

Air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions: effort of Member States to meet the Community's greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments up to 2020

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Following the Commission's presentation of the climate-energy package, the Council held a public policy debate, focusing on the [proposal for a directive](#) on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.

In view of the nature of the climate-energy package, two horizontal questions focused on the ambition of the package as a whole and on sustainability criteria, and two questions were addressed to energy ministers focusing on renewable energy sources and on the trade in guarantees of origin.

The presidency summarised the debate along the following lines:

- Delegations welcome the climate-energy package in general as well as the proposal on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources. Early adoption of the instrument has been urged by several delegations;
- The national targets are considered to be very ambitious - some even think they are too ambitious - and, in order to achieve them, there is inter alia a need for (i) much flexibility on how to achieve them; (ii) increasing public support for renewable energies and; (iii) certainty with respect to the support schemes, including the guidelines on state aid for environmental protection. In this context, it is crucial to have some assurance that, after 2014, the successor to these guidelines will be equally supportive.
- The importance of the indicative trajectories for reaching the targets has been confirmed, but here also, flexibility seems to be necessary;
- Solidarity has been highlighted as another essential aspect;
- Balance is needed between competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability;
- The importance of trade in guarantees of origin has been underlined as a flexible instrument which should enable and not hinder Member States to reach their targets, as well as the continuation of current national support schemes for renewables;
- The contribution of energy efficiency is considered as essential to achieve the objectives;
- With respect to biofuels, there is broad support for ambitious sustainability criteria. However, these criteria should not diminish the competitiveness of European industry nor should they lead to trade barriers since import of and trade in biofuels will be necessary to achieve the target in this field. Moreover, the cost-effectiveness of the sustainability scheme will have to be ensured;
- Several delegations have indicated that sustainability criteria should apply to all forms of biomass. In this context, consistency between the renewables directive and the fuel quality directive is essential;

Lastly, the need for cost efficiency has been underlined as an essential element.