



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 05.08.2015
C(2015) 5605 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion concerning the Commission Communication: A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy {COM(2015) 80 final}.

The Framework Strategy for the Energy Union is based on five mutually reinforcing dimensions and aims to address the three objectives of security of supply, sustainability and competitiveness through a strong commitment by the EU institutions and the Member States to deepen integration, cooperation and coordination.

First of all, the Commission takes note of the Bundesrat's concerns regarding the Energy Union package's compliance with the principle of subsidiarity and the Member States' right to decide about their own energy mix. The Commission would like to assure the Bundesrat that it will fully respect the principle of subsidiarity in all measures proposed under the Energy Union.

Concerning the Bundesrat's view that the Energy Union has a too strong focus on measures to safeguard security of supply, in particular through unconventional fossil sources and nuclear energy, the Commission would like to draw the Bundesrat's attention to the balanced range of objectives, dimensions and measures set out in the Strategy and its roadmap. Energy efficiency is recognised as a source of energy in its own right and can contribute significantly to security of supply. The same is true for renewables which are an important source of domestically produced energy. Both appear not only among the priority areas of the Energy Union strategy but also of the European Fund for Strategic Investments which underlines the importance that the Commission attaches to both of them.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union clearly provides that it is for each Member State to determine the choice between different energy sources, including nuclear energy and unconventional fossil fuels. The role of the Commission is therefore primarily to ensure that those Member States which decide to pursue these options do it within a European framework that ensures the highest standards of safety and security.

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The Bundesrat highlights the importance of a comprehensive picture of the total costs and subsidies of different generation technologies. In this context, among the actions planned to implement the Energy Union is a biennial report on energy prices (the next report to be published in 2016), which will also analyse relevant subsidies.

Concerning the Bundesrat's view about Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), the Commission would like to underline that CCS can make an important contribution to climate change mitigation in the medium to long term, and its importance was confirmed by the October 2014 European Council.

As regards the Bundesrat's request for a vision for renewable energy beyond 2030, the Commission would like to draw the Bundesrat's attention to the Commission Communication on the Energy Roadmap 2050 {COM(2011) 885 final}, which clearly states that significantly higher shares of renewable energy also beyond 2030 are needed to meet our long term objective of reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 80 to 95 % by 2050.

Finally, the Commission welcomes the Bundesrat's positive appreciation of energy efficiency. Enhancing energy efficiency throughout the economy will not only improve the sustainability of the energy system, it will also help to improve energy security and contain energy costs.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Bundesrat and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Cecilia Malmström

Member of the Commission