European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy. Green Paper

2006/2113(INI) - 08/06/2006

In its conclusion on the sustainability of energy production and consumption : promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy, the Council welcomes and supports the overall approach of the Commission's ambitious Action Plan for Energy Efficiency. The successful implementation of the recommendations in the Commission's Action Plan also requires a continued and strengthened focus on R&D on energy efficiency in the context of the Seventh Research and Development Framework Programme (2007-2013), in the context of the energy component of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) as well as in the context of the overall CIP.

More attention and effort should be devoted to the translation of R&D results into energy-efficient products and services on the market and to the demonstration of these products and services.

Legislation which discourages the promotion of energy efficiency should be reviewed and amended as appropriate. Given the need to ensure adequate resources from all those involved in the development of the proposals of the Action Plan on energy efficiency and their implementation, the Commission should seek to ensure that adequate resources are available in accordance with applicable budgetary rules and within its overall budget.

At the end of the debate, the Presidency underlined the following ideas that emerged from the debate:

- There is a consensus that energy efficiency and renewable energies form a key component of energy policy - at both national and European level.

- Energy efficiency and cost-effective use of renewable energy sources enhance competitiveness and security of supply.

- There is a need to promote and facilitate investments into cost-effective energy efficiency measures. Governments and the financial sector should cooperate in developing innovative funding tools.

- There is large agreement on the need to raise awareness, through education, training, demonstration, feedback on energy consumption, etc., and focusing on groups such as SMEs, public authorities, children, etc. This is mainly a task for national, regional and local authorities.

- As regards the use of renewable energy sources, delegations agreed that this should be increased, since the use of renewable energy sources reduces greenhouse gas emissions and the Community's dependence on external sources of energy.

- R&D programmes at all levels should contribute to the development of new and improved technology, with a view to making renewable energies competitive.

- The large investment required in renewable energy needs a stable and predictable long-term regulatory framework. Policy makers should ensure this.

§ On international cooperation on energy efficiency and renewable energy, a Community initiative for an international framework agreement was generally supported in principle, even though concerns and questions as to the precise content of such an initiative must be addressed.