CLIMATE CHANGE ON MEUSAC'S AGENDA

The Core Group of the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) met again on 24 April.

On the agenda was the European Commission's policy paper on how Europe can improve its resilience to climate change. The paper establishes a framework for action, focusing on:

- building a stronger knowledge base on the risks and impacts of climate change;
- taking account of climate change impact in key EU policies, in particular with regard to agriculture, fisheries, water resources, biodiversity protection, transport nad energy;
- combining different policy measures;
- supporting wider international efforts on adaptation;
- working in partnership with national, regional and local authorities.

The White Paper was presented to Core Group members by MEPA official, Miraine Rizzo who explained the impact of climate change on Malta, focusing on an increase in flooding, coastal zones erosion and the deterioration in fresh water quality, as well as a negative impact on tourism due to the possibility of a rise in temperatures. Ms Rizzo said that Malta is vulnerable to climate change and thus, more data and information are required as well as a national strategy on adaptation to climate change.

Discussion among members focused on, amongst other matters:

- the need for more coordination for immediate actions for the adaptation to climate change, in particular with regard to the better usage of water and the re-use of treated water;
- higher sea water levels posing a threat to tourism; the negative impact of bad weather on the agriculture sector; higher temperatures threatening the biodiversity of marine ecosystems and consequently the fishing industry;
- whether studies are being conducted by the authorities concerned with regard to the monitoring of air quality and emissions;
- the need for small and medium sized enterprises to be better prepared for the transition to meet the goals of climate change adaptation;
- the collection of rain water;
- the sustainability of water use;
- the need for regulations from the concerned authorities for the housing sector.

PN appoints new member & substitute

The Nationalist Party has replaced its representatives on the Core Group having nominated two members of parliament, Dr. Francis Zammit Dimech and Frederick Azzopardi as member and substitute member respectively. It was also decided that Ms Grace Attard and Ms Anna Borg would share the two-year term as civil society representative on the Core Group, as they both received an equal number of votes when the elections were held.

Present for the meeting of the Core Group were the following members: Parliamentary Secretary Dr. Chris Said (Chairperson), Dr. Vanni Xuereb (Head), Mr. Julian Micallef (Secretary), Cecilia Attard Pirotta (Permanent Secretary, MFA), Graziella Pullicino (Head. EU Secretariat), Dr. Gabriella Pace (Head of Infromation – MEUSAC), Ms Helen D' Amato, Dr. Josette Grech, Sur Sonny Portelli (MCESD), Mr. Carmel Cacopardo (Alternattiva Demokratika), Arthur Rossi (CMTU), Joe Grech (GBC), Paul Abela (GRTU), Dr. Romina Bartolo (UĦM), Eng. Ray Muscat and Kevin Borg (MCCEI), Parliamentary Member Frederick Azzopardi (PN), Dr. Luciano Busuttil (PL), Benjamin Rizzo (civil society representative), as well as substitute members who attended as observers. Members of staff of MEUSAC were also in attendance.

The next meeting of the Core Group will be held on Friday, 29th May, 2009 Commissioner Joe Borg will also be participating.

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IT-TIBDIL FIL-KLIMA FUQ L-AĠENDA TAL-MEUSAC

Il-*Core Group* tal-MEUSAC reġa' ltaqa' fl-24 ta' April.

Il-*Core Group* iddiskuta l-*White Paper* dwar l-adattament għat-tibdil fil-klima[1], li permezz tagħha l-Kummissjoni Ewropea qed tistabbilixxi qafas għall-azzjoni billi tiffoka fuq:

- aċċess aħjar għal firxa aktar wiesgħa ta' *data* dwar l-impatt tal-klima;
- l-impatt tat-tibdil fil-klima fl-oqsma ewlenin tal-UE fosthom l-agrikoltura, is-sajd, l-ilma, il-ħarsien tal-bijodiversità, it-trasport u l-enerġija;
- azzjoni komuni bejn miżuri politiċi differenti għall-aqwa riżultati;
- appoġġ lejn sforzi internazzjonali aktar wiesgħa għall-adattament tat-tibdil fil-klima;
- ħidma fi sħubija mal-awtoritajiet nazzjonali, reġjonali u lokali.

