



## European and national parliamentarians seek common energy and climate policy

**Ways to secure Europe's future energy supply, the promotion of energy innovation and the EU's role in international climate negotiations were among the issues European and national parliamentarians discussed at a two-day interparliamentary meeting held in Strasbourg on Thursday and Friday.**

"It is important that we Europeans now agree on a common position", stressed European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering outlining the EP's plans to vote on the EU's climate change package at its plenary session from 15 to 18 December. The EP wanted to do its bit to get a final result by the end of this year, said the President, who asked: "How else do we want to make the US, Russia, India and China to follow us?"

"Energy and sustainable development is one of the major priorities of the French presidency and it's the most difficult one", said the President of the French National Assembly Bernard Accoyer. He was confident that the European Council on 11 and 12 December would take the necessary decisions in spite of the present economic situation.

### **A fundamental reform of the EU's energy supply**

Recent scientific evidence showed that current global atmospheric carbon levels exceeded those of the most pessimistic projections from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said Jacqueline McGlade of the European Environment Agency (EEA). She advocated "a fundamental reform of our energy supply" to stop "the unhealthy dependency on distant energy sources" and the excess in carbon emissions.

### **EU has to take the lead at international level**

"We need to shoulder the responsibilities we have towards future generations", said Joseph Daul (FR), leader of the EPP-ED group, calling for "political courage to pursue the adoption of the climate change package". Europe had to be "the driving force" at international level in fighting climate change, he said concluding that "if Europe is not doing this job, no one else will".

Satu Hassi (Greens/EFA, FI) said that the climate package set "a good example to follow for the rest of the world". She stressed that "we need to reduce our own emissions without externalizing the lion share to developing countries". Ms Hassi concluded by saying that "the crisis will be the more expensive the later we start to fight it".

### **Invest in research and technology**

"We won't achieve our targets without massive investment in research and development", stressed Hannes Swoboda (PES, AT). "Above all we want to avoid carbon leakage", he went on because "it wouldn't help if jobs and environmental pollution emigrated from Europe". Mr Swoboda also called for a "responsible and pragmatic solution for the liberalisation of the EU's energy market".

"We must remember that we are not the owners of the earth, we are only users", said Mieczysław Janowski (UEN, PL). Innovative methods of energy production and consumption could avoid a situation where "we shoot ourselves in the foot", said Mr Janowski, warning of increasing energy prices with negative effects on both consumers and the economy.

## **A secure energy supply**

"Russia is using its energy wealth as a political weapon in eastern Europe", said Pierre Lequiller of the French National Assembly.

Reminding MEPs and national parliamentarians that Russia provided a quarter of the EU's coal, a third of its oil and almost half of its gas, ALDE group leader Graham Watson (UK) warned that relying on one supplier alone "could be suicidal". With a view to the current economic crisis he concluded that "we have to re-create growth - a more intelligent growth powered by more intelligent sources".

MEPs and their national counterparts then formed three working groups which debated Europe's energy policy and security of supply, energy innovation and sustainable development, as well as European energy policy, climate change and international negotiations.

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