



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: The Commission's winter package: Agricultural and forestry aspects, in particular biomass
- Information from the Austrian delegation, supported by the Polish delegation

Delegations will find in Annex an information note received from the Austrian delegation and supported by the Polish delegation on the above mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 12-13 December 2016.

AOB for Council Agriculture, 12 – 13 December 2016

Item submitted by the Austrian delegation, supported by the Polish delegation

Subject: The Commission's ,winter package‘: agricultural and forestry aspects, in particular biomass

On 30 November 2016, the European Commission presented the Winter Package as part of the implementation of the European Energy Union.

For the post-2020 period, this package foresees changes that seriously jeopardize the attainability of the European Union’s energy and climate objectives and the reduction of the dependence on fossil fuels.

Within the area of renewables, the text provides for further constraints in addition to the existing high standards. These provisions make it highly unlikely to ensure a corresponding growth for bioenergy and to let it prevail as an alternative while competing with fossil and nuclear energies.

To ensure the diversification of the technologies, proven systems, such as feed-in-tariffs or calls for tenders, must therefore continue to be maintained in a technology-specific manner. Expected restrictions on the preferential access and on the priority feed-in of renewable energies would seriously jeopardize the existing development path.

Agricultural and forest biomass constitutes a major portion of renewable energies and is produced and utilized in compliance with high environmental standards. Additional obstacles to the usage of biomass must be avoided in any case.

Furthermore, in the transport sector the Commission proposal provides for a drastic reduction in the use of conventional biofuels, i.e. biofuels based on agricultural biomass. It is precisely these biofuels that are produced in the EU in regionally useful cycles. They reduce the dependency on fossil fuels and, with their by-products, contribute to feed safety. In contrast, so-called advanced biofuels are not yet sufficiently competitive and cannot be produced in existing plants.

For the further expansion of renewable energies, positive framework conditions and incentives in the Winter Package are indispensable. We believe that further discussions will have to be placed in front in order to also take into account the concerns of agriculture and forestry in an appropriate way during the revision of the Winter Package. This is the only way to jointly meet the energy and climate objectives of the European Union and those of the Paris Climate Agreement.
