



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 9 December 2011**

**18346/11**

<b>ENV</b>	<b>940</b>
<b>POLGEN</b>	<b>228</b>
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<b>ECOFIN</b>	<b>877</b>
<b>AGRI</b>	<b>860</b>
<b>PECHE</b>	<b>387</b>

**NOTE**

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from: General Secretariat  
to: Council

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No. prev. doc.: 17847/11 ENV 911 POLGEN 218 ENER 387 TRANS 339 MAR 155 RECH 403  
COMPET 568 ECOFIN 838 AGRI 822 PECHE 365

No. Cion prop.: 14632/11 ENV 710 POLGEN 140 ENER 300 TRANS 245 MAR 116 RECH 314  
COMPET 413 ECOFIN 620 AGRI 624 PECHE 249 - COM(2011) 571 final

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Subject: Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe  
- Draft Council conclusions

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On 22 September 2011 the Commission presented a Communication on the Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe.<sup>1</sup>

The Roadmap defines medium- and long-term objectives to achieve resource efficiency in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its flagship initiative on "A resource-efficient Europe".

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<sup>1</sup> 14632/11.

The Roadmap covers a wide range of areas - energy, transport, climate change, industry, commodities, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity and regional development. Within a long-term vision for 2050, the Roadmap sets Milestones for 2020, illustrating what will be needed by that date to gradually achieve resource efficiency and sustainable growth. For each Milestone the Communication describes the actions that are needed in the short term (2012 to 2020) to start off the process. The actions are proposed to be taken at all levels of society, by individual businesses, business associations, consumers, regions, Member States and, where needed, at EU level in six main areas<sup>2</sup>, for key resources (ecosystem services, biodiversity, minerals and metals, water, air, land and soil, marine resources) and for three key areas of economic value (food and drink, buildings, mobility).

The Working Party on the Environment examined draft Council conclusions prepared by the Presidency on 27 October and on 16 and 28 November 2011, and the Permanent Representatives Committee discussed the draft conclusions on 7 December 2011. The revised draft of the above-mentioned conclusions can be found in the Annex to this note. All delegations maintain scrutiny reservations on the latest text.

The Council is invited to adopt the draft conclusions at its meeting on 19 December 2011.

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<sup>2</sup> Improving products and changing consumption patterns, boosting efficient production, turning waste into a resource, supporting research and innovation, phasing out inefficient subsidies, getting prices right.

**Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe**

**- Draft Council conclusions -**

The Council of the European Union,

RECALLING:

- the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth adopted by the European Council on 17 June 2010,
- the Council Recommendation of 13 July 2010 on broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and of the Union, and in particular Guideline 5: Improving resource efficiency and reducing greenhouse gases,
- the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy by the European Council on 15/16 June 2006,
- the EU climate change objective as agreed in October 2009 and reaffirmed by the European Council in February 2011 and the Council (Environment) in October 2011,
- the Council conclusions on sustainable materials management and sustainable production and consumption: key contribution to a resource-efficient Europe, adopted by the Council on 20 December 2010,
- the Council conclusions on:
  - = addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss (4 December 2008)

- = the Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan (4 December 2008)
- = Eco-Efficient Economy in the context of the post 2010 Lisbon Agenda and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (October 2009)
- = Improving Environmental Policy Instruments (20 December 2010)
- = Energy Efficiency Plan (10 June 2011)
- = EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (21 June 2011)
- = Protection of water resources and integrated sustainable water management in the European Union and beyond (21 June 2011)
- = a competitive European Economy: Industrial competitiveness in the light of resource efficiency (29 September 2011)
- = the Assessment of the sixth Community Environment Action Programme and the way forward: towards a 7<sup>th</sup> EU Environment Action Programme (10 October 2011)
- = Rio+20: towards achieving sustainable development by greening the economy and improving governance (10 October 2011)
- = the industrial policy flagship initiative – reinforcing implementation of industrial policy across the EU (28 October 2011),

1. WELCOMES the Communication from the Commission “A resource-efficient Europe - flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 Strategy”<sup>3</sup> providing a long-term framework for coordinated actions in many policy areas and supports policy agendas for climate change, energy, transport, industry, raw materials, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity and regional development.
2. WELCOMES the Communication on the Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe<sup>4</sup> which is a key element of the resource-efficient flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 Strategy leading the EU into economic transformation towards a more sustainable and competitive economy, and contributing to world-wide efforts to ensure a transition towards a green economy.

