



**COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
- THE SECRETARIAT -**

Brussels, 2 September 2011

**Delegation to the
European Environment Agency (EEA)
Copenhagen, 1-2 September 2011**

I. Composition of the delegation

The official delegation consisted of 3 Members: Gerben-Jan GERBRANDY (ALDE, NL) who is the contact-MEP for the EEA, Bogusław SONIK (EPP, PL) and Kriton ARSENIS (S&D, EL). In addition, Dan JØRGENSEN (S&D, DK), Margrete AUKEN (Greens, DK) and Anna ROSBACH (ECR, DK) joined the delegation as local Members.

The delegation was accompanied by Bérangère BASIN and Martin FUCHS from the ENVI Secretariat. Wilhelm BARGUM (ALDE Staff), Eleni Anna DIMITRAKOUDI (S&D Staff), Karen ARNON (Assistant MEP GERBRANDY), Maciej SZAJNICKI (Interpreter), Malgorzata JOKIPII (Interpreter) and Grzegorz KOWALEWSKI (Interpreter) came along with the delegation.

Michael SCOULLOS, EP representative to the EEA Management Board was also present.

II. Structure of the visit

1. General presentation

Jacqueline McGLADE, Executive Director of the EEA, gave a general presentation of EEA activities and its role as knowledge base for environmental policies. She also touched upon topics such as water, GMES, Marine and Maritime, Waste and Neighbourhood activities which would not be part of a specific presentation later on. It was highly appreciated by the delegation that Jacqueline McGLADE was present during the whole visit.

2. Biodiversity

Ronan UHEL, Ivone MARTINS PEREIRA and Frederik SCHUTYSER gave a presentation on Biodiversity activities at the EEA, Ecosystem assessments and Forests. They notably presented the two following tools developed by the EEA and the Commission:
- the biodiversity baseline, which contains facts and figures on the current state of biodiversity and which is needed necessary for stepping up the EU action to address the European and global biodiversity crisis now.

- BISE, the Biodiversity Information System for Europe, which is a web portal centralising information about European biodiversity in a single location. BISE not only contains the information of the biodiversity baseline, but also on biodiversity policies, biodiversity research, etc. Moreover, special reference was made to the need for streamlining European biodiversity indicators as a tool to monitor progress of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy.

A special emphasis was given to forests in the presentation, and EEA indicates that they were preparing a report on Forest ecosystems multifunctionality.

3. Climate Change and Air Quality

Paul McALEAVY, Andreas BARKMAN, Aphrodite MOURELATOU and André JOL presented EEA's activities related to climate change:

- EEA will have to support the implementation of the Effort sharing decision. According to this decision which concerns greenhouse gas emissions from sectors not covered by the EU ETS, Member States will have to follow a linear pathway to decrease their greenhouse gas emissions between 2013 and 2020. EEA will notably contribute to the initial review and to the annual reviews that will follow. Making the right calculation in order to set the targets for 2013-2020 is crucially important.

- EEA's activities related to Air quality and Air pollution were presented. It was emphasised that Air pollution and Climate Change should be treated as an integrated problem.

- EEA also works on Adaptation to Climate Change. The flood experienced in Copenhagen on 2 July 2011 was a good example of future adaptation challenges. 10 Member States have developed their national adaptation strategies.

It is to be noted that EEA has offered its continuous assistance to the European Parliament on the path to COP 17 in Durban.

4. Resource efficiency, green economy

Lars MORTENSEN and Pawel KAZMIERCZYK presented the activities of the EEA in the field of resource efficiency and green economy, including:

- the continued improvement of the knowledge base on material resources and waste in Europe as reported by EEA in the SOER 2010 (European State of the Environment and Outlook report), the development of indicators on resource efficiency and consumption, and the assessment of the policies in the Member States (resulting in "country profiles"). Based on this work input has been provided to the forthcoming Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe as well as international activities such as the UNEP report on Decoupling and the OECD Strategy on Green growth.

