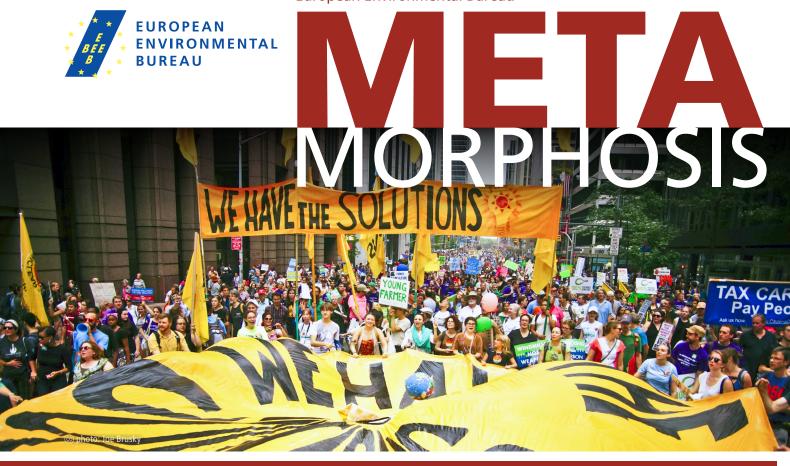
December 2016
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European Environmental Bureau



BOOM OR BUST

Editorial

This time last year the situation looked almost rosy. Countries around the world had signed up to Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals and by the end of December they had agreed the Paris climate deal. And for most of this year momentum towards a clean energy transition seemed to be gathering speed as country after country ratified the climate deal in record time. But then came the bad news when the unbelievable happened and Donald Trump was elected US president.

JEREMY WATES EEB SECRETARY GENERAL



The latest international climate gathering under the auspices of the UN in Marrakech in November was therefore a rather more subdued affair than expected. Some glimmers of hope remained as the EU, China and other countries pledged to continue the battle against climate change. But the European Commission is still failing to match policies with rhetoric. The just published Winter Package, that sets out the EU's energy plans until 2030, increases the ambition on energy efficiency, but proposes extremely weak targets for renewables, offers little overall support for the energy transition and continues to back fossil fuels. It is crucial that Member States and the European Parliament shake up this package

and demand real policies that will deliver real emissions savings.

Trump has challenged the notion of climate change as a Chinese hoax and is surrounding himself with advisers who are unlikely to persuade him otherwise. Many are concerned that some, or even many, of the significant gains in climate action that have occurred during the Obama years could be undone.

The US President-elect has promised to give US infrastructure a significant boost, but instead of misguidedly giving free reign to outdated fossil fuels, he would be better advised to back green infrastructure as some states in the US are already doing. Wind power now accounts for 16% of generating capacity in Texas, for example, and the state is now planning a huge surge in solar power. The role of the US, and of every country, in fighting climate change is clearly vital given that 2016 is on track to become the hottest year on record.

If Trump does indeed follow through on his threat to pull out of Paris, Europe will need to work closely with other countries to prepare a very robust response, possibly

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involving a wall (since Trump likes walls) of carbon tariffs around the US to reduce any short-term economic advantage that it would hope to gain through avoiding its climate responsibilities and cheating on future generations.

One fact that Trump and leaders around the world should take note of is that 2016 is the third year in a row to see relatively flat growth in global greenhouse gas emissions, while global economic growth remains around three per cent a year. This figure

suggests that real progress is being made in decoupling climate impact from economic activity and that Trump and other climate deniers should for economic reasons alone make sure they are backing the right horse; that of clean energy and not the fossil fuels of the past.

Given these facts, one would expect that the EU as one of the regions that pushed hardest to get an ambitious climate deal in Paris, would now be all guns blazing to ensure that the clean energy transition becomes reality. But this is not what is

happening. Worryingly the European Commission, in particular, seems to be listening mainly to the fossil fuel lobbyists and ignoring its own experts, NGOs, economic reality and, most important of all, science. This attitude has to change and we hope that the European Parliament and Member States fight to strengthen the Commission's Winter Package. We want to see even stronger targets for energy efficiency, real support for renewable energies and an end to support for fossil fuels. Europe can, and must, show the way forward to the rest of the world.

A TOAST TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY

With carbon levels in the atmosphere at their highest for 15 million years, it has never been more important for the EU to show serious ambition on cutting emissions. The reductions needed are significant, but the EU has a number of tools at its disposal to achieve them — most prominently energy efficiency.

