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Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2012/2294(INI)

28.5.2013

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on Eco-innovation – Jobs and Growth through environmental policy
(2012/2294(INI))

Rapporteur: Phil Bennion

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to the Europe 2020 strategy, which calls for smart and green growth,
- A. whereas eco-innovation is the cornerstone for Europe's development of an environmentally and economically sustainable growth strategy, leading to diverse employment opportunities in a variety of sectors;
1. Notes the potential for direct and indirect job creation through full implementation of the EU 2020 strategy; welcomes the Commission's promotion of an integrated strategy for green growth under the 'Innovation Union' flagship initiative and in particular the Eco-Innovation Action Plan;
 2. Highlights the wide spectrum of employment opportunities at varying skills levels opened up by eco-innovation and the bioeconomy, particularly with regard to recycling/reuse processing, eco-design, and investment in the knowledge sector;
 3. Recognises that eco-innovation presents clear opportunities for new niche businesses, offering opportunities for SMEs, self-starters and the self-employed to benefit from new business models as well as revitalising existing traditional economic sectors;
 4. Highlights the dual environmental and economic benefits of transition to a bioeconomy, in terms of creating sustainable jobs both in the EU and in the developing world through increased participation in innovative fuel and material production, as well as the employment opportunities resulting from the processing and distribution of biofuels and biomaterials for business, public, private and domestic consumers;
 5. Notes the complex challenges arising for food security, climate change, soil quality, raw material scarcity, and so on; recognises that eco-innovation can solve many of these challenges; reiterates that such a transition requires a holistic approach incorporating education, training, skills development, research and innovation, private sector investment and infrastructure development, all of which contribute to diverse and sustainable employment opportunities.