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Subject: Summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament **Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety**, held in Brussels on 23, 24 and 25 January 2012

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The meeting was chaired by Mr Grootte (S&D, DE).

**1. Report back from the delegation to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 17) in Durban, South Africa**

**ENVI/7/08179**

**Exchange of views**

A summary note on the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Durban on 5-9 December 2011 can be found in the [Annex](#).

Following this presentation the following members of the Committee took the floor:

Mr Arsenis(S&D, EL) said that the Conference brought the European Union back to the centre of attention and praised the important role of the European Commission, adding that although the EU's allies might have felt let down at the end of the process, he hoped the situation would change in time for the negotiations in Qatar. He also emphasised the need for improved coordination with the Council which had caused blockages in the process.

Mr Eickhout (Greens, NL) and Mr Rossi (EFD, IT) also expressed their appreciation for the work of the Commission and the flexible approach it had shown in the negotiations, ensuring that China, India and the USA would follow, unlike the Council which has been unable to deliver on Kyoto II. They called upon the Council to improve its preparations and make sure it had agreement internally before going into negotiations to ensure that the EU speak with one voice. They expressed their disappointment at the results of Durban and hoped that Cyprus would deliver a better outcome in Qatar, noting that the EU had to work hard towards delivering better and more ambitious climate policies.

Mr Panayotov (ALDE, BG) and Mr Florenz (EPP, DE) concentrated on the positive aspects of the conference, saying that many of their expectations had been fulfilled , with China, the US and India having to reduce their emissions. According to them, Durban had started a new global order, and the EU had to lead by example.

A representative from the Commission took the floor, acknowledging the positive results in Durban and the need for future pressure on those who were hesitant in an attempt to bring them into line. In his concluding remarks Mr Groote (S&D, DE), chairman of the Committee, pointed to the need to develop further the quality of diplomacy and improve cooperation between the institutions. Durban had turned out to be better than expected, but less than had been hoped for.

## **2. Exchange of views with Mette Gjerskov (Danish Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries)**

**ENVI/7/08076**

Ms Gjerskov delivered the speech contained in the Annex.

In the ensuing debate Ms Gjerskov answered questions from the members of the Committee:

Regarding animal welfare, she explained that the Danish Presidency was planning discussions on transport and that the Commission statement on animal welfare regulations was to be driven by animal welfare indicators. She informed the Committee that there would be a conference in Copenhagen and that it was to be hoped that there would be Council Conclusions on this as well. Ms Gjerskov noted that some of the regulations in the past had encountered difficulties at the implementation stage, and steps needed to be taken in order to ensure transparent implementation. This means asking Member States how far they had progressed in implementing the regulations. She stated that the European Union had to make sure that the Member States complied and that all of Europe was moving ahead.

Concerning food waste, she mentioned to Ms Lepage (ALDE, FR) the Council conclusions from December, and with regard to food and Europe's self-sufficiency, she reminded her that the EU needed money from outside which meant exporting.

Regarding nutrients in the Baltic Sea, she acknowledged to Ms Hassi (Greens, FI) that this was a problem, and that agriculture was part of the solution along with the Waterfront Directive.

She pointed out to Mr Davies (ALDE, UK) that the Fisheries Reform proposal from the Commission was sustainable, adding that sustainability was a fundamental principle for the success of the reform.

She told Ms McAvan (S&D, UK) that the overuse of medication and antimicrobial resistance in veterinary and human sectors was an essential issue which required changes.

Finally, concerning private inspectors for meat control, she explained to Mr Schnellhardt (EPP, DE) and Mr Schlyter (Greens, SE) that it was important to ensure credible and thorough inspections and that a discussion on efficiency would take place during the Danish Presidency.

### **3. Exchange of views with Pia Olsen Dyhr (acting Danish Minister for Health)**

**ENVI/7/08078**

Ms Olsen began by outlining the need for EP support to achieve results in relation to the European health system. She noted that innovation in health had to be strengthened in order to overcome the economic crisis and that the Danish Presidency hoped to improve health systems within the EU through better legislation.

