

**6<sup>TH</sup> ENVIRONMENT ACTION PROGRAMME  
STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION MEETING  
29 MARCH 2011**

**MEETING REPORT**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Chair, Mr Robin Miege (Director Strategy, DG Environment) welcomed the participants and explained the background to the stakeholder consultation on the assessment of the 6<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme (6EAP). The objective of the consultation was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders:

- to express their views on the operational impact of the 6EAP, taking into account the EEA State of the Environment Report (SOER) 2010 and the independent assessment of the 6EAP carried out by Ecologic Institute/IEEP/CEU (under contract to the European Commission), as well as
- to provide any additional input that might be relevant to the final assessment of the 6EAP.

The Commission intended to use the results of this consultation, together with the findings of the Ecologic report and the SOER, to prepare its final assessment of the Programme in the course of 2011.

EEA and Ecologic/IEEP then presented their reports. Both concurred that there had been real progress in the state of the environment during the course of the 6EAP but that significant challenges remained. Participants were then invited to give their views on a series of questions, both general and specific, and notably to identify the added value of the 6EAP and its operational impact on the environment policy.

**2. GENERAL QUESTIONS**

The first set of general questions centred on identifying (i) the positive environmental impacts over the past 9 years, notably in each of the four 6EAP priority areas – climate change, nature and biodiversity, environment and health, and natural resources and waste and (ii) the remaining gaps and challenges ahead.

The following points were made by participants:

*Context*

- The 6EAP should be seen as part of a *continuum* with the previous EAPs, and should be assessed in this light, rather than *in comparison* with previous programmes.
- The 6EAP was unique in that the context had radically changed – in particular the 2004 enlargement almost doubled the number of MS. While a lot remained to be done in the "new" MS, the pace of change was faster than in "old" MS.
- There appears to be a change across Europe, in that responsibilities and decisions for environmental policy and implementation are being taken more and more in a decentralized way at local or regional/ interregional levels.
- International factors had strong leveraging effects in climate change and biodiversity policies.

### *Positive environmental effects of the 6EAP*

- Although it was impossible to estimate the real added value of the 6EAP against a scenario where the 6EAP did not exist, there was consensus that it provided a *strategic framework* and "leadership value" to support sustained environmental action throughout the 6EAP period.
- The 6EAP was instrumental not only in moving issues forward (eg. soil, marine) but also in keeping issues from disappearing off the environmental agenda, particularly in periods of economic downturn.
- The 6EAP helped to increase the legitimacy of environmental policy-making, especially in areas where targets were more difficult to set.
- The 6EAP provided regions and business with longer-term *predictability* which enabled them to prepare for upcoming legislation/implementation. It also helped national/regional/local decisions on the allocation of financing.
- The *choice of instruments* was less clear – in particular the effectiveness of the Framework Directive approach is still under evaluation. It was also not clear in which circumstances Directives or Regulations should be chosen.
- The 6EAP emphasised *evidence-based policy* more than the 5EAP, and therefore increased monitoring activities. This emphasis led to greater aggregation of data and awareness of the links between data. The notion of coherence became an integral way of thinking.
- The clear focus on environment and health helped to put this priority area on the political agenda and was an important driver of the Environment and Health Action Plan. Significant progress was made on establishing an evidence base on health impacts of environment, in particular through research projects funded under the EU RTD Framework Programme.
- The thematic strategy on *urban environment* helped to stimulate action at a local/city level, as well as the EU Strategy on adaptation, ambient air and noise legislation.
- The 2007 Environmental Compliance Assistance Programme for SMEs had the potential to help SMEs in implementation work.

### *Perceived gaps, lessons to be learnt and remaining challenges following from the 6EAP.*

- It would be essential to ensure a clear link to the wider Europe 2020 strategy in any follow-on action from the 6EAP as well as consistency with other Commission initiatives such as on the low-carbon economy, roadmap for resource efficiency, CAP reform or on green growth/greening the economy. The focus of any follow-up action should be on mainstreaming environmental policy and on taking a pragmatic approach with realistic targets.
- Greater integration and coherence was necessary across policies e.g. in agricultural policy, the agricultural objectives were not sufficiently coherent with the 6EAP objectives, in particular with respect to biodiversity and land use; in international trade negotiations, environmental policy objectives were not always reflected; and in transport policy, the 2006 mid-term review of the White Paper on Transport had represented a major setback for environment policy.
- Much legislation had been adopted during the course of the 6EAP, therefore a new emphasis would be required on *implementation and monitoring*, including targets and indicators for implementation, in order to ensure a level playing field for all. The renewed emphasis on implementation would require new approaches, of a strategic nature,

including sustainability-proofing. Significant governance changes would be required to enable information to be made available at every stage and on a multi-level basis, from EU institution to the local/regional levels involved in implementation, right down to citizens.

