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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	European Court of Auditor's Special Report No 05/2018 "Renewable energy for sustainable rural development: significant potential synergies, but mostly unrealised" - <i>Discussion of Council conclusions</i>

Following the tasking by the Permanent Representatives Committee¹, at its meeting of 27 April 2018 the Energy Working Party discussed the European Court of Auditors' Special Report 05/2018² entitled "Renewable energy for sustainable rural development: significant potential synergies, but mostly unrealised" as well as draft Council conclusions on the European Court of Auditors' Special Report.

The Presidency revised the draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex which will be examined by the Energy Working Party at the meeting on 28 May 2018. Changes to the previous draft Council conclusions are marked as **bold underlined**.

After the agreement of delegations on the text of the draft Council conclusions, in accordance with the Council conclusions of 8 May 2000 on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors³, the Permanent Representatives Committee will be invited to suggest to the Council to adopt, under the "A" items of a forthcoming session, the Council conclusions.

¹ 605/18.

² https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR18_05/SR_Renewable_Energy_EN.pdf

³ 7515/00 + COR 1.

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Council conclusions on European Court of Auditors' Special Report 05/2018 entitled "Renewable energy for sustainable rural development: significant potential synergies, but mostly unrealised"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. THANKS the European Court of Auditors for the Special Report 05/2018 entitled "Renewable energy for sustainable rural development: significant potential synergies, but mostly unrealised".
2. UNDERLINES the focus of the Special Report on links between energy policy with rural development funding programmes such as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).
3. REITERATES in this context, the European Council conclusions of October 2014 where the European Council underlined the continued importance of increasing the share of renewable energy in the EU towards 2030.
4. **UNDERLINES the importance of renewable energy and energy efficiency to fulfil the Paris Agreement.**
5. TAKES good note of the conclusions and recommendations in the Special Report, **in particular for improving the sustainability framework with regard to biomass production and use.**

In particular:

6. TAKES note of the Court's recommendations to the Commission to specify the purpose and role of EAFRD support for investments in renewable energy,
7. TAKES note of the Court's recommendations to the Commission and the Member States to improve the availability of information on EAFRD related renewable energy support, and
8. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to consider taking the needs of rural areas into account when designing the support for renewable energy.
