Air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions: European climate change programme, ECCP

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This Commission Communication analyses and disseminates progress on the implementation of the European Climate Change Programme as well as offering a package of proposals aimed at reducing greenhouse gases. It deals with a concrete set of implementation measures to be addressed in the Commission's work programme in the coming 24 months. From the outset the European Union has been a strong proponent of the need to reduce greenhouse gases in order to arrest global climate change. The European Council meeting held in Gothenburg, June 2001, reconfirmed the Union's determination to meet its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol and to ratify it so as to allow its entry into force by 2002. So what then is the current state of play vis the reduction of green house gases? In many respects the news looks encouraging. According to the 2001 Second Progress Report on greenhouse gas emissions, the EU has seen a decrease of greenhouse gases by 4% since 1990. This indicates that as a whole, the EU is in line with its target paths for both 2000 and 2008-2012. In spite of such encouraging news however the Commission warns against complacency. Added measures are need in order to realise the main objectives of the Kyoto Protocol. Indeed, failure to implement new measures could result in a gap of -8% (about 340 Mt CO2 eq). Strong and timely measures at EU level will thus be an important element of an EU wide climate change strategy. In line with this thinking a European Climate Change Programme was set up last year to help establish, identify and co-ordinate EU policies. A final report from the ECCP was published in June 2001 and encompasses two different approaches - a top-down cross-sectoral study on a cost-efficient evaluation of the EU emission reduction objectives and a bottom-up assessment of policies and measures through expert working groups of the different sectors. The report identifies 40 possible measures which, if implemented, would amount to a combined CO2 emission reduction potential of some 664-765 MT CO2 equivalent. On the basis of this report the Commission proposes a package of measures, to be forwarded in the next two years. They are grouped in four sections: cross-cutting, energy, transport and industry. In the first section namely "Cross-cutting issues", the Commission proposes: - Promoting effective implementation of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive (IPPC Directive); - Proposing a Directive on linking project-based mechanism including JI and CDM Emissions trading scheme; and - Proposing a Review of the monitoring mechanism; In terms of the second section namely "Energy Issues", the Commission will present the following package: - Proposal for a framework Directive for minimum efficiency requirement for end-use equipment; - Proposal for energy demand management; - Proposal for a Directive for the promotion of combined heat and power (CHP); - Initiatives on increased energy-efficient public procurement; and - Public awareness campaign and campaign for take-off. In terms of the third section "Transport", the Commission will present: - Proposal for shifting the balance between modes of transport; - Proposal for improvements in infrastructure useand charging; and - Promotion of the use of biofuels for transport. Lastly, in the "Industry Sector", the Commission is aiming to introduce the following: - a Proposal for a framework Directive on Fluorinated Gases. The Communication recognises that this package of proposals is neither exhaustive nor complete. Additional actions will therefore be selected from the 42 measures identified by the ECCP. These actions will continue to be monitored and assessed taking into account the views of EU industry and other interested parties. A second ECCP report, similar to the one of June 2001 will be prepared by the end of 2002.