



Adopted resolution

EU Heads of State and Government undermine efforts to combat climate change

The Conclusions of the European Council which was held in Brussels on 8-9 March 2007 are not enough to save the climate. The EU Heads of State and Governments acknowledge that climate change is a crucial challenge for our society but in practice we risk that they pay this no more than lip service. Both the 2020 unilateral commitment to reduce our emissions in the EU-27 and the package of weak measures in response fail to offer a credible solution to this threat that humanity is facing. There is a huge gap between the aim of the EU to take a leading role in climate protection issues and the measures it proposes. Other energy related problems, such as weaker international security and increasing instability the scarcity of resources notably oil, security of supply, transport emissions, energy efficiency, renewables in all its aspects, the concentration of the energy market in a small number of big oligopolies or the risks of nuclear power, are inadequately tackled or even ignored by our governments. We however welcome that renewables are upgraded to become the main supply option to tackle the actual energy and climate crisis and that the attempts of the nuclear lobby spearheaded by the French government were clearly defeated.

Renewable Energies aside the conclusions are also a failure of the German presidency. Instead of being a convincing frontrunner and pushing the EU towards a leading role in climate protection, the German government was satisfied with reaching an agreement on weak targets and measures. That has also allowed member states to claim re-nationalisation of renewable policies. The Greens therefore challenge the German Government to use the next three months of its presidency - at both the EU and the G8 levels - to propose concrete EU climate and sustainable energy policies and measures to make up for this inauspicious start as well as to break a deal with its G7 partners committing themselves to a 30% greenhouse gases reduction target by 2020, compared to the 1990 levels.

Furthermore, the Greens propose the creation under the German Presidency of a European pact for climate and energy security. This instrument will provide an enhanced and more stringent framework to bring the EU and its Member States back on track to meet Kyoto targets, to create the necessary platform for EU leadership in the post-2012 negotiations and to combine these policies with the security of supply dimension.

The Greens

1. ask the EU to adopt a "European Pact for Climate and Energy Security" at the latest by the end of the German Presidency, 30 June 2007;
2. Urge the EU Member States to agree on as part of this Pact:
 - a. to swiftly implement measures limiting the average global temperature increase 2°C above pre-industrialisation levels and to significantly accelerate the international negotiations on the post-2012 period so that an agreement -in line with the 2°C objective- can be reached by the end of 2008; to agree in particular on a 30% reduction of GHG emissions in industrialised countries by 2020 compared to the Kyoto baselines;

b. to adopt, for the EU, domestic reductions targets for greenhouse gases emissions of at least 30% by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050 compared to its 1990 level, which are consistent with the 2°C limit; to adopt and implement a penalties mechanism (e.g. financial sanctions for not meeting the targets or reduced emissions allocations) so that Member States will have an additional incentive to stick to their commitments;

c. to give absolute priority to energy savings because they make the most decisive contribution towards climate protection and sustainability; to adopt a binding target of and achieve at least 20% - 25% of primary energy savings by 2020) in order to make the EU the most energy efficient economy by then; to submit, by June 2007, national 2020 binding targets for energy efficiency as part of ambitious national energy efficiency action plans and to agree to implement these measures immediately; to ask the Commission to complement these plans with additional concrete and binding measures so that the EU can reach its full saving potential, which is at least twice higher than the current 1-2% yearly efficiency improvement as estimated by the Commission; to ban under the existing EuP (eco-design directive) incandescent light bulbs by 2010 and to forbid the selling of other domestic electric appliances, office equipments and industrial processes which are energy inefficient and to promote pro-actively through public procurement guidelines, labelling and reduced VAT ;

d. to address, in its energy and climate strategy, the transport sector, which is 96% dependent on oil and responsible for 30% of EU emissions; to set up an EU absolute 30% greenhouse gases emission target from the transport sector by 2020 in line with the EU Kyoto targets; to fix an annual 1% shift in the modal split from modes with high climate gas levels, i.e. cars, haulage vehicles and aircraft to more climate-friendly means of transport such as rail and sustainable waterborne modes; to implement measures to avoid transport and increase the energy efficiency of the transports modes, in particular in imposing a binding 120g CO₂/km limit for the EU fleet average on new cars by 2012, which is exactly what the car industry promised in 1998 - and failed to achieve- by voluntary self-regulation ; calls for a further increase of efficiency of at least 10 gCO₂/km every two years thereafter; notices that the introduction of a speed limit on German highways would have an enormous positive impact on the efficiency of cars through downsizing of the engines which are today optimised worldwide for the few hundred kilometres of German highways; call for early review of Eurovignette, with a view to tougher targets; to internalise the social and environmental costs into the fuel price and to eliminate the unfair subsidies and tax-exemptions in particular for the aviation sector and to impose a kerosene tax so that a level playing field is achieved between the transport modes;

e. to set binding sectoral targets for renewables (electricity, heating and cooling, transport) in order to achieve a quota of at least 35% of renewables in primary energy by 2020 and a road map at Council and Commission level for reaching a target for renewables of at least 50% by 2040; asks the Commission to further develop the directive on renewable electricity and to adopt the promised directive on heating and cooling; considers that while biofuels may have a role to play in reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, they must not be produced at the expense of food production or lead to aggravating climate change, global deforestation, biodiversity losses or more human rights violations;

f. to create a real level playing field in the energy sector, which enables new actors to enter the market and facilitates the introduction of new technologies and a decentralised energy production; to assure in each Member State full ownership unbundling of energy production and transmission of electricity and gas, enhance power for national regulators and national and EU cartel authorities to limit the market power of the big energy oligopolies and to prevent manipulation of prices at the power exchanges and establish an EU regulator which will be exclusively focussed on solving cross border problems;

g. to toughen the EU emission trading system (ETS) with a restrictive enforcement of current national allocation plans for the time 2008-2012. Coal fired plants must not be privileged by getting twice the amount of certificates than gas fired plants. To toughen the ETS the next trading period should be for the time 2013-2020. In order to achieve 20 % reduction the European Commission needs to set the CAP on a EU-level From 2013 on full auctioning and more ambitious targets are the key-stones for a credible ETS; to

promote minimum efficiency standards for smaller power plants not participating in the ETS; to promote actively combined heat/cooling and power technology through a revision of the existing CHP directive; to only continue with public money the research on the variety of open questions regarding the technology of sequestration and the long-term storage of CO₂ (CCS) in order to get all the guarantees that this technology is safe, in particular in the long run, from an environmental and climate point of; to refrain from investing public money in demonstration and commercial CCS projects because this would distort the internal market and to leave this to the big energy utilities which have earned billions of EURO of windfall profits through free allocation of CO₂ allowances over the last years; to agree on a regulation for ambitious standards on safety, environmental and climate impacts and strict liability for demonstration and commercial CCS.

h. to recognise that nuclear energy cannot solve the global climate problem, has serious drawbacks (e.g. major accidents, waste treatment, proliferation and terrorisms risks, health and environmental impacts) and has very little support amongst EU citizens; to take legislative measures so as to make this sector internalise all its external costs taking into account in particular all liabilities of power production; to phase out nuclear plants; to stop R&D in developing white elephant technologies such as Iter or Generation IV; to convene an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to end the privileges for the nuclear energy through the Euratom Treaty.

The Greens are convinced that Europe will only be able to fulfil its promise of leadership on climate policy if it sets for itself tougher 2020 domestic greenhouse gases targets of at least 30% reduction compared to the 1990 levels. Europe has to focus its efforts on improving energy efficiency and savings and promoting renewables instead of relying on nuclear energy and fossil fuels.