- The cost of implementation could be very high – e.g. for the Water Framework Directive, this could run into 10s of millions and in some cases, 10s of billions of €. Therefore, in the current economic crisis, prioritisation of implementation would be essential and would depend to some extent on the region. Implementation tools would also need to be flexible rather than prescriptive as in the past.
- The need for flexibility and adaptability in any follow-on from the 6EAP was emphasised in order to deal with planned events such as enlargement, as well as unplanned events such as the financial crisis.
- A renewed emphasis should be put not only on evidence-based policy development but also on evidence-based reporting in order to identify the impacts and outcomes of policies.
- Environmentally friendly production was a real challenge for SMEs, therefore a framework for SMEs to adapt to legislation e.g. in product policy, eco-design, would be useful.
- Social dialogue, such as the Retail Forum, would be important in order to involve economic actors – in the past, there had been a certain frustration when environmental policies had developed in a different direction to existing and planned investments in environment and sustainability.
- Overall, the four priority areas of the 6EAP are still valid for the future.
- Further review and follow-up action would be required on the whole span of existing policies e.g. waste, product policy and related standards (a more hands-on approach would be needed in view of the fact that currently some standards take longer to develop than the life span of the related products), nanotechnologies, chemical mixtures, land use and soil.
- In addition, links between environment and international developments were important (especially in view of the trend for manufacturing to shift production outside Europe with the consequent "exporting" of pollution), climate change, and biodiversity.
- Regarding waste, upstream action required to tackle production and consumption is a bigger challenge for the future than waste management *per se*.
- Environment plays a crucial role in health benefits and on health care budgets. Supporting the implementation of REACH would be crucial, as would a continued emphasis on cocktail effects, endocrine disrupters, low dose effects, early life exposure, bio-monitoring. A stronger focus should also be put on indoor air quality where a more harmonised approach would be necessary, especially with respect to energy efficient and "health-friendly" buildings.

In continuing the discussion on future challenges the Chair recalled a number of items that the Commission is planning to adopt including a Communication on Biodiversity, a Roadmap to a resource efficient Europe which will inter alia touch on the use of market based instruments, a Communication on implementation and on the preparations for the Rio+20 Conference in 2012. He also referred to a blueprint for water policy, an examination of the coherence of waste legislation and a review of the Sustainable Consumption Action Plan foreseen for 2012. For 2013 air quality would be the focus of attention. In addition CAP and CFP Reform would be tabled this year along with proposals for the next multi annual financial framework. In this context he stressed the need to consider the capacity of a possible new EAP to be influential in the implementation phase of these proposals rather than shaping them.

In the subsequent round of interventions on challenges for the future the following items were mentioned:

- The important role for Market Based Instruments (MBIs), taxation and the removal of environmentally harmful subsidies, resource efficiency & sustainable consumption & production, protection of natural capital, health & environment.
- More dynamic green criteria for products to reflect shorter product life cycles.
- Sustainability proofing, linking EU budget to environmental outcomes.
- The question of whether climate change should be included in a new EAP, adaptation being the crucial link between climate and environment policy.
- More participative democracy to allow citizens to be associated with solutions; the need for clear messages that can appeal to citizens, ways to calculate the true cost and benefits of environmental policy to society and a basis for clear messages to facilitate better communication.
- Need to engage positively with agricultural sector recognising the efforts made by that sector to date to improve the environment.
- Managing uncertainty, responding to uncertainty and the need for strengthening security of citizens to the unforeseeable.
- A stronger evidence base through better use of technology albeit in the face of more limited public finance, the role for "citizen science", valuation of natural capital while not forgetting the intrinsic value of biodiversity, more harmonised judicial approaches to environmental crime, more demonstrable linking of health and environmental improvements.

### **3. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

On the last set of questions (7 – 10) set out in the stakeholder consultation document and referring to inter alia the characteristics of the 6EAP, its level of detail, duration etc the following issues arose:

- A next EAP should be a reference document not only for environment policy but also for other sectors and for the chain of players involved in environmental policy including citizens; the role of different players needs to be defined. It should be complementary to Europe 2020 to allow the case for environmental investment to compete at national levels.
- The possibility for rebalancing/devolving the responsibility for developing policy to meet agreed environmental outcomes should be explored. The costs of policy actions should be clear – they should be framed in a strategic context without being too prescriptive on modalities bearing in mind the characteristics of different pieces of legislation.
- It should project a vision of where environmental policy is going over a fairly long term (perhaps 2050) with interim outcomes and supportive actions for a shorter timeframe of about 10 years.
- For some 2050 is too far in the future, specific actions are needed.
- Others considered the 6EAP to have been too prescriptive for too long a period, more flexibility is needed and a more strategic approach would be better – a 10 year timeframe would provide some clarity for business and civil society. However a more in depth evaluation is required to justify the case for a 7EAP.

