



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 19 OCT. 2012
C(2012) 7027 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputatilor for its Opinion on the Commission Communication "Roadmap to a resource efficient Europe" {COM(2011) 571 final}, and apologizes for the long delay in replying.

The Opinion raises a number of points on key aspects of the Roadmap and touches upon a set of policies relevant to the resource efficiency agenda, providing a useful input and insights for their further development.

Concerning your comments on chapter 3 of the Roadmap, the Commission promotes resource efficiency as a new partnership between environment and business, boosting innovation, inducing efficient production and turning waste into a resource. Therefore, active dialogue with companies and particularly SMEs is key to its successful implementation. As you have noted, in the Roadmap, the Commission has, inter alia, invited the Member States to help companies work together to make the best use of the waste and by-products they produce. Industrial symbiosis is an example of such cooperation.

Eliminating environmentally harmful subsidies is a key element of our resource efficiency agenda and will be closely followed up in the European Semester, together with environmental taxation, in order to help budget consolidation, but also to remove barriers to economic restructuring and development of new sources of growth. The specific situation of transnational companies may deserve further consideration and we would welcome your insight on the issue.

Enhanced efforts to preserve, protect and restore ecosystem services and biodiversity, as well as to support necessary research in these fields and the proper valuation of our natural capital are all important aspects for making progress with the resource efficiency agenda (chapter 4 of the Roadmap). They are part of the active role and response of the EU to its international commitments made in Nagoya in 2010. The EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 {COM(2011) 244 final} proposed targets and actions to meet the biodiversity headline target agreed by the Council in March 2010. The Council adopted two sets of conclusions in June and December 2011, and the European Parliament adopted a Resolution broadly supporting the way forward. While the knowledge base is still being further developed, there is justification for the targets set, and scientific progress will help the implementation of measures to deliver upon these targets.

Mr Valeriu Ștefan ZGONEA
President
Chamber of Deputies
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5
RO – BUCHAREST

Romania's intention to study all the species of the Natura 2000 sites in order to develop relevant management plans and further measures to preserve them as suggested by the Camera Deputatilor is welcome. Moreover, the Commission would like to recall that appropriate environmental impact assessments of all projects with possible negative implications, including for birds, other species and habitats, should be an indispensable part of decision making procedures.

The Commission welcomes the support that is expressed by the Camera Deputatilor for the measures to counter soil erosion and soil sealing in the Roadmap. These elements are taken forward in the implementation report on the Soil Thematic Strategy (COM(2012) 46 final) as well as in the Guidelines on best practice to limit, mitigate or compensate soil sealing published in April 2012 (SWD(2012) 101 final).

The Commission is currently assessing the river basin management plans and will publish an implementation report as part of the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water in November 2012. The obligation to make the plans available to the neighbouring countries with which the Member State shares waters is already included in Article 15(1) of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The Guidance on public participation elaborated under the Common Implementation Strategy of the WFD encourages the Member States to translate the river basin management plans into the language of the consulted countries/regions.

The Roadmap tackles also the sectors responsible for the biggest impacts on our environment – namely food, construction and mobility (chapter 5 of the Roadmap). The Camera Deputatilor rightly points to the numerous benefits that changing food consumption patterns can bring, including to health and public health care spending.

The development of resource efficiency targets and indicators (chapter 6 of the Roadmap) is very important for the successful implementation of the Roadmap and achieving an EU level playing field, and has been requested by stakeholders both on the business and policy making side. It is common practice at EU level to balance costs and benefits of statistics and indicators, while having in mind that good and relevant statistics is cost-effective as it gives the basis for better decisions.

I hope that these clarifications address the comments and concerns raised in your Opinion. In conclusion, I would like to underline that the success in rolling out the Resource Efficiency Roadmap will depend on the engagement of all stakeholders at all levels to ensure that policy, financing, investment, research and innovation are coherent and mutually reinforcing. We count on your support to keep resource efficiency and sustainability high on the political agenda and to integrate, as appropriate, relevant measures into the future updates of the Romanian National Reform Programme to be submitted to the Commission as part of the European Semester.

I am looking forward to continuing our constructive political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*