

Expert Workshop: « The future of European Environmental Policy : what role for the Resource Efficiency Roadmap and what role for the Environment Action Programme ?»

A workshop organized by Bruxelles Environnement (BE), with the support of the Danish Ministry for the Environment (DK) and the Polish Ministry for the Environment (PL)

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The topic of the workshop, organized by Bruxelles Environnement: which added value for a 7th Environment Action Programme (7EAP) for the future European Environmental Policy regarding to the forthcoming Resource Efficiency Roadmap?

In the **first session**, Joanna Mackowiak-Pandera, Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Environment of Poland, highlighted the important urge for resource efficiency since resource consumption has raised during the last decades. Kurt Vandenberghe, chief of Cabinet of Commissioner Potocnik, confirmed this urgent need for action, although a 7th EAP should deliver an added value for the future environmental European policy, regarding to the European Resource Efficiency policy and other important initiatives from the Commission expected or recently published (Communication on better implementation, the Biodiversity Strategy 2020, the CAP, Communication on Rio+20, ...).

Lars Mortensen of the EEA supported the view that the Roadmap RE takes into account the majority of the future environmental challenges, although these challenges are rapidly changing challenges, and future policy should be more accentuated on the consuming rather than on the producing-side. Therefore, a 7th EAP should follow on the RE Roadmap and focus on policy implementation, natural capital and ecosystems management, integration across sectors and a transformation to a green economy. Mr. Mortensen concluded his presentation by raising the question on the need for a paradigm shift for the European environmental policy. For Peter de Pous of the EEB, both the 7th EAP and the Resource efficiency Roadmap are important and complementary policy documents, both having a crucial role to play. The role that the EEB sees for the 7th EAP is the political function of this instrument, the ability to set long term objectives, to tackle emerging challenges and finally to ensure the transition to a real 'green economy'. Peter Borkey of the OECD emphasized three main elements that are missing in the resource efficiency roadmap and that can be taken into account in the new EAP: mechanisms to get the prices right; how to manage the transition to 'green growth'; and finally environmental policy integration.

Evelyne Huytebroeck, Minister for the Environment of the Brussels Capital Region, emphasized that the RE Roadmap will not be sufficient for the future environmental policy, so a 7th EAP is needed. The question now is rather what content the 7th EAP should have.

The second session on how the future Environment Action Programme will be able to help to develop better environmental policy instruments was opened by Raymond Van Ermen from the European Partners for the Environment (EPE), who stated that the 7th EAP should include the RE Roadmap and be the 'overarching legal framework' for the future Environmental European policy. The RE Roadmap on its own will not be able to address the social revolution we need, neither to make the prices right. Paula Baker, representing the Committee of the Regions, insisted on a consistent legislation, better information and evaluation, the use of market based instruments, and the role for the local and regional authorities in the co-decision procedure that should be extended to these key players in the implementation process. Finally, social acceptance of proposed measures was also highlighted as a key issue. Axel Volkery of the IEEP closed the second session by saying that there is no shortage of strategic documents, but rather a shortage of inter-linkages and coherence between these strategies, and therefore is no other tool available than a EAP. A better regulation is, according to Mr. Volkery, a binding regulation. Finally, a future EAP can set environmental priorities, provide inter-linkages and benchmarking.

The final and **third session** addressed the issue on how the future Environment Action Programme can help to implement European environmental policy. Alexandre Affre of Business Europe, who presented the business view, explained why a better implementation of existing legislation is needed. A first reason is that implementation is a key factor for not distorting the market and assure the competitiveness of European businesses. Moreover, there is a need for an environmental compliance

culture. Michael Nicholson, representing IMPEL, explained that *any* future plan should actively promote implementation and enforcement. Barbara Dewulf, from Bruxelles Environnement, presented her ideas on how the 7th EAP could be an opportunity for better implementation, but explained that this question needs to be treated in the whole decision making process. The opportunities for a 7th EAP regarding implementation are better instruments for environmental policy and the involvement of all stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS

The workshop concluded that the Resource Efficiency Roadmap seems to be relatively comprehensive with respect to target setting and environmental areas covered. It also has an interesting integrated sectorial approach (food-building-transport) that takes into account the life-cycle concept. A 7th EAP, adopted by co-decision, could give the Resource Efficiency Roadmap an additional legal value and a real involvement and engagement at all policy levels (European, national, regional and local) in its implementation, and provide more social acceptance.

To ensure this better implementation of EU environment legislation and policy, several ideas were raised for the content of a 7th EAP:

- A true reflection on how powers are exercised at European level in the field of environment. This includes the role and involvement of local and regional authorities (as they are on the front line for feeling the pressure on the environment but also very important actors in implementing EU policy), the role of stakeholders (esp. NGOs) and the role of EU institutions (including the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the European Environment Agency).
- A true reflection on a new set of instruments ('new' in the sense of 'enhanced') for sharing the environmental information, of instruments based on market mechanisms, of instruments to improve implementing legislation in the environmental field as well as of instruments available for financing the environmental policy.

All documents of this workshop are available on the website www.eapdebate.org