She outlined the importance of patient empowerment through new technologies and patient training, and advocated starting new negotiations on a directive on medical equipment noting that new technology, eHealth, and patient education were some of the tools to be used to achieve the goals of "patient empowerment". She explained that the Danish Presidency wished to promote cooperation between the human and the veterinary sector to reaching three political goals:

- Antibiotic consumption in the EU should first be reduced. This applied to both humans and animals.
- Secondly, the use of antibiotics should be more focused, and Europe should use critically important antibiotics only when absolutely necessary.
- Thirdly, we must become better able to monitor antibiotic use and resistance to see if our action is working.

She then announced a Presidency conference on combating antibiotic resistance to be held in Copenhagen on 14 and 15 March which would bring together experts and officials from both the human sector and the veterinary area to discuss challenges and especially solutions.

Ms Olsen stated that health was not just a value in itself but also a catalyst for growth, adding that preparing to efficiently tackle future health dangers was a high priority for the Danish Presidency which was already working on a number of proposals.

She noted that it was hoped that there would soon be agreement in the Council on a Commission proposal on pharmaceutical monitoring.

She stated the importance of an agreement in the Council regarding a patient information proposal and the need for revised rules regarding medical equipment. She explained that the Danish presidency would like to enter into negotiations with the Parliament in order to find solutions and build bridges with the next presidency.

In the ensuing debate, Ms Olsen answered questions on medical implants and antibiotic resistance. Regarding breast implants and the PIP scandal, Ms Olsen admitted that it was a major challenge which required urgent solutions, and that a proposal from the European Commission was needed.

She pointed out to Ms Liese (EPP, DE), to Ms Willmott (S&D, UK) and to Ms Antonescu (EPP, RO) that health systems could be improved by involving patients and that she had taken note of the speakers' views regarding the traceability of medical implants, better nutrition and prevention of chronic diseases by earlier screening.

With regard to antibiotic resistance and the cocktail effect, she advocated a holistic approach and better cooperation between Member States' Health and Environment Ministers.

#### **4. Exchange of views with Ida Auken (Danish Minister for the Environment)**

**ENVI/7/08079**

Ms Auken delivered the speech contained in [the Annex](#).

In the debate that followed she pointed out to Ms Kadenbach (S&D, AT) the need to see where other financial resources could be found and to identify solutions on how to implement the Nagoya targets.

She pointed out to Mr Gerbrandy (ALDE, NE) that it was necessary to trust the environmental arguments and that there was huge market potential for green growth, water infrastructure and renewable energy.

Regarding the Danish Presidency programme for the implementation of the access to justice Directive, Ms Auken reminded Ms Belier (Greens, FR) that there was a blocking minority in the Council at the moment and that this issue was not a priority.

She also reminded Mr Florenz (EPP, DE) that the discussions on the issue of GMOs and their effect on people living at the borders of countries using them must continue. Regarding resource efficiency, she explained that it was important to look at Rio+20, and to find clear and concrete targets for water and energy saving.

She agreed with Ms Westlund (S&D, SE) on the importance of REACH. This would be a difficult time to reopen it but the Danish Presidency would try to introduce it at the 7<sup>th</sup> EAP.

Regarding the Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste, she told Mr Prodi (S&D, IT) that the Council had not yet seen a proposal from the European Commission but would give it priority once it was received. She noted that it would be difficult to reopen discussions on the Soil Framework Directive and she supported Mr Prodi's views regarding Rio and the need for a shift in attitude and consider natural resources as a common good.

She agreed with Ms Klass (EPP, DE) that environmental protection was a programme for a lifetime and that it was necessary to remain convinced that it was possible to turn things around. She added that environmental policies were all about opportunities and solving several problems at the same time through smart regulations. This was an important time to keep Europe united but at the same time it was important to be realistic about what could be agreed within the Council.