- Detailed targets for sustainability are missing from EU2020 and a 7EAP is needed to complement this.
- Differentiated levels of ambition could also be considered for different sectors along with a better appreciation for efforts already made e.g. in the AGRI sector and the associated challenges.

In conclusion the Chair summarised the views expressed throughout the meeting. The 6EAP was seen as being useful mainly for the visibility of environmental policies and goals it provided and helped a number of actors to adapt their actions at various levels. There was a clear call for a reference document (a 7EAP in the eyes of most) for all actors including citizens, business and local levels with implementation and integration being key among a long list of issues to be addressed albeit within an approximate continuation of the current framework. While it should be a strategic framework it should also contain some actions with the players identified and their outcome targeted. It should be flexible but not ineffective. A ten year timeframe or 2020 was seen as an appropriate timeframe. Complementing this with a 2050 vision was seen as having merit by some. However new approaches to tackle old issues where progress has been difficult are deemed necessary.

Further comments in writing are welcome until April 8<sup>th</sup> 2011 as set out in the notice of the meeting.

#### 4. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Title	First Name	Name	Organisation/Company	Position
Mr	Robin	Miege	European Commission, DG ENV	Director, Directorate F
Mr	Paulus	Brouwer	European Commission, DG ENV	Head of Unit F.2
Mr	Brian	Brangan	European Commission, DG ENV	Deputy HoU F.2
Mr	Andrea	Vettori	European Commission, DG ENV	Desk Officer F.2
Ms	Kathryn	Tierney	European Commission, DG ENV	Desk Officer F.2
Prof	Jacqueline	McGlade	European Environment Agency (EEA)	Executive Director
Mr	Ingmar	von Homeyer	Ecologic Institute	Head of Brussels Representation
Mis s	Sirini	Withana	Institute for European Env. Policy (IEEP)	Policy Analyst
Ms	Damyana	Stoynova	European Commission, DG CLIMA	Unit A4 - Strategy and Economic Assessment
Mr	Simone	Goedings	Ass. of the Netherlands Municipalities (VNG)/Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)	Policy officer of European and Env. Affairs
Dr.	Margareta	Stubenrauch	Austrian Fed. Min. of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management	Desk-officer
Ms	Karoline	Entacher	Austrian Perm. Rep. to the EU	Attaché
Ms.	Barbara	Dewulf	Bruxelles Environnement	Director Intl. and general coordination
Mr.	Satu	Räsänen	The Confederation of the Finnish industries; Representing BUSINESSEUROPE	Senior Legal Adviser; Natural resources and Environmental

				Law
Ms	An	Dierckx	European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC)	Environmental Policy Manager
Ms.	Marta	Gurin	CEWEP (ConFed. of European Waste to Energy Plants)	Technical & Scientific Officer
Ms	Paula	Baker	Committee of the Regions, ENVE commission	Rapporteur on recent opinion
Mr.	Carsten	Brauns	Committee of the Regions	Administrator ENVE Commission
Mr.	Ilja Lorenzo	Volpi	Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER)	Policy Adviser - Environment
Ms	Lisa	Engstrom	Confederation Européenne des Propriétaires Forestiers	Trainee
Ms.	Vassilia	Theophilou	Cypriot Perm. Rep. to the EU	Environment attaché
Ms	Helena	Kostohryzova	Czech Min. of the Environment	Gov. official at the EU Dept.
Mr	Nis	Christensen	Danish Min. of the Environment	Deputy Head of division
Mrs.	Stephani	Tiffanie	Deutscher Bauernverband – German Farmers' Ass.- on behalf of COPA COGECA	Senior Policy Officer Dept. for Env. Affairs & Dept. for Intl. Affairs
Ms	Siobhan	Egan	EESC member (European Economic & Social Committee); Representing BirdWatch Ireland (Conservation charity protecting Ireland's birds and habitats)	Member group iii; representative of the environmental pillar NGO sector in Ireland.
Ms	Anna	Bobo Remijn	EESC European Economic & Social Committee	Administrator at the secretariat of the NAT section
Mis s	Elen	Strahle	Environment Agency for England and Wales	EU and Intl. relations adviser/ UK IMPEL coordinator
Ms.	Simone	Mancini	ERRT (European Retail Round Table)	Policy officer
Mr.	Mike	Hale	EURITS – European Union for the Responsible Incineration and Treatment of Special waste	Consultant
Mr.	Michael	Klinkenberg	Eurocities	Policy officer environment
Ms.	Veronique	Schmit	Eurogroup for Animals	Executive Officer - Policy
Ms.	Rosa	Solanes	European Ass. of Crafts and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (UEAPME)	Advisor for sustainable development
Mr.	Gerard	Choplin	European Coordination Via Campesina	CAP & productions policy officer
Mr.	Pieter	De Pous	European Env. Bureau (EEB)	Policy Director
Mr.	Eric	Johnson	European Ferrous Recovery & Recycling Fed.	European Affairs Officer
Mr.	Wilhelm	Bargum	European Parliament	ALDE political advisor Environment, Public health and Food Safety
Mr.	Andreas	Huber	European Parliament	Head of unit of ENVI Committee Secretariat
Ms.	Metka	Cavka	European Parliament	Parl. assistant to MEP Romana Jordan Cizelj (EPP/SL)
Mr.	Terhi	Lehtonen	European Parliament, GREENS/EFA	Environment adviser
Mr.	Jose Antonio	Ruiz	European Solvents Industry Group - CEFIC	Chairman
Ms	Helena	Dehlin	EUSTAFOR (European State Forest Association)	Associate; Forest ecologist

