

Press Release

Brussels, 27 April 2007

Green groups deliver critical mid-term review of Barroso Commission

Ahead of the European Commission's own performance assessment, environmental groups today issued a critical verdict on the Commission's record in protecting and improving Europe's environment during the first half of its term in office, and laid out a series of recommendations for its remaining 2½ years.

According to the Green 10 review of 16 policy areas, each of which is given a mark out of 10, the Barroso Commission has, for the most part, since taking office in November 2004, clung to the dated notion that what's good for the environment cannot be good for the economy. A narrow focus on growth and jobs within the Lisbon Strategy blinded Mr Barroso, early on, to the opportunities of a sustainable and progressive industrial policy.

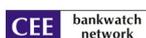
The past six months have seen something of a change of heart by Mr Barroso, prompted by increased media attention to the impacts of climate change on the economy, public health and global security.

Commission support for a global greenhouse gas emissions cut of 30% by 2020 earned the Commission a score of 7/10 for its climate policy, the highest mark in the review, albeit with reservations. The Green 10 awarded the Commission 6/10 both for energy policy, including a binding renewable energy target of 20% by 2020, and for agriculture policy, where it strengthened environmental guidelines in EU rural development policy and pushed for greater transparency about who receives EU agriculture subsidies. On the crucial task of halting biodiversity loss, the Commission gets 5/10, for its Biodiversity Action Plan.

The Commission gets its lowest scores, 2/10, for both marine and forest policies: for its weak proposal on marine protection and for not addressing the destructive impacts of fisheries; and for its foot-dragging to set out measures besides voluntary accords to exclude illegal timber from the market.

The 4.3/10 overall green score awarded to the Barroso Commission reflects the EU executive's failure, say the Green 10, to drive Europe towards becoming the most resource- and energy-efficient economy in the world.

The groups stressed, however, that at this halfway point of the Commission's five-year term it can still improve its record. This can be achieved by implementing forward-looking policies that prepare Europe's citizens for an uncertain future, where cutting resource wastage and pollution will bring cost savings, job creation and new business opportunities.



www.green10.org

CONTACT

Katharine Mill, Greenpeace European Unit, tel +32 2 274 1903 / +32 496 156 229,
katharine.mill@diala.greenpeace.org

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Green 10 review of the Commission is available online at <http://www.green10.org>

The European Commission is expected to deliver its own performance assessment in early May.

The Green 10 are ten of the largest European environmental organisations/networks. They coordinate joint responses and recommendations to EU decision-makers, to ensure that the environment is placed at the heart of policymaking. Membership of the Green 10 alone is more than 20 million people.