



Brussels, 28 April 2015

8319/15

**AG 14
FIN 313
ENV 244**

"I/A" ITEM NOTE

from: Working Party on General Affairs
to: Permanent Representatives Committee / Council
Subject: Special Report No 14/2014 "How do the EU institutions and bodies calculate, reduce and offset their greenhouse gas emissions?"
– Adoption of Council Conclusions

1. On 26 February 2015, the General Secretariat of the Council informed Delegations that the European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 14/2014 entitled "How do the EU institutions and bodies calculate, reduce and offset their greenhouse gas emissions" had been published¹.
2. Pursuant to the rules laid down in the Council conclusions on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors², the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2) at its meeting on 4 March 2015 instructed the General Affairs Working Party with the participation of the Environmental Working Party to examine the report in accordance with the rules laid down in the abovementioned conclusions.

¹ Doc. 6596/15.

² Doc. 7515/00 FIN 127 + COR 1.

3. The General Affairs Working Party examined the Special Report on 18 March 2015 in the presence of experts from the Environmental Working Party. An agreement on draft Council Conclusions was reached on 24 April 2015.
 4. The Permanent Representatives Committee is therefore invited to confirm the agreement reached at the Working Party and to recommend to the Council to adopt, as an "A" item at one of its forthcoming meetings, the draft Council Conclusions as set out in the Annex to this note.
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DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

on Special Report No 14/2014 from the European Court of Auditors "How do the EU institutions and bodies calculate, reduce and offset their greenhouse gas emissions?"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- (1) WELCOMES Special Report No 14/2014 from the European Court of Auditors and NOTES the Court's findings and recommendations with regard to greenhouse gas emissions;
- (2) RECALLS its efforts to improve the way the Union budget is managed;
- (3) IS AWARE of the growing importance of environmental issues, RECOGNISES that Public administrations at all levels can influence the magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions through sound environmental management and OBSERVES that no Union legislation on calculating the carbon footprints of public administrations exists and ENCOURAGES all EU institutions and bodies to start using adequate environmental management systems such as the Union's eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS);
- (4) RECALLS that green public procurement should be used by the EU institutions and bodies, wherever possible;
- (5) NOTES with satisfaction that the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) has enshrined the principles of sound environmental management in its day-to-day work and has been taking steps to improve the environmental performance of its activities;
- (6) NOTES with satisfaction that the GSC plans to establish its carbon footprint in 2015;

- (7) HOLDS THE VIEW that participation of the GSC in the Union's eco-management and audit scheme¹ (EMAS) would be key in order to provide the Council with tools for contributing to the protection of the environment and sustainable development, including green procurement, and WELCOMES the fact that the GSC is to launch an external verification under EMAS in 2015;
- (8) WELCOMES that the GSC is developing an EMAS compliant environmental management scheme which would establish the framework for a harmonised approach to calculating, reporting and reducing direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions of the GSC;
- (9) NOTES that a quantified overall reduction target for the year 2030 in line with the relevant EU targets should be part of a common policy for reducing the carbon footprint of all the EU institutions and bodies;
- (10) CONSIDERS that a common approach of the EU institutions and bodies to addressing the issue of voluntary offsetting of their direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions to compensate for residual greenhouse gas emissions would be welcome;
- (11) ENCOURAGES other EU institutions and bodies to take on similar actions for their direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions;
- (12) NOTES that the objectives of the environmental management programme developed by the GSC are in line with the Recommendations made by the Court in its report.
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¹ Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS III).