



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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DRAFT MINUTES

Subject: **3297th** meeting of the Council of the European Union (**ENVIRONMENT**),
held in Brussels on 3 March 2014

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¹ Deliberations on Union legislative acts (Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union), other deliberations open to the public and public debates (Article 8 of the Council's Rules of Procedure).

NON- LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES - PUBLIC DEBATES

(in accordance with Article 8(2) of the Council's Rules of Procedure [proposed by the Presidency])

2. Communication from the Commission on "A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030"

– Policy debate

5644/14 CLIMA 6 ENV 60 ENER 27 IND 24 COMPET 43 MI 69 ECOFIN 65
TRANS 31 AGRI 35

+ REV 1 (en)

+ REV 2 (pl)

6422/14 CLIMA 12 ENV 134 ENER 55 IND 54 COMPET 103 MI 159
ECOFIN 138 TRANS 56 AGRI 96

The Council held a policy debate on the above Commission Communication on the basis of two questions set out in doc. 6422/14. Following interventions by all delegations and the Commission, the President summarised the debate as follows:

The exchange of views on the Commission Communication on a 2030 climate and energy framework was a welcome and necessary one. Investors, businesses and citizens alike want clarity and predictability with regard to future climate and energy policies. The EU also needs to prepare for the international negotiations aiming at a new, global agreement on climate change. Ministers agreed with the aim of the future framework to achieve a balance between the three key components: environmental sustainability; competitiveness of the economy and protection of consumers; and security of energy supply, and that this requires an integrated approach and consistency between policies. These issues are inter-correlated with the need to keep energy prices affordable in order to guarantee competitiveness and maintain jobs in the EU. There seemed to be a shared view that a greenhouse gas reduction target is the centrepiece of the framework. Many ministers welcomed the approach of giving more flexibility for Member States to decide on the most cost-effective measures to achieve the overall target.

However, questions remained on how this flexibility would work in practice, in particular as regards renewables and the new governance framework, where more clarity is required. Different nuances were seen in the views on the level of ambition, the number of targets and on timing: some would prefer stronger or a larger number of targets while others consider the proposed level of ambition as already very high; while some would like to see swift agreement on the overall framework, others consider that more time is needed to reflect on its elements, not least in the light of developments in the international context. The Emissions Trading Scheme was generally thought to be a key instrument in reducing emissions. Questions remained however on its future functioning, as well as on the contribution of sectors outside the ETS. In addition to the allocation of efforts between different sectors, several ministers pointed out that the sharing of efforts between Member States will be a crucial issue in the discussions to come. The importance of taking into account the different circumstances of Member States was mentioned by many.

The President concluded that the Presidency would reflect further on the ministers' contributions and report to the President of the European Council on the essential elements of the debate, as well as on the debate foreseen at the TTE Council on 4 March, as input to the discussions at the European Council on 20-21 March 2014.

LEGISLATIVE DELIBERATIONS

(Public deliberation in accordance with Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union)

3. Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory [First reading]

Interinstitutional file: 2010/0208 (COD)

– Exchange of views

12371/10 ENV 499 AGRILEG 100 AGRI 271 MI 254 DENLEG 71
CODEC 714 ADD 1

6769/14 AGRI 127 AGRILEG 41 ENV 168 MI 192 DENLEG 42 CODEC 504

The Council had an exchange of views based on a questionnaire (doc. 6769/14).

The exchange of views confirmed that a broad majority of delegations and the Commission welcomes the re-examination of the Commission legislative proposal, presented in 2010, and the swift unblocking of the dossier, on the basis of the Presidency text (6528/14).

The French delegation indicated that they were not in favour of the proposed approach and would prefer, as indicated in their note (7106/14), a positive right for non-authorisation of the GMO cultivation on its territory, rather than a negative approach based on an opt-out.

The Belgian delegation also disagrees with the proposal and asks for more legal clarity.

The German delegation has a scrutiny reservation.

The Presidency informed that it stands ready to unblock the file during its term and that the technical examination of the dossier will start on 13 March 2014 at Working Party level.