- participation in the preparation of the Rio+20 summit, in particular with country workshops and indicator based reports (forthcoming) and addressing resource tax reforms, the accounting of external costs of goods and services and the integration of economic and environmental accounts

- follow-up work on the EU 2008 action plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy, notably related to waste prevention and recycling. Cross-benefits between waste and climate policies were pointed out. A lack of implementation of waste directives in the Member State was noticed.

Overall, it was stressed that in addition to resource efficiency there is a need to address absolute resource use. Reducing the impacts of consumption in Europe will require better technologies as well as changes in consumer behaviour in order to avoid "rebound effects". Resource and environmental taxation can benefit the economy, employment and the environment.

5. Communication

Katja ROSENBOHM, Gulcin KARADENIZ and Malene BRUUN gave presentations on EEA's communication strategy and its implementation. The focus for 2011 is on neighbourhood policy and resource efficiency, in 2012 it will be on green economy, Rio+20, water resources and climate change. In particular:

- as to Rio+20, focal activities will include stocktaking with stakeholders, environmental accounting, knowledge governance at different (local, regional etc.) levels. EEA will be present as an agency or with the EU delegation.

- new communication tools and channels are being implemented as participatory approaches to involve the broader public and realize network partnerships. Examples are EEA's Twitter (1700 followers) and Facebook (2000 followers since April 2011) channels. The next steps aim at improved two-way communication by an "enquiries-forum" and at strengthening the national reference centers for communication within the Eionet network (from November 2011 on) by introducing a co-operation initiative on water resources.

- a pilot initiative on "citizen science" for data gathering and analysis will be launched in 2012. The project should support citizen engagement at the local level and help environmental monitoring; together with the EEA's Eye-on-Earth portal the project is seen as a significant tool for helping others to follow up on Rio+20.

6. EEA evaluation

Søren NIELSEN gave an overview of the project management and reporting procedures at the EEA. As to the Agency's annual budget (in 2011 approx. 41.2 Mio Euro (2011), of which about 35.6 Mio Euro are funded by the EU and 5.3 by other sources incl. non-EU member countries of the EEA), an increase is requested for 2012 of 1.85 % as well as 2 new posts for temporary agents to prepare the review under the Effort-sharing Decision (green house gas emissions), which is a new task for the EEA. Preparing for the review of the EEA itself by September 2012, the Agency is currently performing a (peer-reviewed) self-assessment and undergoing an external review by a verification panel.

After the visit to the EEA, on Friday 2 September, the delegation had lunch at the Danish Ministry of Environment, with Vice Secretary of State Søren Søndergaard Kjær, Vice Secretary of State Svend Særkjær from the Ministry of Health and representatives of the Ministry of Climate and Energy. The discussion focused on the incoming Danish Presidency.

Annex

Programme:

1 September 2011

14:00 - 15:15 Presentation of EEA activities and its role as knowledge base for environmental policies

15:15 - 16:15 Biodiversity activities at the EEA, Ecosystem assessments and Forests

Coffee break

16:30-18:00 Climate Change (effort-sharing review) and review of EU Air policies, Climate Change and air pollution as an integrated problem, Climate Change impacts vulnerability and adaptation

Check-in at hotel

19:00 Dinner/theme: EU and International Dimension of the EEA
Venue - Customs House - Havnegade 44, Copenhagen
SOER 2010 / ASTANA 2011
Rio+20
Neighbourhood policy cooperation
Arctic activities

2 September 2011

9:30 -10:45 Resource efficiency roadmap, waste, green economy

Coffee break

11.00 -11:45 Communications planning and tools for the EU Institutions and the European citizens

11.45 - 12.15 Introduction into upcoming EEA evaluation, balanced scorecard, 2012 budget

12.15-12:45 Wrap-up session/EEA cooperation with the European Parliament (ENVI committee COBU COCOBU and other EP Intergroups)

13:30 - 15:30 Lunch with Vice Secretary of State *Søren Søndergaard Kjær* from the Ministry of Environment and Vice Secretary of State *Svend Særkjær* from the Ministry of Health
Venue: Ministry of Environment - Højbro Plads 4, 1200 Copenhagen