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8th COMMITTEE (ENVIRONMENT, TERRITORY AND PUBLIC WORKS)

FINAL DOCUMENT, PURSUANT TO RULE 127 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE, ON:

White Paper: Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for
action (COM(2009)147 final)

Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European
Parliament: 2008 Environment Policy Review (COM(2009)304 final)

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council,
the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions:
"Mainstreaming sustainable development into EU policies: 2009 Review of the
European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development" (COM(2009)400 final)

Approved on 11 December 2009

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The Environment, Territory and Public Works Committee,

having regard, pursuant to Rule 127 of the Rules of Procedures of the Chamber of
Deputies, to the proposed Community acts referred to above;

having received the opinion of 3 December 2009 issued by the Committee on
European Union Policies, with which this Committee concurs;

observing that consideration of the acts of the European Union provided a
valuable opportunity for a thorough discussion of the various aspects of the issue
commonly referred to as the fight against climate change;

whereas

- the European Union demonstrated its intention to take a leading international role in this area with the European Council's approval of the "Climate and Energy Package" in December 2008;
- the European Union's commitment is not restricted merely to setting targets but is already being translated into the drafting of proposals for legislation containing specific measures aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions by 20% below their 1990 levels, increasing the use of renewable energy sources by 20% and cutting energy consumption by 20%, before 2020;
- the European Union has urged the other countries that share the greatest responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions to take analogous action; the European Union has even indicated that it could seek to reduce CO₂ emissions by 30%, rather than 20%, if the other major CO₂ producers are willing to implement comparable reductions;
- the rigour of the European Union's approach could prove to be particularly useful in the light of the ongoing Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, the specific goal of which is to reach a global accord binding on all countries, including, with international support, the least developed countries;
- the upcoming climate agreement should involve all the countries that contribute the most to reducing emissions at the global level, given that if Europe were to continue to pursue emissions reductions unilaterally, there is the risk that the problem of climate change would not be solved and that the competitiveness of European and Italian enterprises would be harmed;
- it is extremely important to this end that, once the main emerging countries make a binding commitment to the fight against climate change, clear standards be set at the international level concerning the comparability of objectives, such as, for example, in terms of the type and the effectiveness of the tools used to achieve the objectives, the deadlines and the benchmark years used to measure actual emissions reductions, as well as the capacity to finance emissions reductions at the national level and to purchase credits from developing countries;
- the conversion of our productive systems and our lifestyles (ranging from construction techniques to modes of transportation) to a more sustainable basis, above all from the environmental point of view, is a fundamental transition that is not dictated solely by the need to protect the environment since it is in fact largely the result of economic developments;

- as in the past, we are going to face a period of fundamental change, with the adoption of new techniques and new approaches to organising production processes that hold out promise of substantial growth and development opportunities;
- the most advanced and innovative segment of the productive system is already preparing to adopt new production techniques with a smaller environmental impact; accordingly, this transition should be supported and facilitated with consistent, targeted policies and actions;
- such policies should largely avoid prescriptive measures in favour of creating incentives, especially with regard to the development of new technologies and the spread of increasingly environmentally compatible products;
- achieving this end calls for a policy that is aimed not only at the industrial sector, but also comprises all other sectors where there is still-untapped potential for reducing energy consumption, such as, for example, the road transport sector, civil lighting and heating, the food industry, wider-scale use of electric engines and cogeneration;
- the conversion of productive systems to reduce environmental impact is also motivated by strategic concerns. The events of recent decades demonstrate that Western economies can no longer allow their opportunities for growth to depend upon the decisions of countries that supply energy raw materials, countries that all too frequently have proven unreliable. Reducing dependence on fossil fuels is therefore essential to enhance the security of energy supplies and, as a result, the prospects for the growth of our economies;
- the complexity and sweeping scale of the innovations to be introduced calls for the development of a comprehensive Community strategy for the adaptation to climate change that guarantees consistency between the various actions undertaken in different sectors and the appropriation of adequate resources for this purpose, taking due consideration of the need to ensure that the choices to be made do not compromise the sustainable economic and social development that underpins civil society;
- it is clear that the conversion of European economic systems in order to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions requires the appropriation, as is already being done by a number of important partners, such as the United States and China, of adequate resources within the European Union's financial framework in the coming years;
- it is also important to that end to reallocate Community resources, within the scope of the 2007-2013 Community Support Framework, to policies that encourage energy savings actions and/or initiatives involving the use of renewable resources;

