

Green Deal: Re-designing a European Project of Common Interest

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Global energy transition as a measure to stabilize the changing world climate has become a necessity that is now widely acknowledged. Besides compilations of CO₂ reduction targets due for 2025 in the EU and in all other Paris accord signatories with “ambitions” in their saving targets both in amounts and precision in timing, there is a strong debate about pathways and targets for the transformation going far beyond the defossilization of traditional energy systems.

The European Union tries to be leader in the transition with the ambitious target to be the first net-emission free continent in the world. This statement is underpinned by a massive suite of legal and regulatory activity of the past EU commission and parliament. Some modifications of the pathways are articulated for the beginning new legislative period following severe protests of stakeholders.

It is thus a good opportunity to re-think the green deal from a science perspective. As it is politically incorrect to question the target of climate neutrality, we take this as starting point. We interrogate timelines and dimensions of the transition and find that many assumptions made in the politics are difficult to accept as realistic. An analysis of the approach gives rise to the conjecture that the systemic character of energy transitions and the need to think in circular economies is not sufficiently well established in the strategy of the Green Deal.

As grateful we should be to the EU for enforcing the unavoidable transition, as critical we may look at the measures taken. A more effectful regulatory concept with more freedom to operate for the relevant stakeholders will be suggested to enable constructive discussions.
