coal-using infrastructure.

EU energy diplomacy will discourage any new investment in fossil fuel-based energy infrastructure projects in third countries, except those that are fully consistent with a clear path towards climate neutrality.

EU countries agreed last month to cut emissions by at least 55 % from 1990 levels by 2030. As it seeks trillions of euros in investments to meet that goal, the bloc plans to leverage its economic and diplomatic weight to ensure other countries follow suit.

Some EU member states, such as Poland, Romania and Bulgaria are heavily dependent on coal-based electricity production and still have not implemented plans for coal phase-out in the near future.