- the development of this strategy, of which the Climate and Energy Package is the first step, must be founded on a careful assessment of the specific characteristics of each productive system, of developments in energy consumption and of the opportunities for reducing consumption, highlighting related strengths and weaknesses;
- the need for common strategies at the EU level must give due consideration to the fact that the Member States are in significantly different situations in terms of the composition of energy products used and the sources of supply, as well as the outlook for developments in demand;
- the particular vulnerability of Italy, with its strong dependence on foreign suppliers and the marked predominance in its productive system of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are frequently unable to bear the immediate costs associated with massive investment in innovation, lends special urgency to the need for close collaboration between institutions, the scientific world and the economic system in Italy;
- the examples of excellence and world-class achievements in the field of energy efficiency in Italy represent an invaluable store of knowledge, technologies and traditions on which the country can draw with confidence to achieve emissions reduction targets and to increase the competitiveness of Italian goods and services in global markets, even supporting a binding energy efficiency target at the European level;
- this will require a preliminary effort to acquire detailed, specific information on the existing situation and development opportunities, as well as positive factors and problem areas, in order to promptly provide the competent EU institutions with a representation of the country's specific needs as part of Italy's contribution to the development of the Community strategy;
- it is more generally necessary to bear in mind that Southern Europe and the Mediterranean area are considered to be among the most vulnerable areas (notably with regard to marine and coastal systems, hydrogeological systems and territorial threats) and therefore have the greatest need for climate adaptation policies;
- the data acquired during the hearings have been of great use in analysing existing conditions, confirming, on the one hand, the significant presence in the national productive system of sectors with a high risk of carbon leakage, and, on the other, sectors boasting considerable energy efficiency;
- the hearings produced information and specific recommendations concerning the priorities to be pursued, the most effective incentive tools and measures, the examples of excellence in the Italian productive system on which the

country can draw and the most serious deficits with respect to EU standards that need to be remedied and the resources that will be made available;

- the hearings also underscored the need to prepare, as other European countries have done, a national adaptation strategy for climate change, to be developed with the active involvement of the institutions and the representatives of the productive system, with adequate support from the scientific community;

hereby expresses its favourable opinion,

emphasising, in relation to the Government's position for the drafting of legislative proposals and with regard to the decisions of the competent Community institutions, the need to promote initiatives, including legislative measures, in the following six sectors, which – as emerged during the hearings – could contribute to reducing emissions in an effective, lasting manner,

stressing the need to integrate environmental policies with other Community sectoral policies (transport, energy, infrastructure, research, foreign policy) and to seek greater synergies with the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment in order to truly pursue sustainable development;

underscoring the importance of policies to encourage technological and product innovation in order to improve climatic and environmental conditions while at the same time promoting industrial development and employment opportunities;

considering it important to introduce, as recommended at the European level, quality-of-life indicators that go beyond GDP, such as environmental and sustainability criteria, in order to measure progress in the quality of development.

Specifically:

- 1) energy and energy efficiency, by:

increasing funding from Community institutions and Member States for research into the development of new technological processes and products that reduce environmental impact, particularly with regard to investment in clean technologies in industry, construction and low-CO₂ emissions infrastructure;

introducing a stable long-term incentive system at the national level, given that the industries called upon to invest in new technologies, especially renewables technologies, must be able to plan those investments;

reviving the Industry 2015 programme to create a network of enterprises to exploit the opportunities offered by the sustainable economy revolution;

upgrading energy transmission and distribution infrastructure and implementing adaptation measures to enable rising volumes of electricity generated by small-scale facilities to be connected to distribution networks and to foster the evolution of the distribution grid into an active network;

simplifying and standardising procedures for issuing permits for plants that produce or use renewable energy sources, as well as for private parties that implement structural measures for the use of renewable energy sources, including the use of “discriminatory” policies that reward plant efficiency based on their location and actual fuel conversion efficiency;

using renewable sources synergistically and employing electricity storage systems employing energy storage systems to smooth electricity output;

making regions accountable for achieving national energy planning targets, considering that the regional energy plans might not be consistent with national industrial development projects (regional burden sharing);

providing incentives for local energy-environment integration systems in order to make best use of the available resources, supporting the development of renewable resources within the country, such as the biodegradable portion of waste, photovoltaics, thermal solar energy, geothermal energy, as well as the advancement of thin-film photovoltaic module research, an area in which Italy could develop a world-class industry;

introducing new measures for the energy efficiency market, providing for:

a tariff incentive structure based on the cost differential of the individual technologies receiving incentive support or, alternatively, the differentiation of the useful life of energy efficiency projects for the purposes of granting white certificates;

a gradual reduction of incentives for energy sources classified as "comparable" under CIP6 rules, while at the same time providing greater support for renewable energy sources;

the expansion of the definition of primary energy savings to allow initiatives to increase the efficiency of electricity or natural gas distribution networks to be covered by the incentive mechanism;

the improvement of the methods for certifying energy savings and the management of processes for developing the contents of the technical specifications required by the regulator;

the establishment of energy efficiency standards for buildings, equipment, fuels and vehicles;

the development of the reindustrialisation potential of sites through the employment of local raw materials and agricultural waste;

