

## **EU ENVIRONMENT POLICY:**

### **Results and next steps**

Following the implementation of the 6<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme (EAP), which was adopted on 22 July 2002 and provided the framework of EU'S Environment legislation and extended the Natura 2000 network, the European Commission adopted on 31 August 2011 the final assessment of the 6<sup>th</sup> EAP (2002-2012).

#### **Results**

Based on the evaluation of the Programme, the majority of objectives have been completed and seven thematic strategies have been identified (air, pesticides, waste prevention and recycling, natural resources, soil, marine and urban environment) to strengthen the policy.

The Programme provided the framework to Member States and local authorities to safeguard the appropriate EU funding to business and organisations and contributed to the adoption of effective targets and timetables behind the necessary environment legislation. Policy orientations have already been adopted on climate, transport and biodiversity.

#### **Next steps**

The principal pillars of environment policy and legislation, with the exception of soil, are now in place, although their full potential has not yet been achieved due to shortfalls in implementation. The Europe 2020 strategy envisages transformation to a green, resource – efficient, competitive and low-carbon economy as a potential for sustainable economic growth. Further, the appropriate use of land will reduce pressures on ecosystems and the services they provide.

One of the next steps to be examined is also the potential to change the behaviour of consumers, both as individuals and as groups, in particular in urban communities.

The future financing of the environment policy, given the pressure on public budgets, will be concentrated in the financial cooperation and contributions of the public and private sector. The objectives will be set in common and the future stabilised framework will give the opportunity for the development of new partnerships created under financial envelopes at EU level which will determine the needs of co-financing.

The current EU agenda offers many opportunities for environment policy to evolve in a green growth, resource – efficient, low-carbon economy. The adoption of a Roadmap for moving to a low-carbon economy in 2050, of a White Paper on Transport and Communications on Energy 2020 do well as the adoption of an Energy Efficiency Plan 2011. The agenda for 2012 includes a blueprint for water policy and review of Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan.

Regarding the financial sector, the European Commission has presented proposals on the next multi-annual financial framework for the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and Cohesion Policy (CP). All these new initiatives will complement the existing environmental legislation and new Environment Action Programmes will set the long-term objectives for a global economic transformation of the natural resources, the energy sector and the prevention of degradation of the environment in all relevant policies.

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