



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its Opinion on the Communication 'Clean Energy for All Europeans' {COM(2016) 860}.

This Communication was adopted as part of the 'Clean Energy for All Europeans' package, which includes important legislative and non-legislative measures to achieve the objectives of the Energy Union and most notably the Union's 2030 targets for energy and climate.

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its broad support for the package and the Communication, in particular its clear support for ambitious policies for energy efficiency and renewable energy for sustainable and secure energy supply in the long-term. The Commission counts on Sweden's continued support as the various legislative proposals in the package are negotiated by the European Parliament and the Council.

With regard to the few concerns raised in the Riksdag's opinion, the Commission would like to make the following clarifications.

Member States should indeed as far as possible be free to decide how the objectives for energy efficiency are to be met for the 2021-2030 period. The proposals for the amended Energy Efficiency and Energy Performance of Buildings Directives leave significant flexibility to Member States, for example with regard to the implementation of the Energy Savings Obligation in the proposal for the Energy Efficiency Directive. Of equal importance in this regard is the proposal for the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union, which makes it clear that it is for the Member States to set their indicative contribution to the EU level energy efficiency target and to define the basic policies while at the same time ensuring compliance with applicable EU legislation.

With regard to individual metering and billing of thermal energy, the Commission agrees with the Riksdag on the importance of maintaining and even strengthening the incentives for building renovation in multi-apartment buildings, but policies to ensure this must not, and need not, be to the detriment of incentives for behavioural change of individual consumers. Our joint ambition should be to ensure that both property owners and occupants have the right incentives to contribute in their different ways to save energy. Importantly, Member

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States in general have and will continue to have the possibility to make such arrangements in existing buildings conditional to a positive assessment of their cost-effectiveness. Such an assessment, however, must be made at building level or at least for categories of buildings with similar characteristics, not for a Member State as a whole. The Commission notes the Riksdag's specific concern as regards the provisions proposed for buildings that are new or undergoing major renovation.

Bioenergy, which today represents a significant share of the EU renewable energy mix, would continue to do so in the foreseeable future thanks also to the incentives provided by the proposal for a revised Renewable Energy Directive. Bioenergy brings employment and economic development to rural areas, contributes to energy security and helps to reduce carbon emissions.

The Commission notes the Riksdag's concerns in relation to the treatment of first generation biofuels in the proposal for a revised Renewable Energy Directive. The Commission considers that food and feed crop-based biofuels should have a limited role in decarbonising the transport sector due to the concerns about indirect land use change impacts. Therefore, the Commission puts emphasis on advanced biofuels, but provided that Sweden complies with the forthcoming EU legislation in this regard, nothing prevents it from attaining a higher share of biofuels including food-based biofuels. National policies in this regard must however be compatible with State Aid rules.

While the risk of unsustainable solid biomass production today is low, the Commission's research and analysis suggest that risks could increase along with growing bioenergy demand, including higher biomass imports from third countries. Therefore, the Commission suggests a strengthening of the existing EU sustainability criteria by covering also solid biomass and biogas used for heat and power. The verification of sustainable forestry practices would be based on national forest legislation where it exists. The proposed measures fully recognise the legitimate right of Member States to set their national policies for forestry.

Finally, the Commission agrees on the importance of taking account of Member States' differences and specificities when agreeing on EU energy and climate policies. One of the main objectives of the proposed Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union is indeed to ensure this flexibility, and the Commission always ensures that its sectorial proposals fully respect the principle of subsidiarity.

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

Yours faithfully,

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First Vice-President*

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