Saret preżentazzjoni mis-Sinjorina Miraine Rizzo, uffiċjal tal-MEPA li tkellmet dwar l-impatt li t-tibdil fil-klima jista' jkollu fuq Malta. Fost dawn issemma' ċans ikbar ta' għargħar, l-erożjoni taż-żoni kostali, u d-deterjorazzjoni tal-kwalità tal-ilma ħelu. Hija qalet li minħabba t-tibdil fil-klima ċertu setturi jistgħu bħat-turiżmu jistgħu jkunu affettwati ħażin minħabba temperaturi ogħla. Malta hija vulnerabbli għat-tibdil fil-klima u għalhekk hemm bżonn ta' strateġija nazzjonali dwar l-adattament tat-tibdil fil-klima kif ukoll il-ġbir ta' iktar informazzjoni għall-għarfien aħjar dwar ir-riskji u l-impatti tat-tibdil fil-klima.

Il-Membri tal-*Core Group* qajmu diversi punti fost dawn:

- il-bżonn ta' iktar kordinazzjoni għal azzjoni immedjata għall-adattament tat-tibdil fil-klima, fost dawn l-użu aħjar tal-ilma u li jerġa' jintuża l-ilma li jirriżulta mill-purifikazzjoni tad-drenaġġ;
- livelli ogħla tal-ilma tal-baħar huma ta' theddida għat-turiżmu; iktar maltemp jista' jaffettwa b'mod negattiv il-biedja; waqt li temperaturi ogħla jeddu l-bijodiversita` tal-baħar u għalhekk huwa ta' theddida għas-sajd;
- jekk hux qed isir studju mill-awtorijiet konċernati dwar l-emissjonijiet f'pajjiżna u dwar il-kwalità tal-arja;
- il-bżonn li l-intrapriżi żgħar u ta' daqs medju jkunu ppreparati aħjar fit-tranżizzjoni biex jintlaħqu l-miri għall-adattament tat-tibdil fil-klima;
- ilqugħ għall-ilma tax-xita;
- is-sostenibbilità fl-użu tal-ilma;
- il-ħtieġa li jkun hemm regoli mill-awtoritajiet konċernati għas-settur tal-bini.

Sar tibdil fir-rappreżentanti tal-Partit Nazzjonalista fuq il-*Core Group*, fejn ġew innominati l-Onor. Francis Zammit Dimech (Membru) u l-Onor. Frederick Azzopardi (Membru Sostitut). Ġie deċiż ukoll li bħala rappreżentanti tas-soċjetà ċivili fil-*Core Group*, is-sinjuri Grace Attard u Anna Borg jaqsmu t-terminu ta' sentejn, għal sena kull wieħed peress li kienu ġabu l-istess ammont ta' voti.

Preżenti għal-laqgħa tal-*Core Group* kien hemm: is-Segretarju Parlamentari Dott. Chris Said (Chairperson), Dott. Vanni Xuereb (Kap tal-MEUSAC), is-Sur Julian Micallef (Segretarju), Cecilia Attard Pirotta (Segretarju Permanenti, MFA), Graziella Pullicino (Kap, Segretarjat UE), Dott. Gabriella Pace (Kap tal-Informazzjoni, MEUSAC), is-Sinjura Helen D' Amato, Dott. Josette Grech, is-Sur Sonny Portelli (MCESD), is-Sur Carmel Cacopardo (Alternattiva Demokratika), is-Sur Arthur Rossi (CMTU), is-Sur Joe Grech (GBC), is-Sur Paul Abela (GRTU), Dott. Romina Bartolo (UĦM), l-Ing. Ray Muscat u s-Sur Kevin Borg (MCCEI), il-Membru Parlamentari Frederick Azzopardi (PN), il-Membru Parlamentari Dott. Luciano Busuttil (PL), is-Sur Benjamin Rizzo (rappreżentant tas-soċjetà ċivili), kif ukoll sostituti u membri tal-istaff tal-MEUSAC.

Il-laqgħa li jmiss tal-*Core Group* se ssir nhar il-Ġimgħa 29 ta' Mejju, 2009 u fiha ħa jieħu sehem il-Kummissarju Joe Borg.

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[1] White Paper L-adattament għat-tibdil fil-klima: Lejn Qafas Ewropew għall-azzjoni [COM(2009) 147]