## **5. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held in Brussels on 30 and 31 January 2012.

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## **Summary Note - Delegation to the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Durban, South Africa, 5 - 9 December 2011**

### **III. THE COP-17 NEGOTIATIONS AND OUTCOME**

After two long nights and extended negotiations the Parties adopted the "Durban Platform for Enhanced Action" in the early morning of Sunday 10 December 2011. 19 COP and 17 CMP Decisions were adopted together with the approval of a number of conclusions of the subsidiary bodies. The South African Presidency drew on African traditions in convening a series of "Indabas" - gatherings and meetings of negotiators and Ministers in a spirit of interdependence so as to overcome differences and find common solutions. The most high profile of these was the "huddle" on the plenary floor in the final hours of the Conference, requested by the Presidency, so that the EU and India could try to find agreement on the wording for options on the form of the proposal universal legal agreement (the Parties finally agreed on the term "agreed outcome with legal force").

#### **Key elements of the Durban Platform include:**

A decision to adopt a universal legal agreement on climate change as soon as possible, but not later than 2015, to be implemented from 2020. Such an agreement will take the form of: a legal instrument; a protocol; or an agreed outcome with legal force. Work will begin on this immediately under a new group called the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action. A politically binding (rather than rectifiable) agreement on a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol from January 1, 2013. To achieve clarity as rapidly as possible, parties to this second commitment period will turn their economy-wide targets into quantified emission limitation or reduction objectives (QUELROs) and submit them for review by May 1, 2012. Agreement on a significantly advanced framework for the reporting of emission reductions for both developed and developing countries. Agreement on the full implementation of the package to support developing nations, adopted in Cancun, Mexico, including the Green Climate Fund, an Adaptation Committee and a Technology Mechanism.

#### **Green Climate Fund**

Countries have already started to pledge to contribute to the start-up costs of the fund, meaning it can be made ready in 2012, and at the same time can help developing countries get ready to access the fund, boosting their efforts to establish their own clean energy futures and adapt to existing climate change. A Standing Committee is to keep an overview of climate finance in the context of the UNFCCC and to assist the Conference of the Parties. It will comprise 20 members, represented equally between the developed and developing world. A focussed work programme on long-term finance was agreed, which will contribute to the scaling up of climate change finance going forward and will analyse options for the mobilisation of resources from a variety of sources.

#### **Adaptation**

The Adaptation Committee, composed of 16 members, will report to the COP on its efforts to improve the coordination of adaptation actions at a global scale. The adaptive capacities above all of the poorest and most vulnerable countries are to be strengthened. National Adaptation Plans will allow developing countries to assess and reduce their vulnerability to climate change.

The most vulnerable are to receive better protection against loss and damage caused by extreme weather events related to climate change.

### **Technology**

The Technology Mechanism will become fully operational in 2012. The full terms of reference for the operational arm of the Mechanism - the Climate Technology Centre and Network - are agreed, along with a clear procedure to select the host. The UNFCCC secretariat will issue a call for proposals for hosts on 16 January 2012.

### **Support of developing country action**

Governments agreed a registry to record developing country mitigation actions that seek financial support and to match these with support. The registry will be a flexible, dynamic, web-based platform.

### **Other key decisions**

A forum and work programme on unintended consequences of climate change actions and policies were established. Under the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism, governments adopted procedures to allow carbon-capture and storage projects. These guidelines will be reviewed every five years to ensure environmental integrity. Governments agreed to develop a new market-based mechanism to assist developed countries in meeting part of their targets or commitments under the Convention. Details of this will be taken forward in 2012.