Transforming electrical appliances sold within Europe is one way of drastically reducing the EU's energy needs. This is currently done by ensuring that certain electrical appliances are designed to meet specific energy efficiency standards, known as ecodesign, and using energy efficiency labels to encourage consumers to buy efficient products that use less energy and therefore have less of an impact on the environment.

These policies have been tremendously successful. They account for half of the contribution needed to meet the EU's energy efficiency targets by 2020, and amount to a quarter of the bloc's carbon dioxide reduction efforts within that time — as European Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans has highlighted.

Consumers and businesses also benefit hugely from ecodesign and energy labelling policies. European Commission research shows how these policies could save customers €100 billion, earn an extra €56 billion in profits for businesses and create



800,000 jobs by 2020 — with these benefits increasing again by 2030. And while these projected gains are significant, they do not take into account additional savings created by updating current energy efficiency standards on products already included in the ecodesign regulation, including more appliances in that regulation and the benefits from switching back to a clear A to G energy labelling scale.

Despite these benefits, 2016 has been a terrible year for European ecodesign standards. Heavy criticism from some Eurosceptic tabloids, and serious misconceptions from people in the higher echelons of the Commission, led to this much needed policy area being totally frozen. But as the year ends, the ecodesign winds are changing. A new work plan covering 2016 to 2019 was released in November, listing new products to be investigated for energy saving possibilities,

and whether they would benefit from inclusion in the energy labelling scheme. As Vice President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness Jyrki Katainen has said, "If you still think ecodesign is a small thing, I don't think you have understood the whole picture."

The signs are encouraging, but warm words must translate into tangible action. While electric kettles were included in the Ecodesign Working Plan's final list of new products, toasters and

hairdryers were overlooked. Smartphones will also be investigated to assess whether they can be designed to be more resource efficient — very promising given they are a treasure trove of retrievable metals — but this investigation alone may not ensure they are included in future Working Plans.

The link between melting ice sheets and your morning toast might not be immediately obvious. But making household products that don't burn through massive amounts of energy, last a long time and are easily repairable directly limits the amount of carbon being pumped into the Earth's atmosphere. And with lower energy bills also thrown into the mix, what is there for the

European Commission not to like?

Paul Creeney, **EEB Communications** Officer

PUSH HERE TO STOP POLLUTION



If you could press a magic button to stop half a million children suffering from asthma, but you knew it would cost money if you did, how expensive would it have to be before you decided it wasn't worth it?

What if the button would also, every year, prevent 20,000 premature deaths, 10,000 new cases of chronic bronchitis and six million days of illness serious enough to prevent people from going to work?

Believe it or not, such a 'magic button' exists, and governments all over Europe have, so far, decided that the cost of pushing it is too high.

The 'button' is the use of a set of tried-andtested techniques to reduce and prevent toxic pollution from coal. The cost of pressing it is the amount of money plant operators would have to invest to install and run these techniques.

A new EEB report: "Lifting Europe's Dark Cloud: How cutting coal saves lives", written together with four other leading health and environmental NGOs, shows how emissions limits set in line with pollution levels achieved under recognised 'Best Available Techniques' could save lives and improve health across Europe.

The EEB has been active in the drafting of a new EU environmental standards document for Large Combustion Plants, the so-called "revised LCP BREF". Throughout the process the EEB has actively demanded higher standards and stronger environmental protections.

Sadly, because the group assembled to draft the new standards initially included representatives of the polluting operators, and because many Member State delegates were actually industry employees seconded to work for governments, the final document's ambition is limited and the public interest was not put first.

Despite this, the new standards do represent progress compared to the extreme levels of pollution currently being emitted from some of Europe's Large Combustion Plants, in particular lignite and coal power stations. It is therefore essential that the document is adopted by Member States as soon as possible.

In order to meet new lower emissions limits. abatement techniques will have to be used to tackle emissions of NO_x, SO₂ and mercury at the most polluting plants, including coal and lignite power stations. Furthermore, with renewable energy becoming increasingly affordable, operators will choose to move away from coal as it becomes prohibitively expensive. Closing all coal plants completely has to be the clear goal of any government serious about protecting citizens' health and the environment and the EEB is committed

to pushing for a 100% coal phase-out by 2030 at the latest.

In the meantime, the new 'LCP BREF' standards should be adopted by EU environment ministers early next year. Once published in the official EU journal, Member States will have up to four years to ensure their plants are compliant. Ensuring the full benefits will mean setting strict limits on pollution at the national level, so it will be up to groups around Europe to keep tabs on how their governments respond to this document.

