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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu
on behalf of the Commission
(8.7.2025)

Conducting public consultation on the Social Climate Plan is a mandatory process. Article 5 of the Social Climate Fund (SCF) Regulation¹ outlines specific requirements for Member States on public consultation. They are required to provide a summary of the public consultation process when submitting their plan. The summary must show how the participants' perspectives have been integrated into the plan.

The consultation must be conducted in accordance with Article 10 of the Governance Regulation², where the Member States are to ensure early and effective consultation, reasonable timeframes and adequate public information. The consultation must also comply with the national legal framework.

In line with its obligations under Article 5(4) of the SCF Regulation, the Commission has published a note on good practices for public consultations for the Social Climate Plans³. These good practices have been presented to all Member States at the Climate Change Expert Group formation for the SCF, established by the Commission. 10 Member States have been supported under the Technical Support Instrument to set stakeholder engagement plan and events.

All requirements of the SCF Regulation will be considered by the Commission when assessing the plans.

In accordance with Article 5(3) and Article 16(3) of the SCF Regulation, the assessment of the consultation process based on the criteria specified in the reply to question 1 is part of the overall assessment of the plans. Following this assessment, as outlined in Article 17 of the SCF Regulation, the Commission will adopt an implementing decision.

Once the French authorities submit their plan to the Commission, the latter will assess it, including whether it complies with the abovementioned provisions.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/955 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 establishing a Social Climate Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/955/oj/eng>.

² Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Text with EEA relevance.), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1999/oj/eng>.

³ Directorate-General for Climate Action, Ramboll Management Consulting, Wuppertal Institute for Climate Environment and Energy and Gelibolyan, K., Support for the implementation of the Social Climate Fund – Note on good practices of public consultation for the Social Climate Plans, Publications Office of the European Union, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2834/49708>.