

PRESS RELEASE

Post-2012 climate policy EU should lead in reconciling competitiveness and climate protection, Chambers say

Future climate policy has to be economically feasible, otherwise it can never be sustainable. In view of the Commission (DG Environment) stakeholder conference on "Post-2012 climate policy for the EU" on November 22, EUROCHAMBRES urges the EU not to confuse leadership on the issue with solitary action on the ground.

Christoph Leitl, President of EUROCHAMBRES said: *"As one of several global economic players, the EU should take a leading role in seeking to reach world-wide agreement on pressing climate issues. However, the EU must not end up being the only active implementer of international climate protection policy. A mere 14 percent share of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions does not justify a solitary approach that effectively distorts the EU's relative competitive position."*

"Well intentioned environmental targets can be counterproductive if they have the consequence of driving industries out of Europe to countries that have not signed up to any reduction targets - for example to China."

EUROCHAMBRES strongly encourages the European Commission to:

- Ensure that Europe's lead on this issue is translated into simultaneous action from other global economic players. There should not be a 'solo run' by the EU;
- Link the Kyoto and Lisbon targets better in order to reconcile competitiveness and climate protection,
- Constantly monitor the costs and benefits of the EU (2005-2007) and the global emission trading (2008-2012) period. The emissions trading systems of both EU and Kyoto have to be evaluated on their effectiveness and efficiency.

A future EU climate policy will be beneficial, provided it does not distort EU competition but supports economic development by utilising market forces. A continual increase in the targets, systems and red-tape that business has to implement is stifling investment in research that could lead to innovations that bring about environmental improvement. If the EU can establish a technological leadership regarding the reduction of green house gases, EU climate policy will be successful.

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