

# The European Green Deal

## Batteries Included

By Priscilla Haring-Kuipers (The Netherlands)

The European Green Deal will effect electronics design and end-of-life. The EU is providing regulation and funding to create a greener future. Will it be enough?

The European Green Deal is the European Union's (EU) manifest to become a climate neutral continent in 2050 and to produce 55% less greenhouse gases in 2030 (compared to 1990) as a midway marker [1]. This goal has been written into a European Climate Law, which has been formally agreed upon and is currently waiting on a few final steps to become a legal reality. Already the biggest EU funds are now bound to spend around a third of their trillions to initiatives and products that are aimed at this climate-friendly future. To give some substance to such grand intentions, the EU has adopted a Fit for 55 policy package [2] that is aimed at achieving this 55% drop in 2030, stating that "The make-or-break decade has already started." [3]

Under the Climate Law, all industry in the EU will need to "decarbonize" and hold itself accountable to our climate. The EU Industrial Strategy has announced to focus special attention on the development of a common

charger, initiatives for circular electronics and sustainable batteries. Funding will aim to support what the EU sees as key enabling technologies: "robotics, microelectronics, high-performance computing and data cloud infrastructure, blockchain, quantum technologies, photonics, industrial biotechnology, biomedicine, nanotechnologies, pharmaceuticals, advanced materials and technologies." [4]



*The make or break decade has already started.*

While aiming at a climate-neutral circular economy, we also need to address the waste of materials in electronics, and new

rules will force the end of exporting such waste outside the EU. This means that all the e-waste that is currently going to Asia and Africa will be recycled here — under environmental and employee-friendly EU regulations. The energy market will also need a fast and full-blown upgrade to become the efficient, affordable, renewable and fully integrated EU energy market that is envisioned. Things are going to change.

The Green Deal as a whole and specifically the Fit for 55 package have been criticized by environmental agencies for not forcing countries to move fast enough and for leaving ample room for loopholes and greenwashing. The United Nations Environment Programme reports that the 55% drop in emissions that the EU is aiming for will not be enough to hold us at a 1.5°C global temperature rise and will likely lead to an even hotter planet. As politically ambitious as this Green Deal may be, it may not be enough to stop the force of the environmental crisis that we are already in.





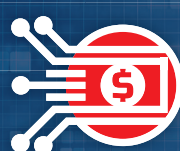
A European Green Deal resulting in a European Climate Law resulting in green EU policies that are going to shape our very near future. This might be a good time to start your electronics disassembly house, further your research into biodegradable PCB substrates, develop tiny backyard wind farms or smart grid support and algae tanks growing components. Get in touch with other small-to-medium businesses in Europe (involve a university) and go get that funding.  210500-01

### About the Author

Priscilla Haring-Kuipers writes about technology from a social science perspective. She is especially interested in technology supporting the good in humanity and a firm believer in effect research. She has an MSc in Media Psychology and makes This Is Not Rocket Science happen.

### WEB LINKS

- [1] European Green Deal Portal:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)
- [2] European Council, "Fit for 55: The EU's Plan for a Green Transition":  
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-plan-for-a-green-transition/>
- [3] European Commission (@EU\_Commission), "The make-or-break decade has already started," Twitter, July 14, 2021: <https://bit.ly/EU-twitter-decade>
- [4] European Commission, "Communication from the Commission: A New Industrial Strategy for Europe," Brussels, 10.3.2020.: <https://bit.ly/EC-indust-strat>



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