Ms.	Laetitia	Reynaud	FEAD	Policy and Communication officer
Ms.	Miia	Wallen	Finnish Energy Industries	Advisor
Mr	Liisi	Klobut	Finnish Min. of the Environment	Director, EU Affairs
Ms	Ulla-Riitta	Soveri	Finnish Perm. Rep.	Environment Counsellor
Dr.	Bettina	Wurster	German Ass. of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag - DIHK)	Director EU Env. Politics, Env. Law
Dr.	Julia	Werner	German Fed. Min. for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety	Policy officer
Ms.	Anne	Stauffer	Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)	Policy Manager
Mr.	Paul	Lemass	Irish Perm. Rep.	Environment Counsellor
Ms	Samantha	Sapienza	Italian Ministry of the Environment	Expert
Mr.	Maris	Klismets	Latvia Min. of Env. Protection and Regional Development	Director of Dept.
Ms.	Gunnel	Klingberg	Municipal Waste Europe	Secretary General
Dr.	Nicola	Campbell	UK National Farmers Union	Environment policy adviser
Ms.	Seda	Orhan Defranceschi	Naturefriends Intl.	EU Policy Officer
Mr.	Edwin	Koning	NL Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment	Senior Policy Advisor
Ms.	Gemma	Hilverdink	NL Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment	Intl. Affairs directorate
Mr.	Knut	Kroepelien	Norwegian Mission to the EU	Environment counsellor
Ms.	Annalisa	Volse	PANGEA – Partners for Euro African Green Energy	Programme assistant
Ms	Joanna	Kopczyńska	Polish Min. of the Environment	Advisor to the Minister
Ms.	Beata	Wiszniewska	Polish Perm. Rep. to the European Union	First Counsellor
Ms.	Ana	Almeida	Portuguese Min. of Environment and Spatial Planning	Senior office
Mr	Paulo	Lemos	Portuguese Perm. Rep.	Env. Attaché
Mr.	Joop	Kramer	Province Drenthe/IPO; representing the Ass. of Dutch Provinces	Chairman IPO-KEM/IPO Expert
Ms.	Márta	Szigeti Bonifert	Regional Env. Center (REC)	Executive Director
Mr.	Rickard	Eksten	Scotland Europa	Senior EU Policy Executive
Prof	Gemmel	Campbell	Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Chief Executive
Ms.	Mária	Vidová	Slovak Min. of the Environment of the Slovak Republic	Director, env. policy Dept.
Ms.	Madelen	charyszak	Stockholm region EU office	EU policy officer
Ms	Josephine	Holmquist	Swedish Perm. Rep. to the EU	Environment Counsellor
Ms	Eva	Corral	UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, DEFRA	Policy Advisor
Mr.	Hugh	Laxton	UK Nature & Landscape Office (UKNLO)	Head of Brussels Office
Mr.	John	Peredur	Welsh Assembly Gov.	Environment policy officer

Mr.	Andreas	Baumueeller	WWF European Policy Office	Senior Biodiversity Policy Officer
Mr.	Erik	Gerritsen	WWF European Policy Office	Resource Efficiency and Land Use