



CRPM CPMR

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PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 18 December 2008

Ref: CRPMCOM080054

MIXED FEELING ABOUT THE ENERGY/CLIMATE CHANGE PACKAGE

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) considers that the Energy/Climate change package is a step in the right direction, even though it is aware of its imperfections and regrets that many of its key instruments have been weakened significantly.

A particular source of satisfaction for the peripheral maritime regions lies with the Renewable Energy directive, which, thanks to the European Parliament, asserts much more forcefully the role of the regional and local authorities than was the case in the initial proposals.

"Since these authorities play a key role in planning, economic development, housing, transport or education, one cannot see how the Directive could have much chance of success without their active support and implication" pointed out **Xavier Gizard**, the CPMR Secretary General.

The CPMR hopes that, by laying mandatory targets in terms of the share of renewable energy, the Directive has set a framework which will give confidence to investors to exploit the vast potential of coastal and island areas, and thus foster their economic development. To that effect, a number of measures should prove instrumental - the simplification of administrative procedures, the reiterated prohibition of discriminatory practices in transmission charging for renewable electricity produced in peripheral and island areas, and the decision to accelerate "renewable energy projects of European interest" under the Trans-European Network for Energy - . So should the provision aiming to achieve coherence between environmental legislation and the development of renewable energy, since this issue (the well-known "birds against windmills" conflict) has been severely hampering the development of renewables in some of its member regions.

Therefore, the CPMR considers that, on some points, the legislation manages successfully to address simultaneously two issues of key concern to the maritime regions: combating climate change, and strengthening Europe's territorial cohesion.

However, the CPMR very much regrets that decisive steps were not taken to ensure that adequate financial means would be made available to meet the package's objectives.

"If Europe is serious about its will to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to avoid deforestation, or to develop renewable energies and energy efficiency, then one may wonder why the whole of the proceeds of allowance auctioning has not been allocated to these purposes, as the European Parliament proposed, but only half of it, and only on a good will basis" queried CPMR Energy Coordinator, **Jean-Didier Hache**, pointing out that the cost of such measures will be tremendous, and a fair share of them might have to be met by the local and regional authorities.

The CPMR is also concerned about the way heavy industries located in Europe's richest areas were quick to obtain derogations in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), although they are the main polluters; whereas little attention was paid to the impact of this mechanism on air transport, which is of key importance for peripheral regions.

"The Energy/Climate change package could be an exceptionally efficient tool to foster Europe's territorial cohesion, Jean-Didier Hache added, "but paradoxically some of its policies, if unchecked, could end up worsening the situation." CPMR intends to monitor closely the way the package will be implemented, and especially the way it will affect Europe's maritime peripheries.



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