

Environment Council to deal with climate

The second formal Environment Council under the Greek Presidency will be held in Luxembourg on 12 June. Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik, Commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard and Health Commissioner Tonio Borg will represent the European Commission.

The Council will deal with climate and health-related points in the morning before moving on to environment issues after lunch. The main climate point will be a public debate on the policy framework on climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030.

The main environment points in the afternoon are an orientation debate on the Clean Air Package proposed by the Commission last December, and conclusions that are expected to be adopted in view of the up-coming multilateral biodiversity conferences to be held in South Korea in the autumn. Any other business points include information from the Commission on the state of play regarding EU ratification of the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period and the proposal to establish an EU system for monitoring and reporting CO₂ emissions from large ships, information from the Presidency on the Commission proposal to cut plastic bag use, information from France on endocrine-disrupting substances and from Sweden on highly fluorinated substances.

A press conference will take place at the end of the morning session on the items discussed. A second press conference with Commissioner Potočnik on environment issues is scheduled to take place at the end of the meeting.

The proposal for a Regulation on monitoring, reporting and verification of carbon dioxide emissions from maritime transport

The Commission put forward a legislative proposal to establish an EU system for monitoring, reporting and verifying (MRV) emissions from large ships using EU ports (see IP/13/622), as a first step to implement an EU strategy to integrate maritime transport emissions in the EU's greenhouse gas reduction policies. The Commission proposes that the MRV system apply to shipping activities carried out from 1 January 2018.

The ratification and implementation of the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period

The Commission put forward the legislative proposals necessary for EU ratification of the second commitment period (2013-2020) of the Kyoto Protocol in November 2013 (see IP/13/1035). The Commission aims to finalise the main elements of the ratification package so that the EU and Iceland can jointly ratify the second commitment period.

2030 Framework for Climate and Energy Policies

The Council will hold a public debate on the climate and energy policy framework for 2020-2030 presented by the Commission in January (see IP/14/54). The framework aims to make the EU economy and energy system more competitive, secure and sustainable. The Commission proposes that, by 2030, the EU reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 40 % below 1990 levels through domestic measures alone and increase the share of renewable energy to at least 27 %. Improving energy efficiency is also a key pillar of the 2030 framework: the Commission will review progress to date later this year and propose further action as necessary. The Commission also proposes a new governance framework for

climate and energy policies and a set of key indicators to assess progress. The European Council is expected to take a final decision on the framework in October 2014.

The debate will be based on input from the informal Energy and Environment Councils held in mid-May and structured around two questions drawn up by the Council Presidency. The first is on whether other sectors could contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The second focuses on the investment challenge.

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