## **IV. CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

Prior to the Conference, expectations were limited and the operationalisation of the Cancun Agreements was considered the likely focus of the negotiations. So the adoption of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action could be welcomed as a means of maintaining political momentum in the move towards securing the conclusion of an international legally binding agreement on climate change. Much of the credit for this achievement is attributed to the EU for building a coalition of support around its proposal for a Roadmap to a legally binding agreement and in forming a strong alliance between the EU and developing - particularly African - nations. However, key issues remained unresolved; the form of such an agreement remains open, with a number of options to be the subject of further negotiations - legal instrument; a protocol; or an agreed outcome with legal force. In addition, the timelines for the implementation of the agreement (from 2020) must be finalised, together with the actual mitigation commitments of the Parties. Furthermore, there remains a need urgently and before 2020, to address the "gig tonne gap" - between the emissions reduction commitments already made and those needed to limit the global mean temperature rise to less than 2°C.

**Speech by Mette Gjerskov (Danish Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries)**

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and a great pleasure to speak to you today about the priorities of the Danish Presidency for the coming six months. The Danish Presidency is looking forward to a fruitful cooperation between our institutions. And please be assured, Mr Chairman, that the Danish Presidency is determined to work in a very close cooperation with you.

First, I will give you a brief introduction to the main priorities of the Presidency. The presidency is working for a **responsible, dynamic, green and safer Europe** to prepare Europe for the future economically, socially and environmentally. Afterwards, I will continue with the more specific proposals. The Danish Presidency will set an overall pro-active **agenda for green and sustainable growth**. The goal is to create growth without increased resource and energy consumption, and this is possible. Promoting the green growth agenda is a necessary challenge. Green growth is essential for future prosperity, development and employment in Europe. But, obviously, we must focus on cost-effective solutions and take into account the competitiveness of businesses.

Focusing on green growth will provide opportunities. A simple and flexible framework for green growth can be a driver of innovation that gives possibilities for the EU to achieve and to maintain global technological lead positions. EU must lead the way, and if EU does not seize the opportunity, instead, the potentials of green growth will be exploited elsewhere.

Since October last year the debate on the Commission's proposals on **the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy** has taken centre stage in both the Parliament and the Council. We face the challenge of reshaping the Common Agricultural Policy to the changing needs, priorities and expectations of European farmers, citizens and taxpayers.

Mr Chairman, it is too early to go into detail on the key elements of the reform but let me just emphasise the element of simplification, greening and policy coherence where I think we could really make a difference in relation to the future policy.

The **Common Fisheries Policy** is also the perfect testing ground for our green growth vision as fisheries is one of the sectors where economy is most dependent on the environment.

The EU has a leading position regarding **food safety**, but there is still a need for continued development and modernization of the legislation. EU consumers must be confident that the foods on the market are healthy, safe, of high quality and produced with respect for animal welfare. Any opportunity to improve food safety levels in the EU through the harmonization of standards will be of high importance during the Presidency. This will be achieved both with a view to protecting consumers in the EU and strengthening EU exports as well as in relation to the safety of imported foods.

Let me now focus on some of the specific proposals on which you are currently working on in the Committee.

Regarding the proposal on **food for infants and special medical purposes** the Council agrees that there is a need to review and simplify the current legislation, in force since 1989. The Council accepts abandoning the concept of "dietetic foods" as proposed by the Commission.

However, the Member States have still some doubts concerning the restriction of the scope only to foods for infants and to foods for special medical purposes. Member States consider that other foods, traditionally classified as "dietetic foods", would need a similar legal treatment. The debate that has already taken place at the European Parliament showed that the Members of the European Parliament share this approach.

In view of the Presidency, there are good reasons to believe that we should be able to find agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the substantial elements of the proposal. Therefore, the Presidency is committed to reach a first reading agreement on this legislative proposal with the cooperation of the Commission. The Presidency is looking forward to continuing a fruitful cooperation with the rapporteur, and the Committee in general.

Let me now briefly outline the Presidency's views on the dossier on **electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labeling**.

The presidency will ensure progress on the proposal and we hope to be able to reach an agreement with the European Parliament during the next six month.

