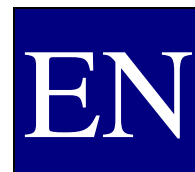




**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



## **Council conclusions on the Commission Communication "Investing in the Development of Low Carbon Technologies (SET Plan)"**

*3001st TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY Council meeting  
Brussels, 12 March 2010*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

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### RECALLING

- its conclusions of 28 February 2008 concerning "A European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan)"<sup>1</sup>;
- its conclusions of 19 February 2009 concerning "Second Strategic Energy Review - An EU energy security and solidarity action plan"<sup>2</sup>;
- its conclusions of 21 October 2009 on the EU position for the Copenhagen Climate Conference, where the importance of at least quadrupling by 2020 the global investments in energy RD&D, in particular in the area of renewable energy and energy efficiency, was reaffirmed<sup>3</sup>;
- its conclusions of 3 December 2009 concerning "Guidance on future priorities for European research and research-based innovation in post-2010 Lisbon strategy"<sup>4</sup>;
- the SET Plan Conference held in Stockholm on 21-22 October 2009.

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1 Doc. 6326/1/08 REV 1  
2 Doc. 6692/09  
3 Doc. 14790/09  
4 Doc. 17189/09

# **P R E S S**

WELCOMES the Communication "Investing in the Development of Low Carbon Technologies (SET Plan)"<sup>5</sup>.

ACKNOWLEDGES that the SET Plan will contribute to accelerating the development and widespread application of clean, sustainable and efficient energy technologies. These technologies will make it possible to achieve the EU's ambitious energy and climate goals for 2020 as well as the EU's intention to make the transition to a low-carbon economy by 2050, and will also contribute significantly to the EU's competitiveness and security of supply.

ACKNOWLEDGES that the development of the SET Plan builds on the European industrial base and the research and innovation capacities of the European Research Area and CALLS for appropriate links with the forthcoming "EU 2020" strategy and the European Innovation Act with a view to making an optimal use of Union and national resources in research and innovation to accomplish its overall objectives.

ACKNOWLEDGES that the implementation of the SET Plan has progressed well since the Council conclusions of 28 February 2008. A Member States' High-level Steering Group has been formed, the European Industrial Initiatives (EIIs) have developed their Technology Roadmaps (2010-2020) and are working towards the establishment of effective European programmes, the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) is ready to launch its first research activities, and the Smart Cities initiative is being developed.

WELCOMES the Technology Roadmaps (2010-2020) for the different EIIs which are the result of a strategic planning process involving the industry/technology platforms, the research community and the Member States and INVITES these actors to contribute to regular reviews and updates of these documents.

SUPPORTS the objectives of the EERA, which are aimed at strengthening, expanding and optimising the EU energy research capabilities through the joint realisation of pan-European activities and the sharing of world-class national facilities, drawing upon results from fundamental research and maturing technologies to the point where they can be embedded in industry-driven research.

RECALLS the main existing EU funding programmes and initiatives , which can support the development of safe and sustainable low carbon energy technologies within their respective area of application, namely: the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for research; the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP); the European Energy Programme for Recovery; the provision included in Article 10a(8) of the Emission Trading System Directive 2003/87/EC that establishes a mechanism for the financing of demonstration projects in certain areas, and the Cohesion Policy.

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<sup>5</sup> Doc. 14230/09

RECALLS that while the range of potential funding instruments is fairly wide there is the risk of insufficient and fragmented resources and of a lack of cross-fertilisation and leverage effects.

RECALLS that the EU's transition to a low carbon economy should be a part of a global transition and, therefore, STRESSES that the SET Plan should contribute to the reinforcement of international initiatives (e.g. the Technology Mechanism proposed in the Copenhagen Accord) which facilitate the development and transfer of advanced energy technologies with developed and emerging and developing economies, while ensuring due protection of intellectual property rights.

IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, THE COUNCIL

STRESSES the need to move from the Technology Roadmaps to the operational implementation of the EIIs, where partners are voluntarily engaged, as smoothly and quickly as possible.

AGREES to the launching of all identified EIIs without delay and by 2011 at the latest, and, in particular, to the launching already in 2010 of those EIIs that demonstrate their maturity and industry commitment as well as their cost-effectiveness. Although the implementation of the various EIIs will differ between sectors, a set of common principles and practices should be applied. This includes: definition of priorities and concrete actions, identification of potential financial instruments and of criteria for public intervention, and development and systematic use of key performance indicators.

AFFIRMS that the structure and governance of the EIIs should be light and non-bureaucratic, while at the same time efficiently engaging all participants. They could take the form of flexible “public (EU and/or interested Member States) – private partnerships” with a decentralised, open architecture, which could share objectives, planning, monitoring and reporting tools and implementation mechanisms.