2) the environment, by:

providing incentives for studies and research into climate change so as to obtain updated models that make it possible to define clear criteria for comparing objectives and establish uniform deadlines for international emissions reduction commitments;

concentrating research within a small number of national platforms capable of competing at the European level for Community funding;

supporting research into and the use of technologies to reduce emissions, such as, for example, carbon capture and storage (CCS) or sustainable biofuels;

introducing material on “sustainable development and climate change” into doctoral programmes in order to encourage greater understanding and further study in this area;

establishing a framework of measures to enhance public awareness of the strategic nature of environmental policies and the crucial importance of virtuous behaviour on the part of individuals;

establishing a framework of environmental education measures for schools, with the possible involvement of businesses and environmental associations;

developing clear eco-indicators to foster the spread of a culture of sustainable development;

allocating sufficient resources to reinforce the hydrogeological stability of territories and to review urban organisation, with a special focus on urban heat islands (Kyoto Club);

with regard to waste, by way of:

developing a policy to prevent the production of waste;

developing a national programme on the life-cycle of goods and products and a communication and public education campaign;

transposing the Waste Framework Directive;

promptly drafting the national waste prevention programme;

reducing reliance on landfills;

increasing the use of composting and the employment of refuse-derived fuels (RDF) in place of fossil fuels;

introducing garbage collection and recycling as part of the process for granting white certificates;

applying the same environmental requirements to all plants;

the current review of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive, which is expected to confirm the original approach of the legislation, given businesses a degree of flexibility while setting important environmental targets;

preparing incentive instruments that encourage research and development into new chemical substances with a lower environmental impact within the scope of the REACH system;

3) the water sector, by:

reviewing the regulations governing water diversion concessions, establishing that the concession fee be calculated on the basis of the volume used, which may include introducing tariff mechanisms based on the optimal allocation of water resources;

reviewing the duration of concessions in relation to territorial planning and to the introduction of new technologies that permit more intelligent use of water resources;

verifying the minimum flow rate of waterways needed to maintain flora and fauna, especially to preserve the biodiversity;

establishing incentives for the reuse of waste water, amending current regulations to set limits by type of use;

providing new resources to reduce leakages in the national water network, which currently amount to 30% of the water sent to the network;

implementing a monitoring and data collection system for measuring the environmental performance of individual water companies and the sector as a whole at least every six months;

modernising treatment plants for waste water that is released into key bodies of water, in implementation of Directive 2000/60/EC, which sets quality

standards for bodies of water and Directive 91/271/EEC, which sets the quality standards for discharges;

introducing a programme of measures to upgrade water infrastructures for handling water runoff from rainfall and extreme events resulting from climate change in general in order to prevent landslides, subsidence, etc.;

4) the transport sector, by:

developing “smart” networks, which will play a strategic role in routing traffic to the least congested modes of transport, as it is believed that innovative, technologically advanced systems can be combined to enhance accessibility and sustainability and exploit existing infrastructures more effectively, with a positive impact on consumption as well;

introducing measures to foster the take-up of electric and hybrid vehicles for public and private transport, especially in large urban areas, and to promote alternative mobility systems, such as trams and bicycle lanes;

introducing incentive policies to encourage the use of public rather than private transportation, while implementing mobility policies that promote rail over road transport, especially in the goods transport sector;

introducing permanent incentives for scrapping old automobiles and purchasing vehicles with a low environmental impact;

5) the building sector, by:

introducing rules to make energy efficiency techniques a mandatory requirement in order to receive state or regional aid and to encourage, through stable, long-term fiscal measures, extraordinary maintenance of existing buildings in order to boost the energy performance of buildings and the use of renewable energy sources and to reduce the energy consumption of private and public buildings and public lighting;

introducing incentives for the use of state-of-the-art technologies available in plant design, home automation and interactivity, safety, reducing energy and operating costs, and the energy certification of buildings;

increasing incentives for green public procurement (GPP), i.e. calls for tenders that promote energy savings or reduce environmental impact;

6) in the agriculture sector, with reference to:

the creation of a development model that focuses on the quality of the territory, that leverages integrated systems, the minimisation of the use of

resources, attention to the end of product life-cycles and the culture of respect for the environment with the revival of Italian exports, starting with the promotion and voluntary adoption of eco-indicators to enhance the Italian model of production;

the introduction of sustainable farming practices, such as re-using compost to partially replace chemical fertilisers while lowering water use, reducing disease and increasing crop yields, as well as establishing incentives, including appropriate tax relief measures, for environmentally sustainable agricultural practices - such as organic farming – aimed at substantially reducing the use of chemical-based farming.