Next is a dossier to which both institutions attach great importance: **Animal Welfare**. One decisive aspect of this dossier will be on the agenda of the Presidency. On 10 November 2011 Commissioner Dalli presented a report on the protection of **animals during transport**.

The Commission report gives a state of play of the application of the EU regulation on animal transport and identifies several ways to address the problems that have arisen. The Presidency will ensure that the Council carefully examines the report.

It is also worth noting the major public interest in animal transport. Personally, I am very impressed by the 1 million European citizens who signed up to strengthen the rules on animal transports. We should take the concerns of the European citizens very seriously.

We also look forward to examining the Commission Communication on the **European Union Strategy** for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 which has just been adopted by the Commission last week. Here the European Parliament is already a step ahead in the discussion with the adoption of its own initiative resolution from 5 May 2010 concerning the evaluation of the Animal Welfare Action Plan 2006-2010.

In this context, the Danish Presidency will together with the Commission organise a Conference on Animal Welfare in Brussels on 29 February and 1 March 2012 and in particular on the topics of user-driven welfare, enforcement and science based welfare. We will bring together stakeholders, scholars, officials and others to give their input on elements in the strategy. The European Parliament is of course also invited.

In an issue that concerns both animal production and human health, we will coordinate the Council's response to the Commission's **Action Plan against the rising threats from Antimicrobial Resistance**. That will be done with a holistic approach, involving both veterinary and human health sectors. In this context, we have taken careful note of the two resolutions recently adopted by the European Parliament on this important subject.

The presidency will focus on the use of antimicrobials in both human and veterinary medicine and host a conference on the subject with experts and government officials from both the agricultural and the health sectors.

The **Conference "Combating antimicrobial resistance – time for joint action"** will be held in Copenhagen on 14 and 15 March.

The aim of the conference is through the exchange of best practices to develop actions against antimicrobial resistance.

It is also important that the EU, as one of the leading meat producers and exporters, plays a significant role in promoting a sound and scientifically based **meat inspection system**. Therefore I find it important to review the current EU-legislation and work towards a **future meat inspection** with a risk based approach for all species. The Presidency will host an expert-level conference on 2 and 3 February with the aim of discussing possible changes in the EU legislation.

Mr Chairman, let me conclude by assuring you that the Danish Presidency will do all it can in the coming months to bring about a sound dialogue between our institutions. I will end this presentation by mentioning the title of the Danish presidency programme “**Europe at Work**”.

And I promise you that I will work hard to ensure a solid foundation for the future of European Agriculture, fisheries and food safety.

Thank you for your attention.

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**Speech by Ida Auken (Danish Minister for the Environment)****Speech by Minister for the Environment, Ms. Ida Auken in the ENVI Committee of the European Parliament 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012****Introduction**

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is an honour and a pleasure to speak to you today about the Danish Presidency and the priorities for the coming six months on the environmental agenda. The Danish Presidency is looking forward to a fruitful cooperation between our institutions. Please be assured, Mr Chairman, that the Danish Presidency is determined to work in a very close cooperation with you. If we really want to make a difference on the environmental agenda, we need to cooperate on all levels and to join forces with other players. This must be a joint venture. Our ambitions are high though we are fully aware that the European Economies are currently stricken by a financial crisis which is threatening the entire European economy. This is of course a very difficult starting point for the Danish Presidency, but I am convinced that the answer to the present crisis is not a business as usual scenario.

**The Resource crisis**

The EU is not only stricken by the financial crisis. The EU and the rest of the world are also faced with a climate and resource crisis. And the crises are mutually interlinked and must be solved coherently. No solution of the economic crisis will be found without renewed economic growth and job creation! No economic growth and job creation in Europe without improved competitiveness! – And no improved competitiveness without a substantial improvement in resource efficiency! And improved resource efficiency will not only improve the competitiveness and profit of European business. The efficient use of resources is also the way forward towards sustainable management of our natural resources – and here I am not only talking about energy resources. I am talking about resources in a broad sense: energy, raw materials, soil, air, water and biodiversity.

