



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

ENVIRONMENT

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
16.04.10

Contents



- **Reminder: Environment Sectoral Committee to meet again in April.....Pg.2**
- **COM (2010) 132 - Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European environmental economic Accounts.....Pg.2**
- **Commission launches €35 million call for projects that turn environmental challenges into business opportunities.....Pg.3**
- **Europeans not well informed about biodiversity loss.....Pg.4**



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

Environment Sectoral Committee to meet again in April

The Environment Sectoral Committee is meeting once again on the 21st of April to discuss the “EUROPE 2020” Strategy. The meeting will be a joint sectoral committee meeting with the TTE SC, the Agriculture and Fisheries SC, and the General Affairs SC. Mr. Martin Spiteri and other officials from the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment will be giving out a presentation on the topic. Please send an e mail on frederick.abdilla@gov.mt to book a place

The communication can be found on:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>

COM (2010) 132 - Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European environmental economic accounts

Following the Amsterdam Treaty, environmental and sustainability policy moved up the political agenda, focusing on the integration of environmental and economic policy making and on integrating environmental concerns into other policy areas. At EU level, key policy initiatives important for environmental accounts include the 6th Environmental Action Programme, the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and various sectoral policy initiatives related to the Cardiff process. Key areas include climate change, sustainable transport, nature and biodiversity, health and the environment, natural resource use and waste management and the international dimension of sustainable development. The structural indicators, designed to monitor progress towards the Lisbon objectives, have been extended by adding environmental indicators.

In its June 2006 conclusions, the European Council called on the European Union and its Member States to extend the national accounts to key aspects of Sustainable Development. The national accounts have therefore to be complemented with integrated environmental economic accounting that provides data that are fully consistent.

The proposal is expected to ensure the means to reach these three objectives:



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

- • To implement the ideas laid down in the environmental accounts part of the new chapter on satellite accounts in the forthcoming revised ESA.
- • To give priority to regular production of a core set of accounts based on the revised European Strategy for Environmental Accounting, as adopted by the Statistical Programme Committee in November 2008.
- • To ensure that National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) maintain and potentially expand their work on environmental accounting, with the main objective of providing harmonised and timely data of reasonable quality.

The full proposal can be found here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0132:FIN:EN:PDF>

Commission launches €35 million call for projects that turn environmental challenges into business opportunities

On the 13th of April, the European Commission launched a €35 million call for eco-innovation projects to be funded under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme. Applications are particularly welcome from small businesses with green products or services that need backing to penetrate markets. The call runs until 9 September 2010. Some 50 projects could end up being chosen for funding.

The call covers four main areas:

- Material recycling
- Sustainable building products
- Food and drink sector
- Green business

What is the CIP- Eco-Innovation?

With a total budget of around €200 million over the period 2008-2013, CIP Eco-innovation supports the first application and further market uptake of sustainable solutions that make better use of Europe's natural resources. CIP Eco-innovation is a green strand of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and a dynamic contributor to the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP).

Up to 50% of project costs covered

The call is addressed particularly to SMEs that have developed a green product, process or service that is technically proven but is still struggling to find its place in the market. The call offers direct co-financing with grants that cover up to 50% of the total project cost. The €35

Tel. 2200 3300 Fax 2122 7580 Email: consult.meusac@gov.mt



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

million funds available for the 2010 call are expected to bring to life between 45 and 50 new projects.

The projects are selected on the basis of their innovative approach, their market replication potential and their contribution to European environmental policies, especially in terms of resource efficiency.

All relevant call documentation can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/application_en.htm

Also make sure you visit <http://www.cipmalta.com/home.aspx> which is the Malta National Contact Point of the Programme

Eurobarometer: Europeans not well informed about biodiversity loss. European Commission launches campaign to raise awareness

The European Commission has published a Eurobarometer survey which shows that many Europeans do not understand what is meant by biodiversity and do not feel well informed about biodiversity loss. The Commission has at the same time launched a campaign aimed at informing the public about the loss of biodiversity in the EU.



New research into biodiversity awareness

The new "Attitudes towards biodiversity" survey reveals that only 38% of Europeans know the meaning of the term, although another 28% have heard of it but do not know its meaning. A majority feel that biodiversity loss is a serious issue, although they do not think they will be personally affected by the decline, with only 17% of respondents agreeing that they are already touched by it. When asked about the most

important threats to biodiversity, 27% prioritised pollution, with 26% blaming man-made disasters. The main reason cited by citizens for their lack of actions to stop biodiversity loss was low awareness of what can be done

The primary concern of the campaign is to make the biodiversity problem/issue more familiar, ensure that citizens understand the potential consequences of this loss, and that they can do something to stop the decline.



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

The EU-wide campaign, which coincides with the UN's designation of 2010 as the Year of Biodiversity, aims to raise awareness about the problem through a website, a video clip, PR actions, street art and media, including social media. The main thrust of the campaign will be to show citizens the real implications these losses will have in their daily lives, with a focus on actions citizens can take to prevent such losses. The campaign revolves around a slogan: 'Biodiversity – we are all in this together'. It will have an educational dimension that reveals the benefits of biodiversity and stresses in particular the idea of ecosystem services and the dangers of their disappearance. The aim will be to make citizens more aware of the role they can play in slowing and preventing this loss. The theme that will return repeatedly is the idea of connectivity and interdependence.

Background: what is the problem with biodiversity?

Global biodiversity is under severe threat, with species being lost at 100 to 1000 times the normal rate. More than one third of species assessed are threatened with extinction and an estimated 60% of the Earth's ecosystem services have been degraded in the last 50 years. Human activities are causing this loss, through land-use change, over-exploitation, unsustainable practices, pollution and the introduction of invasive species, which lead to habitat and species destruction, fragmentation and degradation. Climate change is also a factor.

EU Environment ministers discussed a new biodiversity target in mid-March, and agreed to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems services and restore them as far as possible by 2020. They also set out a long term vision for 2050, by which time biodiversity should be protected, valued and appropriately restored, and called for biodiversity objectives to be integrated more clearly in a variety of EU policies and strategies. This Communication was also discussed during the last MEUSAC Environment Sectoral Committee.

More information:

Campaign website:

www.weareallinthistgether.eu

Latest biodiversity Eurobarometer:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

Council conclusions on biodiversity:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st07/st07536.en10.pdf>

EU nature policy:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm