



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

3021st Council meeting

### **Environment**

Luxembourg, 11 June 2010

President

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Minister for the Environment and Marine and Rural Affairs  
of Spain

# **P R E S S**

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## **Main results of the Council**

*The Council discussed **options to move beyond a 20% greenhouse gas emission reduction target** for 2020. In its conclusions, it requested further analysis of what an increased reduction objective would mean for individual member states and stated that it would come back to this issue at its October session. Delegations agreed that the ongoing international negotiations on climate protection made a definitive assessment of the risk of **carbon leakage** difficult for the time being, but indicated that no policy options should be excluded for the future.*

*Moreover, the Council adopted conclusions on water scarcity, **drought** and adaptation to climate change. It supports the development of a European drought observatory, which would be charged with forecasting and monitoring as well as the exchange of best practices between relevant actors and stakeholders. It also encourages member states to elaborate water scarcity and drought management plans and to promote sustainable water use in agriculture.*

*Finally, the Council adopted conclusions on **preparing forests for climate change**. The text calls for the strengthening of cooperation at EU and international level on sustainable forest management and highlights the need to further mainstream this issue in relevant policies.*

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<sup>1</sup> Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks. Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>). Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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Mr Janez POTOČNIK

Member

Ms Connie HEDEGAARD

Member

**ITEMS DEBATED****BIOCIDAL PRODUCTS**

The presidency presented to the Council a progress report on the proposed regulation on biocides, set out in [9970/1/10 REVI](#).

Biocides are non-agricultural pesticides, for instance insecticides, disinfectants, repellents as well as material preservatives. Veterinary or human medical products are not covered. The draft regulation is designed to replace the current directive on the authorisation of such products.

**HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES IN ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

The presidency presented a note on progress with the proposed recast of the directive restricting the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment, set out in [10350/10](#).

**WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

The Council heard a report from the presidency on progress with the recast of the directive on waste electronic and electrical equipment, featured in [10351/10](#).

**CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY - *Council conclusions***

The Council adopted conclusions on the EU position for the 5th Conference of the Parties to the Cartagena protocol on biosafety, which aims to protect biodiversity from potential risks posed by live genetically modified organisms, see [10453/10](#).

**UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2012 - Council conclusions**

The Council exchanged views and adopted conclusions on the UN conference on sustainable development 2012, see [11062/10](#). In addition, the presidency briefed delegations on the first preparatory conference for the 2012 meeting, held from 17 to 19 May in New York, where a roadmap for the process up to 2012 was agreed.

The UN conference on sustainable development in 2012 comes twenty years after the 1992 Rio earth summit and will aim at securing renewed political commitment to sustainable development. It will focus on two themes: "green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" and "institutional framework for sustainable development".

**WATER SCARCITY, DROUGHT AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE - Council conclusions**

The Council adopted conclusions on water scarcity, drought and adaptation to climate change, a priority of the Spanish Council presidency in the area of environment policy. The text is set out in [11061/10](#). The conclusions support the development of a European drought observatory, which would be charged with forecasting and monitoring as well as the exchange of best practices between relevant actors and stakeholders. They also encourage member states to draw up water scarcity and drought management plans and to promote sustainable water use in agriculture.

**PREPARING FORESTS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE - Council conclusions**

The Council adopted conclusions on preparing forests for climate change, a priority of the Spanish Council presidency in the area of environment policy. The text can be found in [11037/10](#). It calls for the strengthening of cooperation at EU and international level on sustainable forest management and highlights the need to further mainstream this issue into relevant policies.



**CLIMATE CHANGE - OPTIONS FOR THE EU EMISSION REDUCTION TARGET AND CARBON LEAKAGE - Council conclusions**

The Council discussed options to move beyond a 20% greenhouse gas emission reduction target for 2020. In its conclusions, it requested further analysis of what an increased reduction objective would mean for individual member states and stated that it would come back to this issue at its October session. Delegations agreed that the ongoing international negotiations on climate protection made a definitive assessment of the risk of carbon leakage difficult for the time being, but indicated that no policy options should be excluded for the future.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council of the European Union

1. TAKES NOTE of the Commission communication "Analysis of options to move beyond 20% greenhouse gas emission reductions and assessing the risk of carbon leakage".
2. REAFFIRMS its conclusions of 15 March 2010, as endorsed by the European Council on 25-26 March 2010.
3. STRESSES that the abovementioned communication covers a wide range of issues which need to be discussed in-depth in order to prepare the EU for the medium- and longer-term climate change challenges, and more specifically for the next steps in the international climate negotiations.
4. AGREES to revert to these issues as soon as possible and in any case no later than at its October 2010 session, and WELCOMES the intention by the Commission to conduct more detailed analysis on the policy options and costs and benefits, including at member state level, as appropriate."