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<sup>3</sup> 5869/11 of 28 January 2011.

<sup>4</sup> 14632/11 of 23 September 2011.

3. RECOGNIZES the proposed milestones of the Roadmap as a good basis for further discussion among Member States, the Commission and all key stakeholders with a view to the transition towards a sustainable and responsible resource-efficient economy and society in a progressive and cost-effective way, while having in mind that the purpose of the proposed indicative milestones is to point out the general directions for future actions and feed-in the discussions on potential targets.
4. ENDORSES the cross-sectoral approach in the Communication, designing a coherent action framework that aligns the requirements of a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy in all relevant sectors; STRESSES that the economic prosperity and well-being of citizens now and of future generations depends on natural capital, including ecosystem services, biodiversity, mineral resources, water, air, land and soils and marine resources which are treated as “free” commodities and the importance of taking action in priority sectors responsible for the most significant environmental impacts in order to maintain natural capital and ensure a sustainable flow of ecosystem services.
5. SUPPORTS the Commission’s vision to achieve by 2050 sustainable growth in a way that respects resource constraints and planetary boundaries thus contributing to transformation towards the economy which is competitive, inclusive and provide a high standard of living with less input and lower environmental impacts. All resources should be sustainably managed within environmental limits, from raw materials to energy, water, air, land, soil, biodiversity and marine resources, and waste should be turned into a resource. The EU objective in the context of necessary reductions according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by developed countries as a group, to reduce emissions by 80-95% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels should be reached, while biodiversity and the ecosystem services it underpins should be protected, valued and appropriately restored.

6. IS AWARE that transforming the economy onto a sustainable and responsible resource-efficient path should also contribute to the recovery from the current economic crisis and bring increased competitiveness and new sources of growth and jobs through cost savings from improved efficiency, some of which can result from no- or low-cost actions, the deployment of innovative solutions in markets and society and better valuation and management of resources in the long as well as the short term.
7. REAFFIRMS that the transformation will need an integrated and coherent policy framework that creates a level playing field, where eco-innovation and resource efficiency are rewarded, creating economic opportunities and improved security of supply through a life-cycle approach, product redesign and high quality standards, sustainable management of natural resources, greater waste prevention and reuse, recycling and recovery, substitution of environmentally damaging and critical raw materials and resource savings. UNDERSTANDS that striving at absolute decoupling of growth from resource use and negative environmental impacts and unlocking these new sources of growth needs coherence and integration in the policies that shape our economy and our lifestyles.
8. SUPPORTS the need for a global integrated approach to environmental, economic and social issues, based on impacts along the whole life-cycle of products i.e. from cradle to cradle, their content, quality and durability both within and outside Europe; RECOGNISES the key role of closing the material cycles as a source of necessary raw materials and energy; IS AWARE that the shift towards a sustainable and responsible resource-efficient European economy and society will require, in addition to technological innovation, innovation at the level of our socio-economic system, i.e. new governance models, new business and education models, new consumption patterns, and lifestyles geared towards the sustainable management of resources.