It's hard to know how much it will cost plant operators to install and run the pollution abatement techniques, or to close their coal power stations. However, the Lifting Europe's Dark Cloud report estimated that the effects of burning coal costs European health services €63.2bn every year.

The EEB will continue to argue that this enormous sum, together with irreparable damage to people and the planet, is more than enough reason for governments to start pressing that 'magic button' to protect their citizens from coal's dark cloud.

Anton Lazarus, **EEB Communications Officer**

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EEB MEMBER | News from EEB members and working FOCUS groups



CHEMICALS IN SERBIA: THE FIGHT TO KNOW!

The campaign the "FIGHT TO KNOW!" (in Serbian "Izbori se da znaš!") was carried out in Serbia from October 2015 to April 2016 in order to test the implementation of the legal provisions aimed at protecting people from substances of very high concern (SVHCs) and to raise awareness about them. We modelled our campaign on the "FIGHT TO KNOW" that was led by the EEB at an EU level in 2010.

A modern chemicals management system was implemented in the Republic of Serbia in 2009 with the adoption of the Law on Chemicals, which is largely harmonised with the EU chemicals law REACH. These regulations inter alia contain provisions on SVHCs and set down how consumers are entitled to be informed about the presence of SVHCs in products if their concentration exceeds 0.1%. This means that producers, importers and distributors must share the information with the consumer that is needed to ensure the safe use of a product. This includes, at least, the name of the SVHCs. Although this rule was introduced in 2009, not a single consumer in Serbia seems to have requested such information by the end of 2015.

The campaign was focused on a total of 90 PVC products that can contain phthalates, which are classified as SVHCs. Through communication with distributors, we tested how the right to information about the presence of SVHCs in products works in

practice. At the same time, we tested the content of phthalates in various products through laboratory analyses.

According to the results of the campaign, responses were received from 52.2% of the distributors, out of which 22.2% provided specific answers to the question about the presence of SVHCs in products. The other responses indicated that distributors were not familiar with their legal obligations and responsibilities and that they confused their obligations under other regulations with the terms of chemical legislation. Only 10% of distributors showed high-level knowledge about SVHCs and the obligations related to legal provisions.

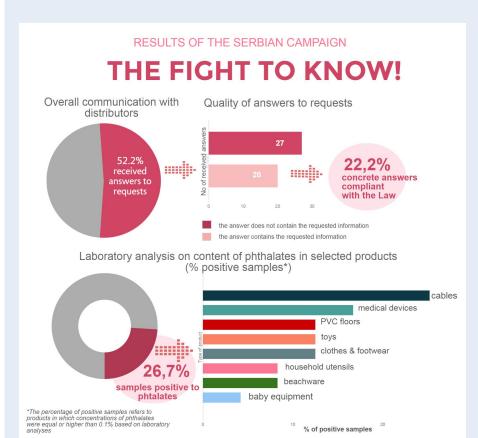
Laboratory tests revealed the presence of phthalates in 26.7% of products Yet, none of the distributors of these products provided appropriate and correct information about the substances they contained.

The campaign "FIGHT TO KNOW!" has helped to raise awareness about SVHCs in products in Serbia and about the legal obligations on producers, importers and distributors, and among consumers who now know that they can exercise their legal right to ask for information.

This campaign was a part of the project "Strengthening Capacities and Strategic Partnership for Safe Chemical Management in the Republic of Serbia" which was implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection (Serbia) with the support of UNDP and funded by "SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund," in collaboration with two EEB members: ALHem and WECF.

Read full report on www.alhem.rs/wpcontent/uploads/2016/05/Izvestaj-okampanji_Final-EN.pdf

Jelena Milic, PR & Communications Coordinator, ALHem



ENERGY TRANSITION: THE EU HAS A CHOICE

The global energy sector is witnessing the biggest transition since the discovery of oil and gas. Fossil fuels are giving way to renewables. Electricity markets are undergoing profound changes. New technologies continue to advance and the costs of wind power are falling. To meet our global climate commitments and to keep global warming below two degrees, this transition needs to accelerate.

The Paris agreement and the required changes in our energy system represent huge opportunities and challenges for the European wind energy industry. The opportunities are that more than 70 countries outside Europe committed to deploy more wind. The national commitments of emerging economies should read like an investment brochure for Europe's renewable technology manufacturers.

Now this is where the challenges come in. European manufacturers have a 49% share of non-EU wind turbine markets. And Europe's total exports of renewables equipment and technology are worth €35bn per year, with wind playing a major role. To continue this, Europe must ensure its domestic renewables sector remains strong.

