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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Follow-up to CoP 21 (Climate change)
– Policy debate
= The role of sequestration in the context of the Paris Agreement and EU climate policy up to 2030
= Information from the Polish delegation

With a view to the Council (Environment) meeting on 4 March 2016, delegations will find attached an information note from the Polish delegation on the above subject.

**The role of sequestration in the context of the Paris Agreement and EU climate policy
up to 2030
- a note from the Polish delegation -**

Forests play an important role not only in society, the economy and biodiversity protection, but also in climate policy, especially in the field of mitigation. Forests not only constitute an important stock of carbon, they also possess a large mitigation potential, which can be further enhanced through the implementation of additional activities in forestry. It would be unfair for countries which manage their forests in an exemplary way not to take into account accordingly their additional, pro-environmental measures in future climate policy, both at the global and at the EU level. CO₂ sequestration by forests should be treated at least the same as other reduction measures, if not in a prioritized way. This is consistent with biodiversity and soil protection, as well as with food security.

The appropriate recognition of efforts undertaken in the LULUCF sector can deliver appropriate incentives for larger investments in this sector. The mitigation potential of forests should be increased through the implementation of additional activities in forestry. Strengthening incentives for increasing the mitigation potential of forests will ensure compatibility with the principle of the cost-effectiveness of policies and measures to deal with climate change. This is a principle included in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which forms a basis for promoting mitigation activities in the most cost-optimal manner. Sequestration by the LULUCF sector is a much more cost-effective method than implementing activities related to CCS technology. In the case of Poland, another cost-effective mitigation method includes geothermal energy.

The Paris Agreement invokes the spirit of the Convention and encourages parties to undertake appropriate activities in order to increase the GHG sequestration potential of forests and allow for the accounting of removals in the future. The EU, in its INDC, unequivocally declared that the implementation of the 40% reduction goal will be achieved with the participation of the LULUCF sector. Specific actions in this regard still remain an open question.

In accordance with the points made above, benefits arising from increased sequestration by forests should be appropriately reflected in EU climate policy after the year 2020. Creating the possibility of using removal units within the EU ETS framework would create an incentive for other Member States to manage their forests sustainably and to implement additional activities in forestry. The inclusion of removal units in the EU ETS would strengthen sustainable forest management in the EU.

Poland expresses the strong hope that suggestions concerning the incorporation of the LULUCF sector into EU climate policy up to 2030, which will be presented soon by Poland in the EU forum, will be met with acceptance of other Member States. The proposals will concern, above all, solutions which can be implemented within the whole of the EU, which introduce unified, transparent and equal rules for all Member States and which will be based on existing solutions used within the EU ETS.