**A green Transformation of the economy**

If we want to put the finances on a sustainable track I truly believe that a green transformation of the economy is not only the right way to go – it is also the necessary way to go. We need to develop a new green approach that can pave the way towards a resource efficient, green economy in Europe. We need a policy framework - A framework to create coherence and integration of the policies that shape our economy and our lifestyle. A framework that can create the playing field where innovation and resource efficiency is rewarded. Where economic opportunities and enhanced security of supply of resources are created through smart regulation, product design, eco-innovation, sustainable management of our natural capital, increased recycling, recovery and substitution of materials and resource savings. These areas are indeed key areas of our environmental policy. For the Danish Presidency it is a key priority to make the environmental policy a central player in a green transition of the European economy.

## **The resource efficiency approach in Rio and 7<sup>th</sup> EAP**

We want the resource efficiency approach to be the fundamental point of departure for the Rio+20 Conference and for the elaboration of a new 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Program. Take clean water as an important example. Clean water is a vital resource and a prerequisite for life itself. Actually I believe that supply of clean water in the future will be the most important challenge we are facing. During the Danish presidency I will use all opportunities to move forward the water efficiency agenda. I will do it in the Rio+20 negotiations, in the elaboration of the 7<sup>th</sup> environmental action programme, in the negotiations in the Council on the concrete proposal on priority substances in the aquatic environment and in bilateral agreements on water. I look forward to the work by the Commission on a “Blueprint to safeguard Europe’s water Resources” which is planned to be presented in the end of 2012.

### **The Rio+20 conference**

To me the Rio+20 Conference provides a unique opportunity for the world community to make concrete and ambitious commitments on sustainable development issues. The EU is a driving force in this respect, pushing for a greening of the economy via the central proposition of a UN green economy roadmap. We need concrete and ambitious goals and actions agreed in Rio in June. Along with my European colleagues, I do my best to further improve and strengthen the EU’s position before the conference. The Danish Presidency intends to prepare environment Council Conclusions in March, discuss Rio+20 at the informal environment ministers meeting in the city of Horsens in Denmark and bring Rio+20 to the attention of the European Council. I hope the conference will lead to an agreement on phasing out environmentally damaging subsidies. This would send a strong signal to companies and other actors. – This is the right moment of time! A number of member states face severe budget deficits! If not now, When? I genuinely believe that we need to make new and solid commitment in key resource areas and in improving resource efficiency across the board: Energy, water, agriculture together with sustainable consumption and production and sustainable cities are key areas where targets, actions and follow up mechanisms should be agreed at Rio. The scarcity and access to clean water is one example of a focus area that calls upon the attention of the world society. I hope that we in Rio can agree on how to handle this crisis in terms of specific water goals - especially global goals – and concrete actions in order to reach these goals. The EU must take a lead on this strategic subject that is central to the concept of sustainable development as defined in the Rio-declaration of 1992. It is my hope that the conference will take huge steps forward in advancing public participation and engagement in decision making. In the ECE region we have the Aarhus Convention that might serve as an example across the world. I am sure that the European Parliament will play an active role in the preparations of the conference and at the conference itself. We need to build bridges to our partners around the world and everybody has a role to play. I count on your support!

### **A new 7th Environmental Action Programme.**

Besides the Rio+20 the elaboration of a new 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme is a key priority to the Danish Presidency.

The 7<sup>th</sup> EAP holds the potential of building a bridge between the Europe 2020 strategy towards a green economy for Europe and the environment policy underlining the close connection between the fundamental services that nature and the environment provides for the economy.