## **CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS OF LIGHT VANS**

The presidency briefed the Council on progress with the draft regulation setting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions standards for light commercial vehicles, see [9803/10](#).

Proposed in November 2009, the draft act ([15317/09](#)) complements and ensures consistency with the regulation setting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions standards for new passenger cars ([443/2009](#)). The new text would introduce a limit of 175g CO<sub>2</sub>/km for the average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from new light vans registered in the EU, to be phased in between 2014 and 2016.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Challenges for a good environmental status of the marine environment**

The presidency and the Commission presented an information note concerning the marine environment to the Council ([10545/10](#)). The document lists several challenges for the successful implementation of the EU marine strategy framework directive: addressing linkages with other EU policies, coordination within regions and at European level, knowledge gaps and the need for a permanent structure for providing scientific support as well as financing strategies.

### **UN commission on sustainable development**

The Council took note of information from the presidency on the eighteenth session of the UN commission on sustainable development, held in New York from 3 to 14 May ([10539/10](#)). The themes addressed at the session were chemicals, transport, waste management, mining as well as sustainable production and consumption.

### **Memorandum of understanding in the field of forestry**

The Greek delegation briefed the Council on a memorandum of understanding in the field of forestry signed by Greece and Turkey on 14 May ([10524/10](#)). A joint declaration addressing the issue of the Evros river was also signed by the environment ministers of both republics that day.

### **Genetically modified organisms**

The French delegation submitted a note to the Council ([10832/10](#)) regarding the Council conclusions on genetically modified organisms adopted on 4 December 2008 ([16882/08](#)). France invited the Commission to brief the Council on the follow-up given to those conclusions. A number of delegations supported the French request.

## **Bio-waste management**

The Commission presented a note on its communication on future steps in bio-waste management in the EU ([10700/10](#)). In the communication ([9955/10](#)), the Commission did not find deficiencies in the current legislation that would require a specific directive on bio-waste management. The Commission confirmed this approach at Council and indicated that it aimed to work further on introducing technical rules supporting the management of bio-waste, for instance setting end-of-waste criteria for compost.

## **Whaling**

The German and UK delegations made a joint statement on the 62nd meeting of the International Whaling Commission, to take place in Agadir from 21 to 25 June ([10821/10](#)). Both countries are concerned about the proposed consensus decision to improve the conservation of whales, which is to be discussed at the conference. A number of delegations intervened to stress the importance of this issue and of continuing to engage in discussions, bearing in mind the EU position and objectives as set out in the relevant Council decision adopted in 2009.

## **Nuclear installations planned in the EU neighbourhood**

The Lithuanian delegation provided information about nuclear installations planned in the EU neighbourhood, which may significantly affect the environment of EU member states ([10852/10](#)). Lithuania expressed its wish to see greater involvement on the part of the Commission and EU member states in the associated environmental impact assessment procedures. Some delegations, in support, highlighted the importance of respecting international obligations under the Espoo convention on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context.

## **Work programme of the incoming Belgian presidency**

The Belgian delegation presented the work plan for its presidency, which is to take place in the second half of 2010.

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED****ENVIRONMENT****Halons - Adaptation to technical progress**

The Council decided not to oppose the modification by the Commission, for the purpose of its adaptation to technical progress, of regulation 1005/2009 on substances that deplete the ozone layer with regard to the critical uses of halons.

**Petrol with bioethanol - Adaptation to technical progress**

The Council decided to oppose the modification by the Commission, for the purpose of its adaptation to technical progress, of directive 98/70/EC relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels.

**Cartagena protocol on biosafety**

The Council modified the negotiation directives on international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress for damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms under the Cartagena protocol on biosafety. These directives concern matters falling within Community competence and are addressed to the Commission.

**BUDGET****Budgeting of the surplus from budget year 2009**

The Council adopted its position and accepted without any changes draft amending budget no 4 to the general budget 2010, budgeting the surplus of EUR 2.25 billion from the implementation of the budget year 2009. The surplus results from:

- a higher revenue than expected (+ EUR 3.40 billion);

- an under-spending of payment appropriations (- EUR 1.93 billion);
- a positive balance of monetary exchange (+ EUR 185.5 million).

The budgeting of this surplus will diminish accordingly the global contribution of member states to the financing of the EU budget.

## **FISHERIES**

### **EU/Solomon Islands agreement**

The Council approved the signature of a new fisheries partnership agreement with Solomon Islands ([9336/10](#)). Pending its entry into force, the agreement will be retroactively applied, on a provisional basis, as from 9 October 2009, in order to guarantee the continuation of fishing activities by EU vessels.

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