9. UNDERSTANDS that resource efficiency can reduce costs but often requires initial investments which implies not only spending on individual green solutions, but an overall greening of public expenditure and the facilitation of private investments in resource efficiency; in this context CALLS for clear policy signals, and for favourable and predictable framework conditions and financing to encourage the shift to a resource-efficient economy in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy.
10. UNDERLINES the direct link between the Resource Efficiency Roadmap and the 7th EAP, which should be complementary and reinforce each other in providing, respectively, *inter-alia* for the integration of environmental aspects in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy and the definition of the environmental policy priorities and actions.
11. POINTS TO the following principles and considerations, which should be taken into account by the Commission and the Member States in developing the actions:
- actions shall consider the interdependencies between the various resources and should bring forward a coherent set of mutually supportive measures and policy instruments contributing to the sustainable use of multiple resources;
  - actions shall take into account the differences in various resources, especially their degree of scarcity or supply risk status, and the environmental impacts arising from their use; regional and sectoral differences must also be considered;
  - milestones can be well integrated into the 2050 vision, most of them are positively perceived. Further analysis of the underlying actions and of related realistic timelines is needed;
  - proper conditions need to be established, both in the form of regulatory and market-based instruments, as well as through voluntary schemes, in order to stimulate resource efficiency;
  - resource efficiency is also a matter of lifestyle; stronger public awareness, social acceptance and environmental education from a very young age are crucial for a more sustainable future.

12. LOOKS FORWARD to the Impact Assessments of the actions proposed in the roadmap, taking into account a country specific approach as appropriate and CALLS UPON the Commission to further mainstream resource efficiency considerations in the impact assessments of all relevant future policy proposals.
13. AGREES that transforming the EU into a more resource-efficient economy will require the development and adoption of robust, easily understandable, timely and widely recognized indicators, applicable on the global scale where relevant, to measure progress in improving resource efficiency. INVITES the Commission to continue to work in close cooperation with Member States and all other relevant stakeholders and to develop by 2013 a proposal for an appropriate set resource efficiency indicators, taking into account the life-cycle perspective, potential environmental burden-shifting to other regions or between resources, and social aspects, as well as the work done by, among others, the EEA, OECD and UNEP, and to define a process for considering potential resource efficiency targets in close cooperation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders.
14. RECOGNISES that it will also require the further development and application of methods to assess environmental impacts over the full life-cycle of products and processes, including consumption based emissions, both within and outside the EU, whilst having in mind the task to minimize disproportionate administrative burdens. CALLS upon the Commission and Member States to address these issues respectively in the forthcoming initiatives.
15. ENCOURAGES the Commission to continue consultations with all key stakeholders, including business, trade unions, scientists/academia, NGOs, as well as national and regional governments and local authorities, with a view to creating an EU platform for the transition to resource-efficient economy.

16. UNDERLINES the need to address together with all stakeholders, the short-term transitional side-effects and emerging implications of the shift to a resource-efficient economy, such as:
- possible employment loss in some sectors and a need for anticipation and mitigation measures in the process of restructuring;
  - the rebound effect, that may result when increases in resource efficiency are offset by increases in consumption which eliminates expected environmental benefits;
  - relocation of environmental pressures, especially carbon leakage, which may result from high adaptation costs within the EU compared to regions with lower environmental requirements and no equivalent commitments;
  - possible trade-offs among and between environmental and other policy objectives.
17. REAFFIRMS the need of valuing natural capital to create, among others, possibilities to integrate the economic value of biodiversity and ecosystem services in public and private sector decision-making and national accounting systems and INVITES the Commission to work further towards this end.
18. TAKES NOTE of the Annual Growth Survey for 2012 and ACKNOWLEDGES the important contribution of resource efficiency to implement the Europe 2020 Strategy. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to include further actions aiming at resource efficiency in the European Semester process and ENCOURAGES Member States, when drawing up and revising strategies, to give due consideration to resource efficiency measures and the need to advance investment in green jobs and skills, to share these strategies with other Member States, the Commission and all relevant stakeholders and to report their progress on the different aspects of resource efficiency in their National Reform Programmes as appropriate.
19. CALLS UPON the Commission and the Member States to undertake effective actions aimed to increase consumers' awareness and make sustainable products available by ensuring an adequate flow of information on environmental and social consequences of consumption and production, e.g. through ecological footprint, eco-labelling, green public procurement, environmental education, and cross-sectoral partnerships to promote sustainable lifestyles.

20. REINSTATES the need to address resource efficiency in the global context, in particular to strive for a successful outcome of the Rio+20 Summit with concrete progress towards the global transition to a more sustainable and efficient use of natural resources and the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.
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