### **Roadmap on resource efficiency**

I welcome the Commissions Roadmap on resource efficiency which should serve as a cornerstone in the 7<sup>th</sup> EAP. The roadmap is an important contribution defining key elements of a green transformation: The need for improving products and consumption patterns, boosting efficient production, turning waste in to a resource, support eco-innovation, eco-design, phasing out environmental harmful subsidies and getting the prices right. The use and protection of our natural capital – biodiversity, water, air, land, soils, minerals and marine resources – is identified in the roadmap at the heart of our aspirations to create a wealthy and competitive future Europe. In this regard we have huge challenges implementing and delivering on existing commitments. The implementation of the Nagoya targets on Biodiversity is an important remaining challenge. The milestone on research and innovation in the roadmap on resource efficiency has recently been qualified with the communication by the Commission on the Eco-innovation action plan. In my view the new programme should be focused. The European Environment Agency's 2010 Outlook Report showed that EU has come far in many aspects. So we are not starting from scratch. We have mature policies in a large number of areas. I think we should now focus on challenges where we do not have mature policies and legislation. And finally, implementation and enforcement of the environmental Acquis, where much added value can be achieved.

### **The integration of environmental focus in other sectors**

The integration of environmental focus in other sectors is a very efficient way of ensuring a greening of the economy in general. We want initiatives and milestones in the Commissions Resource Roadmap reflected in the Commissions annual growth survey.

We look forward, with high expectations, to conducting the negotiations on the revision of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy, and to achieve a genuine lift for the improvement of nature conservation and biodiversity in the EU. It is essential that we make sure that the financial instruments are tailored to meet our needs when for example implementing the water framework directive, the Natura 2000-directives or the marine strategy framework directive. The Presidency approach must be ambitious and realistic. Green growth in the EU will only be achieved if the necessary support in the Council and European Parliament becomes a reality, and negotiations are actually completed, proposals are adopted and translated into reality for the benefit of the citizens of Europe.

### **Dossiers on the agenda during Danish Presidency**

Let me now briefly present the different dossiers on the agenda during Danish Presidency and our specific aims. It is a key priority to the Danish Presidency to provide an effective and well prepared leadership of the Council and of the Council's negotiations with the European Parliament on the specific dossiers which are on the table. The ambition is to promote negotiations on the individual dossiers to the greatest possible extent and to reach political agreements and final adoption of as many dossiers as possible during our presidency.

We will of course continue the negotiations on the 4 proposals we have inherited From the Polish Presidency.

## **GMO**

The first one – the revision of the directive on deliberate release of GMO – intends to provide Member States with an opportunity to prohibit, limit or prevent cultivation of genetically modified organisms on their territory. We are examining the possibilities of dissolving the blocking minority in the Council. The aim is to reach a political agreement on the proposal at the “Environment” Council meeting in March taking into account the amendments that the European Parliament adopted in July 2011. I know that the environmental grounds are an important issue to the European Parliament and that you see these as complementary to the EFSA risk analysis. I sincerely hope that the more sceptic Member States in the spirit of the common European Union grant the other Member State the possibility.

## **Revision of the directive on sulphur in marine fuels**

The second dossier we have taken over from the Poles is the revision of the directive on sulphur in marine fuels. The proposal incorporates more stringent rules for the content of sulphur in fuels for ships used in marine areas which needs enhanced environmental protection – including the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. We aim at a political agreement in the Council if a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament is not possible. I am aware that a number of Member States have difficulties, but for me, it is important that we as a minimum implement the annex VI in the Marpol convention. And I am ready to go beyond a straight implementation if we can find a qualified majority in the council. Taking into account that sulphur emissions from ships in 2020 will exceed the land based emissions and that 50. 000 citizens in Europe die too early each year due to sulphur pollution, I think we need to be ambitious on this proposal.

## **Recast of the PIC Regulation concerning export and import of hazardous chemicals**

The third inherited dossier is the PIC Regulation concerning export and import of hazardous chemicals. The changes in the recast are mostly dealing with technical and administrative issues. However, the Commission proposal is also opening up for export according to the Convention in situations where a member state, despite several attempts, has not received any response to a request for consent from the importing country. The objective pursued by the Danish Presidency is to get an agreement between the Parliament and the Council at first reading on this dossier maintaining the present level of protection. Based on the outcome of the vote in the Environment Committee I think the prospects of reaching such an agreement are good. I hope the Parliament agrees on that.

