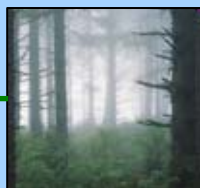
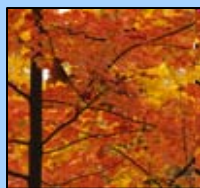


# EU Environment Policy Brief



Issue 28, June 2009

The monthly newsletter that keeps you informed about developments in EU environment policy

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## CLIMATE CHANGE



### **Commission welcomes fall in EU greenhouse gas emissions for third consecutive year**

European Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas has welcomed the news that EU greenhouse gas emissions have fallen for the third consecutive year. The emissions inventory compiled by the European Environment Agency for 2007, the latest year for which complete data is available, shows that EU-15 emissions dropped by 1.6% from 2006 while the economy grew by 2.7 %. The reduction takes EU-15 emissions to 5.0% below their levels in the base year (1990 in most cases). This puts the EU-15 well on track to meet its Kyoto Protocol target of reducing emissions in the 2008-2012 period to an average of 8% below the base year level. EU-27 emissions fell 1.2% over the year to stand 12.5% lower than in the base year.

[Press release](#)

### **Carbon capture and storage (CCS) in emerging developing countries: financing the EU-China Near Zero Emissions Coal Plant project**

The European Commission has set out plans to finance the demonstration of carbon capture and geological storage (CCS) in cooperation with China. This comes in the context of a commitment made by the EU and China to develop and demonstrate in China and the EU advanced, near-zero emissions coal technology through carbon capture and storage by 2020. CCS is an important technology in the fight against climate change and has the potential to cut emissions from power generation in fast-developing and coal-dependent emerging economies, such as China. The investment scheme could serve as a model for other technology cooperation activities between developed countries and emerging/developing countries in the context of a post-2012 climate change agreement.

[Press release](#)

[Questions and answers on the Communication](#)

## **Emissions trading: public consultation on future EU ETS auctioning rules launched**

A public consultation on rules to govern the future auctioning of emission allowances under the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) has been launched. The consultation forms part of the Commission's preparation of a Regulation on auctioning of allowances for the third and later trading periods. From 2013 at least half of the allowances under the EU ETS will be auctioned instead of being allocated to businesses free of charge. The consultation covers all aspects of auctioning that may be relevant to the future Regulation and runs until 3 August 2009. Interested stakeholders are invited to participate by filling in the online questionnaire.

[Press release](#)

[Public consultation](#)

## **Record turnout for Green Week conference on climate change**

More than 4,000 participants from Europe and beyond attended Green Week 2009 from 23-26 June – the highest ever turnout in the event's nine-year history. With a new international climate agreement due to be finalised in Copenhagen in December, climate change was the natural focus for this year's conference. Under the slogan 'act and adapt', Green Week, the biggest annual conference devoted to European environment policy, examined the multi-faceted challenges of reducing EU and global greenhouse gas emissions and of adapting to the climate change that is already under way. Eight of the 36 sessions were dedicated to establishing a realistic vision of how a low-carbon world in 2050 would look. European Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas spoke at the high-level opening session, as well as at the closing session focusing on 'The Road to Copenhagen', where Commission President José Manuel Barroso gave the keynote speech. Other speakers at the closing session included Swedish Environment Minister Andreas Carlgren and Professor Wang Yi of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

[Green Week website](#) (videos of all sessions available)

[Speech: Commissioner Dimas](#)

[Speech: President Barroso](#)

## **World Environment Day: Commissioner calls for greater ambition in talks on new global agreement**

As World Environment Day was being marked around the globe on June 5, European Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas called for greater urgency and ambition in international negotiations on a new global climate agreement, warning that it represents the world's last chance to prevent climate change from reaching dangerous levels. Commissioner Dimas made the remarks in a statement to mark the annual event, which this year had climate change as its theme.

[Commissioner's statement](#)

## INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS

### **Commission welcomes political agreement on industrial emissions at Environment Council**

The Commission welcomed the political agreement on industrial emissions reached at the Environment Council on June 25. The agreement brings the EU one step closer to new legislation on industrial pollution providing higher levels of environmental protection. It strengthens the application of best available techniques and reduces harmful emissions from large combustion plants. The agreement reached in Council retains the key aspects of the Commission proposal presented in December 2007. The proposal merges seven directives into one and streamlines certain provisions. It will also reduce competition distortions between companies and lessen the administrative burden faced by business under the existing regime. The proposal tightens minimum emission limits in certain industrial sectors, introduces standards for environmental inspections, and renders the review of permits more effective. The agreement will now be sent to the European Parliament for a second reading.

[Press release](#)

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## WATER



### **Bathing water quality improving in the EU**

The annual bathing water report presented by the European Commission and the European Environment Agency in early June has revealed that the large majority of bathing sites across the European Union met EU hygiene standards in 2008. During that bathing season, some 96% of coastal bathing areas and 92% of bathing sites in rivers and lakes complied with minimum standards. The report provides useful water quality information for the millions of people who visit Europe's beaches every summer. Of the 21,400 bathing areas monitored throughout the European Union in 2008, two thirds were on the coast and the rest were along rivers and lakes. This year the report was prepared by the European Environment Agency (EEA), which has made maps and tables with detailed information on specific bathing areas available on its website.

[Press release](#)

[EU and national reports, national bathing sites lists](#)

[European Environment Agency website](#)

[Questions and answers on bathing water policy](#)

## .CHEMICALS

### **Commission proposes to improve the safety of biocides and to simplify authorisation procedures**

The European Commission has presented draft legislation to achieve a higher level of protection of health and environment. This proposal aims at significantly increasing the safety of biocide products used and placed on the market in the European Union. It proposes to phase out the most hazardous substances, particularly those that may cause cancer, and to introduce new rules for articles such as furniture and textiles treated with biocides, which are not covered by existing legislation. It introduces simplified legislation, while providing new incentives for companies to develop safer products against harmful pests and germs. The Helsinki-based European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) will be involved in the authorisation of some of these products through a centralised approach. The proposal should enter into force in 2013.

[Press release](#)

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## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



### **First Asia-Europe Meeting Ministerial Conference on energy security held in Brussels**

The first Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Ministerial Conference on energy security was held in Brussels on 17-18 June 2009. The event brought together Foreign and Energy Ministers from the 45 members of the ASEM to discuss energy policy and possibilities for cooperation between Europe and Asia. Topics on the agenda were energy security choices, sustainable energy, and trade and investment in energy. The Ministerial Conference agreed that energy security requires ambitious and comprehensive energy policies at international, national and regional levels that include diverse sources, routes and types of energy supplies and emergency mechanisms, including oil stocks. It also agreed that the use of safe and sustainable low-carbon technology and more sustainable and cleaner energy resources, in particular the development of renewable energy sources, should be encouraged.

[Further details](#)

## BOOKSHOP

Latest DG Environment publications available:

Environment fact sheet: Invasive Alien Species, available in English

Leaflet: Adaptation to Climate Change – An EU Approach, available in English

Leaflet: The Arctic – a Changing Environment, available in English

Booklet for children: "Blossom Lane", dealing with air pollution, climate change and modes of transport, available in 22 languages

Environment for Europeans N° 33, available in English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish and Spanish

LIFE brochure: Getting more from less – LIFE and sustainable production in the EU, available in English

DG ENV publications are available from the EU Bookshop, at [www.bookshop.europa.eu](http://www.bookshop.europa.eu) where you can order free single copies of publications. Multiple copies can be ordered via the form which can be found at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/env-informa/>

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