This requires a vibrant home market. As things stand the latter is not yet secured.

The wind energy sector has become a mainstream industry that today can cover 12% of the EU's electricity demand. But right now, fewer countries in Europe are investing significantly in onshore wind than five years ago. Investments in offshore wind continue to grow, but the outlook is uncertain in many countries beyond 2020. And EU policies don't seem able to change that. With a modest 27% renewable energy target in final energy demand by the end of next decade, the EU is postponing decisive actions to the post-2030 period.

So what does Europe really need from a policy perspective to continue leading the global renewable technology race? Two things are essential: adequate policies and an integrated power system.

The revised renewable energy framework for Europe needs to increase investor confidence by guaranteeing policy continuity in Member States. National legislation supporting planning and permitting of wind energy projects should continue after 2020. Mechanisms that provide reliable revenue streams and bring down the cost of capital should be tailored to specific risk profiles.

A new power market design is also critical for the successful deployment of wind power and other renewable energy sources. As renewables' penetration increases in EU power systems, the instruments which support them will become more market-based and increase competition. More cross-border trading of electricity over a broader geographical area, equal access to balancing markets for all technologies, and more demand side response are also critical elements of a market that is fit for renewables.

Europe has been the global posterchild for green technologies, but its leadership on renewables is now in question. The Commission's Clean Energy Package is out, but there is still a lot of work to do. The European Parliament and the Council need to show the ambition needed to make transition work. A vibrant home market for renewable energy is the *sine qua non* for European global leadership and a strong export position. Whichever way Europe's policymakers decide to go — they have a choice.

Joel Meggelaars, Senior Advisor – Energy & Climate Change, Wind Europe

EKOenergy FOR THE WORLD

Every day it becomes clearer that the use of renewable energy is booming and that the age of coal and oil is ending. However, this evolution towards a 100% renewable world is still happening too slowly to avoid dramatic climate change. As environmental organisations, we must continue to act to facilitate quicker change.

However, we must also ensure that the fast move to 100% renewable energy does not come at the expense of nature. The development of hydropower threatens the last free flowing rivers and the rush for biomass has devastated many forests. That's why the Finnish Association for Nature

Conservation and partners from all over Europe launched "EKOenergy" to ensure that renewable and nature protection go hand-in-hand. More concretely, here are some of the things we are doing:

 In 2013, we developed an ecolabel for electricity. Inspired by other labels such as the FSC label for forestry products or the organic label for food, electricity sold with the EKOenergy label fulfills strict environmental criteria and raises funds for new renewable energy projects. We are growing fast: EKOenergy certified electricity is now available for household consumers in 10 countries, and is available for businesses worldwide. We are now also finalising the criteria for an ecolabel for biomethane.

 A 100% renewable world is technically and financially possible, but the problem is that many people, including politicians, still don't believe it. We want to dispel the myth that renewable energy is expensive and complicated. In Finland the EKOenergy logo is now visible in many places, for example on beer cans and the jerseys of a famous ice hockey team. We are sure that this will spread to other countries. The logo helps bring our message to people we wouldn't have otherwise reached.

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- We are developing activities in less obvious countries, such as Poland and Turkey. In these countries the anti-coal movement is growing, and so now is time for real alternatives. We also have concrete plans to launch our label in Russia and would ideally like this to become reality in 2017.
- Each time electricity is sold with our label, the seller has to pay €0.10/MWh to our Climate Fund. With that money we have financed climate projects in five countries. For example, we paid for solar panels
- to be installed on schools in Tanzania and invested in a solar mini-grid in Togo. Likewise, each time hydropower is sold with our EKOenergy label, the seller has to pay an additional €0.10/MWh to EKOenergy's Environmental Fund through which we finance river restoration projects and help mitigate the negative impact of hydropower plants.
- We have launched our first large communication campaign. We joined forces with Protect Our Winters, an

international network of professional winter sport athletes whose aim is to mobilise the outdoor sports community to lead the charge towards positive climate action. This winter, for example, they will call on winter sport centres, winter sport events and winter sport tourists to switch

to 100% EKOenergy certified renewable electricity.

Steven Vanholme, **EKOenergy**



THE WINTER PACKAGE: A DISRUPTIVE STORM FOR SOLAR?