## **The SEVESO III-Directive**

The last inherited proposal is the Seveso III on control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances. The outstanding questions are the scope of the directive and the strengthening of the provision relating to public access to safety information, participation in decision-making and access to justice (the Århus Convention issues).

I believe that there is a will present in both Council and Parliament to find ways to reach a first-reading agreement on the dossier which is ambitious about scope and which finds ways to bridge the different views on the on the Århus Convention-related issues.

### **New proposals from the Commission**

Apart from taking over the negotiations on these four dossiers, we intend to negotiate on 3 new proposals from the Commission:

#### **Regulation on the EU financial programme for the environment (LIFE) 2014-2020**

The first is the LIFE program proposal for the period 2014-2020. The LIFE Programme is a part of the Multiannual Financial Framework and therefore the Danish Presidency will aim at a partial general approach in the Council on the substantial elements of the proposal including priorities for specific environmental areas. The LIFE program has made significant fingerprints on the European landscape and biodiversity. Through the programme funding has been raised to secure vulnerable species and fragile areas. The North Atlantic heath dunes are just one example.

#### **Priority substances in the aquatic environment**

The second is the proposal on Priority substances in the aquatic environment. We expect the Commission to adopt the proposal within very short time and we aim at a political agreement in June on this very important dossier that is high on the list of priorities for the Danish Presidency.

#### **Proposal on a regulation for dismantling of ships**

The third is a regulation on ship dismantling that is an implementation in the EU of the Hong Kong Convention that was adopted in 2009. We hope the Commission will present the proposal in due time for us to reach a political agreement in the council in June.

### **Council Conclusions**

Finally, I expect to reach Council Conclusions on two very important topics: the biodiversity COP 11 and the Mercury negotiations and SAICM.

#### **COP 11 – ABS Protocol**

During the Danish Presidency we will be preparing the EU negotiation mandate for COP11 in India, October 2012. I believe the discussions on resource mobilisation during the next six months before COP11 will be of great importance for how we succeed at the COP. In the light of the global economic crisis I believe that the discussions on innovative financial mechanisms are more important than ever. I am therefore co-hosting a meeting with the Commissioner for the EU Environmental Ministers in May to discuss resource mobilisation.

We all know that the EU is the most influential 'developed country' player in the CBD as well as the largest biodiversity donor. Therefore, it is very important that EU plays a crucial role in the negotiations on resource mobilisation during COP11. The Danish presidency - in cooperation with Member States and the Commission – will pave the way for an ambitious but realistic EU position with regard to resources and financial mechanisms for COP11.

### **Mercury negotiations and SAICM**

A main activity will be to facilitate the negotiations on a new mercury convention, with the fourth negotiation meeting taking place in Uruguay in June. Getting a strong mercury convention is important since mercury is transported through air and water and causes risks globally. Denmark will also facilitate the preparatory work within the EU so the role of the SAICM in achieving these goals can be kept strong. In order to do this, we intend to do Council Conclusions on the ICCM-3 and the INC-4 processes.

### **Conclusion**

Let me sum up:

It is our ambition to be an effective and professional Presidency that drives the negotiations as far as possible. We want to set the direction for EU environment policy in the years to come, contributing to transforming EU into a green economy and we want to cooperate and to be an open presidency. Open for discussions, good ideas and initiatives from a broad range of stakeholders. There are huge challenges ahead and a lot of work to be done to promote a green transformation of Europe. We need to use green technologies and sustainable innovation to boost the economy. If we can get more out of less, I believe we have found an important key to the green economy of the future. When taking on this great challenge, we have to work together in order to raise standards and ambitions, and to influence the global Agenda. I will do my best to bring the work forward. It is my hope that the European Parliament will accept my invitation to join forces.

Thank you.

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