

ENVI-News

Newsletter from the European Parliament Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee

Meeting in Brussels

Tuesday, 21 June 2011, 9.00 – 12.30 and 15.00 – 18.30

The Committee meeting will be web-streamed and can be watched live on the EP web site at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/public/default_en.htm or on Europarl TV: www.europarltv.europa.eu

Past meetings can be watched or extracts downloaded via the EP Live multimedia library: http://europarl.europa.eu/eplive/archive/default_en.htm

OPINIONS

➤ **AN EFFECTIVE RAW MATERIALS STRATEGY FOR EUROPE**

Adoption of draft opinion 2011/2056(INI)

The ENVI Committee will vote on a draft opinion to ITRE on an effective raw materials strategy (Judith Merkies, S&D, Netherlands).

This is the ENVI opinion to the ITRE-led report on the Commission Communication on Tackling the Challenges in Commodity Markets and in Raw Materials.

The draft opinion welcomes the Commission Communication and its emphasis on raw and recovered raw materials from mineral and biotic resources. It also covers issues including the development of a raw materials hierarchy, a life-cycle approach to raw materials, producer responsibility, full implementation of the Waste Framework Directive, proposals for a landfill ban on recyclable raw materials and examination of the effects of a tax on mineral resources.

There are 98 amendments, which focus on areas including sectoral material reduction targets, a raw materials hierarchy, and examination of the effects of a tax on non-energy raw materials and mineral resources.

Vote in ENVI: 21 June 2011

Vote in ITRE: 30 June 2011

Vote in Plenary: September 2011

ORAL QUESTIONS

➤ **ORAL QUESTION ON THE EU GLOBAL RESPONSE TO HIV/AIDS**

Exchange of views with Commission representatives

In 2009, the European Commission adopted its Communication aimed at "Combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries, 2009-2013". Today, there is still no decrease in number of new infections in the EU and neighbouring countries. Estimates from the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC) indicate on average that 30% of HIV-positive individuals are not diagnosed, and have 3.5 times higher risk of transmitting HIV than do those who are diagnosed. Half of all HIV-positive people still present late for care and progress to late stages of infection before they are diagnosed and can start treatment.

In this context, questions were asked to the Commission: The Commission is invited to outline progress made to date, to indicate if it intends to update the EU Strategy to combat HIV/AIDS, in particular regarding prevention, access to diagnose and testing, and to indicate how it intends to coordinate EU internal action and the broader EU global response to HIV/AIDS.

➤ **ORAL QUESTION ON DIOXIN IN FISH PRODUCTS IN FINLAND AND SWEDEN**

Exchange of views with Commission representatives

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 lays down maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuff, including for dioxin. A derogation for Sweden and Finland allows fish species, originating from the Baltic region, to be put on the internal market with higher levels of dioxins than those set out in the Regulation. Sweden and Finland now want to prolong this derogation.

Sweden and Finland are required to inform consumers of the dietary recommendations concerning restrictions on consumption of fish from the Baltic region. However, there is evidence that this does not always happen: a report by the Swedish responsible Food Safety Authority (Livsmedelsverket) says that many women and children consume more than the recommended intake. Only 17% of the public seem to be aware that women of childbearing age and children should follow the dietary recommendations. According to the Livsmedelsverket, thousands of children and young women are at risk of consuming above the tolerable intake levels. This is despite the fact that the authorities have been advising about the dietary recommendation for many years. Livsmedelsverket therefore recommended the derogation to be abolished.

Ms Westlund asks if the Commission is aware of this recommendation to abolish the derogation.

EXCHANGES OF VIEWS

➤ **REPORT BACK OF THE ENVI DELEGATION TO POLAND**

Exchange of views

Poland will take over from the Hungary the 6-month EU Presidency on 1st July 2011. The ENVI Committee sent a delegation of its Members to Poland on 18-20 May in order to meet the representatives of the Polish government, Sejm, Senate, as well as NGOs and journalists and see how the country is being prepared for the EU Presidency, what priorities have been chosen and what areas of cooperation will be the most important. The delegation very

much appreciated the open and informative character of the different visits and the hospitality from the Polish Government, Sejm and Senate. The following key findings can be identified:

- Poland is well prepared to take over the EU Presidency in the area of environment, public health and food safety. The delegation noticed a strong commitment and engagement of the country to succeed,
- Several topics will feature the 6-month Polish Presidency in relation to the ENVI Committee. Those would include the revision of the legislation on biocides, as well as the revision of waste electrical and electronic equipment directive. The reports on a resource-efficient Europe and on a roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 and the preparations for United Nations Climate Conference in Durban (COP17) and the Rio+20 summit in Rio de Janeiro will also be of importance.
- Poland will also preside EU at the time when other topics of major importance are going to be discussed, in particular future financing of the EU and the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy.

➤ **IMPLEMENTATION OF EU ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION IN MEMBER STATES**

Exchange of views with Commission representatives

ENVI traditionally holds implementation sessions to address topical implementation problems in the field of the environment. They are an occasion to raise special issues with the Commission concerning the application of EU legislation in one or more Member States or to point out problems with the implementation of specific directives or regulations/ in specific fields of environmental legislation across the EU.

Questions on the following issues have been tabled:

1. REACH
2. Biocides - data sharing on animal testing
3. Waste legislation

4. Gypsum waste
5. Water Framework Directive
6. Improving implementation of environmental legislation

HEARING

➤ **HEARING ON IMPROVING THE ECOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE BALTIC SEA THROUGH MORE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES**

The aim of this hearing is to have an exchange of views between the Commission, the incoming Polish Presidency, MEPs and experts, on the environmental aspects on the Baltic Sea Strategy. The general aim of this strategy is to promote a more balanced development of this macro-region. The 4 cornerstones of this strategy are to make the region: environmentally sustainable (by reducing pollution in the sea), prosperous (by promoting innovation in SME's), accessible and attractive (by better transport links) and safe and secure (by a better accident response) .

The hearing will be divided into 3 sessions:

1. A general policy part (Commission and Council)
2. A part dedicated to pollution in general
3. A part dedicated to eutrophication from agriculture, a special problem in the Baltic waters.

RECENTLY ADOPTED IN ENVI COMMITTEE

At its meeting of 14-15 June 2011 the ENVI Committee adopted:

- a report (NEWTON-DUNN) on amendment of Regulation (EC) No 648/2004 as regards the use of phosphates and other

phosphorous compounds in household laundry detergents;

- an opinion (LEPAGE) to ITRE on the Commission Communication entitled "Facing the challenge of the safety of offshore oil and gas activities";
- a motion for a resolution further to a question for oral answer on a comprehensive approach for the non-CO2 climate-relevant anthropogenic emissions.

NEWS FROM THE AGENCIES

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EEA)

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/pressroom>

EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY (ECHA)

http://echa.europa.eu/news/press_en.asp

EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY (EMA)

http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/landing/news_and_events.jsp&murl=menus/news_and_events/news_and_events.jsp&mid=

EUROPEAN CENTRE OF DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL (ECDC)

<http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/Pages/News.aspx>

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY (EFSA)

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/news.htm>

EUROPEAN FOOD AND VETERINARY OFFICE

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

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| Date of next meeting (Brussels): |
| 13-14 July 2011 |