SUPPORTS the launching by the EERA of joint activities in different energy areas, where participation in these activities should be open to all European research organisations that can bring in significant R&D capacity and own resources. The objectives and activities of the EERA should be complementary and consistent with those of the EIIs, and the EERA should actively encourage more effective networking between industry, research institutions and universities.

STRESSES that basic research addressing key scientific mid-long term energy challenges (e.g. innovative materials) is very important and that the related needs, resources and funding mechanisms should be better defined and integrated into the overall SET Plan picture, thus avoiding double efforts and financing.

RECOGNISES that other potential poles of science and research should be activated, including, inter alia, the European Research Council, the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) of the European Institute of Technology (EIT), and the European Space Agency (ESA), whenever energy-related scientific benefits could be expected from such cooperation. The Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund and other programmes can help to bridge gaps in RTD and innovation capability in the field of energy between different parts of the EU.

AGREES that the SET Plan should concentrate on strategic programmes rather than individual projects, and that combining public resources effectively and creating flexible public-private partnerships with industry should be a reference model for future pan-European energy research cooperation. Participation in the programmes should be open to all Member States, as well as to companies and research institutions of all sizes.

STRESSES that, whilst respecting fully their legal bases, the existing EU research and technology programmes in the field of energy and, to the extent possible, other relevant non-thematic EU programmes/initiatives, should support the SET Plan objectives and current and related future initiatives.

UNDERLINES that given the scale of the public and private funding required for the medium term, inter alia for the financing of major demonstration projects, an increase in the proportion of public investment at EU level may be needed, which should therefore be given due consideration in the budget review and the negotiations regarding the next Financial framework, without prejudice to the outcome of negotiations.

WELCOMES the Commission's and the European Investment Bank's (EIB) efforts to work together in order to improve the coordination and continuity of available funding to finance higher-risk R&D and demonstration projects in the energy sector and to mobilise and leverage other public and private sector resources. Ongoing initiatives such as the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), the "2020 European Fund for Energy, Climate Change and Infrastructure" (the Marguerite Fund) and the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF) could be reinforced in order to contribute to the financing of the SET Plan initiatives.

WELCOMES the intentions of the Commission and the EIB to assess the optimal financial packages for large demonstrations, and INVITES the Commission to look for new ways to combine resources from different actors and instruments and to further develop a dedicated joint instrument to finance the initial market take-up of safe and sustainable low carbon technologies, which builds on the pilot joint EC-EIB "EU Sustainable Energy Financing Initiative" of the European Economic Recovery Plan.

FURTHERMORE THE COUNCIL

CALLS upon Member States and other stakeholders to instigate a coherent partnership approach within the SET Plan, which would allow all key players to participate and all the different sources of private and public funding to be strongly coordinated and used efficiently.

INVITES public authorities in the Member States to coordinate their energy RTD programmes and policies with SET Plan objectives and activities. Where possible, in light of the current constraints of public budgets, they should be ready to offer the appropriate incentives and consistent policy signals and, if necessary, to significantly increase the public funding of safe and sustainable low carbon technology development.

REQUESTS Member States and the Commission to streamline the existing institutional steps and to give due regard to the central role of the SET Plan Steering Group to guarantee a fair and transparent process for the conception, launch and implementation of the various SET Plan activities, in particular for the EIIs and the research programmes of the EERA.

REQUESTS the Commission to develop to its full capability the SET Plan Information System (SETIS) in order to provide a robust technology-neutral planning tool, which reflects the current state of the art of the individual technologies and their anticipated technological development and market potential. It should make it possible to assess performance and cost-effectiveness and to monitor the progress of the SET Plan activities towards their objectives in a transparent and objective way.

INVITES all the parties to take in advance the necessary steps, including consistent policy signals by public authorities, to maximise information sharing and the dissemination of generated knowledge, which will help to create synergies enabling faster technological development and optimisation of resources.

INVITES Member States and the Commission to consider the adoption of EU and national regulatory and non-regulatory measures in support of EIIs.

REQUESTS the Commission to coordinate and communicate continuously the possibilities offered by existing EU programmes and initiatives for the development of safe and sustainable low carbon energy technologies, in order to provide a more predictable, transparent and stable framework to industry and private sector investors.

INVITES the Commission to set up a platform for involving interested financing organisations in order to exchange information and best practice as well as to coordinate actions, as appropriate.

INVITES the Commission to take forward, in close coordination with Member States, existing and recently established forms of cooperation in order to ramp up international cooperation and to improve coordination of the EU actions with key strategic partners in both developed and developing countries, as well as with international organisations, such as the International Energy Agency (IEA) and International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

REQUESTS the Commission to keep the Council regularly informed of the progress in implementing the SET Plan."