The new Renewables Directive, the electricity market design package and efforts on efficiency and buildings promise to be the start of a new era of disruptive technology growth, ushering in new policies to make solar, other renewables and flexible energy sources grow throughout Europe. The package is a good start and will give all Europeans a new right — to self-generate and self-consume their own energy, this is a truly silent revolution.

The package brings forward a proactive framework for solar through these new rights. In the past Member States set their own laws and often limited the use that ordinary consumers and communities could gain from their solar systems. The new Directive instead protects the rights of people and companies to enjoy the solar that they produce. This is a major boost for decentralised solar and the democratisation of energy. It is also coupled with an anti-retroactivity clause and transparency on the levels of support schemes up to three vears in advance. This all makes investment in solar more certain and more reliable. This is good news and the Commission should be congratulated for that.

While the package has delivered more than many of us expected, we also recognise that much more work needs to be done to address the missing elements and we will look to the Member States and the European Parliament to finish the good work

that has been started. We in SolarPower Europe have some very simple and easy to implement recommendations that must be translated into action if we are to meet our climate pledges as a European Union.

First, let's get the targets right. Twenty per cent renewables by 2020 gave the impetus that was needed to get the costs of solar moving in the right direction — a solar system is 75% cheaper today than it was seven years ago.

However, the target of 27% renewables by 2030 in the Renewable Energy Sources (RES) Directive 2.0, is not even business as usual for solar, it is less ambitious than that. Most renewables associations, including ours, believe that a 35% target is needed if Europe is to help the world have any chance of meeting the 2°C target of Paris, let alone the 1.5°C goal. The new RES target for 2030 should also be backed by Member State benchmarks at the very least so that every country plays its fair part in the effort to reach the target.

Secondly, the Renewables Directive 2.0 needs to be supported by an electricity market design that is built around renewables and flexibility providers. The Market Design initiative in the Winter Package does not go the full distance on prohibiting subsidies for energy production capacity which distorts the market in favour of coal and nuclear power. The package has introduced a carbon threshold which would appear to exclude



some coal, but this is not strong enough and needs to take effect now, rather than in five years as the package foresees.

Finally, the package must also do more to protect priority dispatch and access of renewable energies to the electricity grid, this will drive private investment into our technologies. The measures foreseen so far, protecting current investments, are a good starting point, but more needs to be done to resist the possibility of curtailment by maintaining priority access and proper compensation.

If these positive elements remain after discussions in the Parliament and the Council, and the remaining concerns are addressed, we will be going a long way to building the framework for solar, and renewables in general, to flourish and disrupt the energy system of the past."

Then, and only then, will our policymakers be able to say that they have set in motion the means with which to achieve the 2°C target of Paris.

James Watson, **Executive Director,** Solar Power Europe

EU EFFICIENCY PROPOSALS FALLS SHORT OF PARIS COMMITMENTS

With the new proposal the European Commission delivers on its promise of "a binding 30% energy efficiency target," but fails to put energy efficiency first by setting a more ambitious 40% target, thereby missing the opportunity to trigger additional jobs, economic recovery and greenhouse gas emissions savings.

The evidence base to go for higher ambition at the cost-effective level of 40% energy savings is strong. Indeed, it would save €549 billion on fossil fuel imports and would likely increase the EU's GDP by 4.45% by 2030. These potential gains have been understood by the European Parliament which has repeatedly called for a binding 40% energy efficiency target with mandatory targets for EU Member States.

The Winter Package continues the key provisions of the existing Energy Efficiency Directive, setting an EU target and asking Member States to lay out their national contributions to the EU target. Furthermore, key components like the energy savings obligation mechanism are extended to 2030 with 10-year extension periods to 2040 and 2050.

However, these positive signals of stability and consistency are dampened by the failure to fix the existing loopholes for transport and industry included in the EU Emissions Trading System, and the possibility for Member States to count savings resulting from actions that are already implemented (so-called "early actions"). Furthermore, the proposal's positive signals cannot hide the failure to set a binding 40%

energy efficiency target that would have contributed to bringing Europe in line with its commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Similarly, the Commission has missed the opportunity to speed up action to cut energy consumption and phase out fossil fuels in the building stock. In contrast to the commitments under the Paris deal and calls from the European Parliament, the proposal lacks measures that would bring the EU's building stock to nearly zero energy consumption by 2050.

Roland Joebstl, EEB Energy and Climate Policy Officer



TIME TO GET OUR BOOTS DIRTY

As the UN Paris climate agreement enters into force it is time to look beyond energy as the key sector for achieving its objectives. Soil protection, for example, can and must play a crucial role if global warming is to be kept below 2°C.

