



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

ENVIRONMENT



27.02.09

NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS

COM (2009) 82 - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions -

A Community approach on the prevention of natural and man-made disasters

This Communication sets out an overall European approach to the prevention of disasters. The objective of this Communication is to identify measures which could be included in a Community strategy for the prevention of natural and man-made disasters, building upon and linking existing measures. In this regard, the Commission suggests the creation of an inventory of information on disasters. This will provide the basis for assessing how to better share information within the EU. The Commission will also carry out a study on current practices of hazard and risk mapping in Member States. These should focus on disasters with potential cross-border impacts (e.g. floods or accidental release of chemicals and radio-nuclear agents), exceptional events (major storms), large-scale disasters (earthquakes), and disasters for which the cost of recovery measures appears to be disproportionate when compared to that of preventive measures. The possibility of developing a specific initiative on forest fires will also be explored.

The communication also explores the possibility of making Community funding targeted at disaster prevention more efficient.



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Environment Ministers to discuss emissions

Environment ministers will on Monday 2nd March meet to discuss the EU's position ahead of international climate negotiations for the period after 2012. This follows proposals presented on 28 January.

In previous discussions with international partners a 30% target was agreed to. The 30% figure is consistent with findings by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which had advised developed countries to reduce their emissions by 25-40% by 2020 and 80-95% by 2050 to keep global temperature rises below 2°C.

The EU has already committed itself to a 20% (1990 levels) reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. It had however shown willingness to a 10% further reduction if other developed countries agree to comparable cuts.

A final EU decision is expected to be taken at the European summit of 19-20 March in Brussels. The decision will then be taken to the Global Climate Copenhagen Conference.

Further reading: [Communication from the Commission: Towards a Comprehensive Climate Change agreement in Copenhagen](#)

Addressing disasters in developing countries

COM (2009) 84 - Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - EU Strategy for supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries

In this Communication, the Commission states that Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in developing countries can reduce the loss of life and property, and therefore it is important to move from mainly responding to disasters to implementing comprehensive DRR approaches. According to the Commission the overall objective is to **“contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication by reducing the burden of disasters on the poor and the most vulnerable**



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countries and population groups, by means of improved DRR.” This can be reached through various strategic means including: supporting developing countries in integrating DDR considerations into their development policies and planning effectively, as well as supporting developing countries in reducing disaster risk more effectively, through targeted action on disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The Communication also outlines a section on implementation priorities.

News from the European Parliament

Climate Change: The European Parliament leads by example

The European Parliament is planning to cut its CO₂ emissions by 30% by 2020. The work has already started and measures include using photovoltaic and solar thermal energy as well as encouraging suppliers to reduce their carbon footprint. More information can be found by clicking [here](#).

EU ANNUAL STRATEGY FOR 2010

[COM \(2009\) 73](#) - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Annual Policy Strategy for 2010

This Annual Policy Strategy paves the way for establishing a policy agenda for 2010 and launches the interinstitutional dialogue on the priorities for next year. The environment topic is mentioned frequently in this communication. Climate change alone is covered separately; the Commission sets out various ambitious targets for the year 2010 in this respect. Biodiversity, the use of renewable energies, the preservation and management of natural resources, and the lowering of the EU's carbon footprint are clearly on the top of the agenda of the EU's policy strategy for 2010.



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Consultation Note – A Message from Malta Standards Authority (MSA)

Discussions on the Commission's proposal to review the RoHS directive have just started. The Commission's proposal which was mentioned in the previous Environmental Sectoral Committee update may be found [here](#):

Directive [2002/95/EC](#) on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment bans the use of certain substances (lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent-chromium, polybrominated biphenyls, (PBB) or polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE)) in certain categories of **electrical and electronic** equipment.

This particular proposal would be of interest to all economic operators that deal in electrical and electronic products. This includes manufacturers, distributors and importers.

Comments to be sent to the *Regulatory Affairs Directorate*, Malta Standards Authority by post or e-mail ecodesign.msa@msa.org.mt or joseph.micallef@msa.org.mt