

Brussels, 21/05/2010
C/2010/2367

Dear President,

The European Commission would like to thank the Italian Parliament for the very comprehensive opinion addressing several aspects of environmental policy and sustainable development {COM(2009)147} COM(2009)304} and {COM(2009)400}. The opinion provides valuable input for further development of our environmental policies and promoting sustainable development. As concerns the different points addressed in the parliament's opinion:

We agree that the integration of environment policies into the sectoral policies is a key to pursue the road to real sustainable development. The Commission has successfully mainstreamed sustainability objective into the various policies over the past years, but more needs to be done, as we also highlighted in the progress report on sustainable development strategy {COM(2009) 400}. In this context, we also welcome that the Italian Parliament recognises the importance of introducing indicators of quality of life that go beyond GDP to measure progress in terms of quality of development.

Sustainability also means ensuring that our economy can respect the need to protect the European environment, and its biodiversity. We need to maintain the momentum towards a low emission and resource-efficient economy, integrated in all sectors of our economy. Investing in resource-efficient growth, continuing the fight against climate change and promoting energy security are crucial issues in promoting sustainable development further.

The Europe 2020 strategy, which will replace the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs, will be a key in leading our economies out of the current economic and financial crisis, and paving the way for smarter, greener and more sustainable growth. The Member States including national Parliaments, will play a crucial role in this. As highlighted in various Commission documents, the economic crisis presents an historic opportunity to speed up the greening of our economies. Government and EU investments should target environmental infrastructure, energy and resource efficiency and eco-innovation.

Mr Gianfranco FINI
President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies
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In keeping with the White Paper on Adapting to Climate Change commitments, the Commission will work with all Member States to support the development of National and Regional Adaptation Strategies with a view to also considering mandatory adaptation strategies from 2012. Moreover, Article 4 of the UNFCCC stipulates that every effort must be made to adopt national or regional adaptation strategies. The Commission is establishing a working mechanism with EU Member States to facilitate the exchange of best practice and the sharing of information, supported by an information system (EU Clearinghouse) to be available end-2011.

At the same time the European Union will continue to exert its climate leadership role in 2010. Following the first steps taken in Copenhagen we are committed to make further progress towards an ambitious, legally binding post-2012 agreement at the Cancun Climate Conference at the end 2010.

I look forward to continuing this fruitful exchange of information,

Yours sincerely,

/-/ Maroš Šefčovič