Soils, when managed sustainably, play an important role in climate change mitigation by storing carbon and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere. There is more carbon stored in soil than in the atmosphere and in vegetation combined. A release of just 0.1% of the carbon now contained in European soils would be equal to the annual emissions of 100 million cars. Moving from intensive farming practices to organic farming, for instance, increases the soil carbon stock.

On the other hand, land use change, for example, cutting down forests, turning grassland into farmland or paving it over for urban development, land degradation, poor soil management and unsustainable agricultural practices, such as the use of heavy machinery and the planting of single crops (monoculture) on one farm, can contribute to climate change.

And healthy soils are not only important for change mitigation, they also help communities deal with the effects of climate change by, for instance, improving the ability of soils to retain water and therefore reduce the likelihood of drought and flood impacts and increase food security.

Despite this — and the fact that soil is vital for food production — soil remains well down in the EU's list of priorities and virtually unprotected. The United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, which world leaders signed up to in 2015, agrees to "progressively improve land and soil quality" and "strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world". But there are still no legislative proposals from the European Commission in the pipeline.

This is why civil society has decided to take the initiative into its own hands and over 300 European organisations, including the EEB, have launched the People4Soil initiative. This calls for EU leaders to keep soils healthy by establishing a coherent pan-European soil policy.

Soil is often a private asset, but it delivers services for everyone. Supporters of People4Soil are convinced that common European rules are needed to prevent the loss of this resource, which is essential for the health of present and future generations.

If the initiative manages to collect one million signatures by September 2017, the European Commission will be forced to take action according to the rules of the European Citizens Initiative.

If you haven't already done so, it is therefore time to sign the petition people4soil.eu and make change happen.

Balazs Horvath, EEB Senior Policy Officer Soil and Water



COMING AND GOING

SOIL DEPARTURE

We are all sad to see the departure of the EEB's Senior Policy Officer for Soil and Water, Balazs Horvath this month, who is returning to his home country of Hungary where he will work for a government agency responsible for the enforcement of water management policies. He will be sadly missed and we wish him all the best in his new role.

INTERN NEWS

The EEB has welcomed two new interns for six-months. Guillermo Gea studied Environmental Sciences at the University of Murcia, Spain. He will be working on the water-energy nexus, focusing on the pricing of water resources. Pedro Ogando studied Environmental Engineering at the Technical University of Lisbon. His work will focus on the Industrial Emissions Directive, especially with regards to access to information and public participation.

CALL FOR ACTION: MORE AMBITION FOR MERCURY

The EEB welcomed the vote in October by the European Parliament's Environment Committee on the European Commission's proposed mercury regulation.

This sent a clear message that the Committee wants to see a robust mercury regulation going beyond the minimal requirements of the Minamata Convention. The trilogue between the EU institutions is now ongoing and the EEB will continue to urge the Commission and EU Member States to follow ENVI's line that will reduce and eliminate all unnecessary uses and releases of mercury.

We believe that the following should be considered as a priority:

- A ban on exports of mercury-added products that are not allowed to be marketed in the EU.
- A phase-out of the use of mercury in dentistry by 2020. In the interim, mercury use in dentistry for children and pregnant women should be phased out by 2018 at the latest.
- The development of a comprehensive mercury use and trade tracking system

that will be effectively implemented and publicly accessible.

- · Mercury waste should be solidified before disposal in underground facilities. The temporary storage of mercury waste should be allowed for a short period of time (three to five years years maximum), in appropriate aboveground facilities.
- The scope of the export ban should be expanded to include additional mercury compounds and mercury waste.
- A ban on the use of mercury in industrial facilities located in the EU, where mercury is used as a catalyst or electrode, as early as possible.

The value of a strong EU commitment to tackling mercury problems on the global stage must not be underestimated. This is a straightforward opportunity to reduce the health risks to millions of EU citizens (and many more globally) that we cannot afford to miss.

Elena Lymberidi-Settimo, Project Manager 'Zero Mercury Campaign', European Environmental Bureau

FEATURED PUBLICATION

Navigating the Better Regulation Maze

The EEB has put together an analysis of how the European Commission's narrative of Better Regulation impacts EU climate and energy legislation. The analysis is intended as a guide and reference to all advocating in the coming months and years for ambitious EU policies.

Read the full report at www.eeb.org



This newsletter is produced by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB). The EEB is the largest federation of environmental citizens' organisations in Europe. It groups together more than 150 member organisations from 33 countries.

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