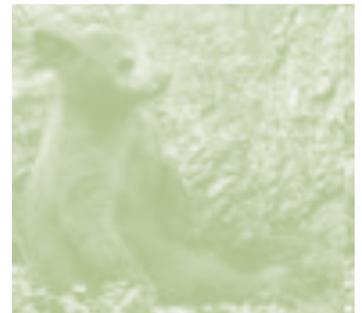




# EU Environment Policy Brief

*The monthly newsletter that keeps you informed about developments in EU environment policy*

Issue 72, June 2013



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## GREEN CAPITALS

### Bristol European Green Capital 2015

The UK city of Bristol has won the European Green Capital Award for 2015. The award was presented on 14 June by EU Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik at a ceremony in Nantes, France, which currently holds the title.



Bristol received recognition for its investment plans in the areas of transport and energy, and especially for its commitment to act as a true role model for the green economy in Europe and beyond. Its communication and social media strategy were also highlighted as a real call to action for its citizens.

The city has committed a budget of EUR 500 million for transport improvements by 2015 and up to EUR 300 million for energy efficiency and renewable energy by 2020. Bristol's transport and urban policies have contributed to achieving better air quality. Thanks to its efforts the number of cyclists has doubled in recent years, and the city is committed to doubling this number again by 2020 (based on 2010 baseline figures).

Bristol has carried out pioneering communication actions, especially through social media and their series of live conferences "Laboratory for Change" to involve citizens in improving the quality of life in the city.

[Press release](#)

### Will your city be the European Green Capital 2016?

The Commission has launched its search for the 2016 European Green Capital. The European Green Capital Award recognises cities that are at the forefront of environmentally-friendly urban living. The annual award is intended to inspire European cities to take action to become more attractive and healthy places to live, work and visit – cities that are "fit for life".

For the first time, cities across Europe with more than 100,000 inhabitants can apply for the title. Previously only cities with a population of 200,000 or more were eligible. The change means that the award is now accessible to over 400 cities across Europe.

The benefits of being a European Green Capital start with a cleaner environment, new jobs and investments, and include an increase in tourism, with benefits from positive international media coverage and more sponsorship for environmental projects.

The award is open to EU Member States and candidate countries, (FYROM, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) and European Economic Area countries. Cities can apply online at [www.europeangreencapital.eu](http://www.europeangreencapital.eu). The deadline for applications for the 2016 title is 17 October 2013. The title is awarded by a European jury supported by a panel of renowned experts in different environmental fields. The winner will be announced in June 2014.

[Press release](#)



## WASTE

### Your views can help make Europe become a recycling society

The European Commission wants to know whether you think the recycling targets in EU waste legislation need reviewing, and how. The results of the consultation will be used to help develop potential new legislation to prevent waste and boost re-use and recycling, as part of a wider review of waste policies in 2014. Citizens, businesses, NGOs, public authorities and other interested parties are welcome to contribute their views until mid-September 2013.

Existing EU waste legislation sets clear targets for re-use and recycling of waste and for reducing landfill. By 2020, for example, 50 % of municipal/household waste and 70 % of construction and demolition waste should be recycled or re-used. The Commission is examining whether, and how, EU waste targets should be adapted to reach these objectives, and the consultation will gather views on the desirability of reinforcing the existing targets or introducing new ones. Building on the results of the public consultation, the Commission will identify the key options for developing the targets. The potential added value and the economic, social, and environmental impacts of these options will then be analysed. A legislative proposal may then be developed in 2014, in the context of the waste policy review.

[Press release](#)



## 7<sup>th</sup> ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMME

### European Commission welcomes agreement on the new Environment Action Programme (EAP) to 2020

Following an agreement on 19 June between the European Parliament and the Council on the Commission's proposal for the 7<sup>th</sup> EAP, "Living well, within the limits of our planet", [Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik](#) said:

"This agreement sends a clear signal that the EU and its Member States firmly support a strong and smart environment policy as a key condition for healthy living and a competitive, resource-efficient and low-carbon economy in Europe. It is essential that the EU institutions and the Member States now turn their commitments into action, and that we assume our collective and individual responsibilities to tackle the challenges we have identified together. This will deliver tangible benefits for people and the environment."

[European Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard](#) said:

"I am very happy to see that the European Parliament and the Council agreed on the need to urgently define our climate and energy targets for 2030. They also recognise that 2030 targets are needed not only to prepare Europe for the international negotiations up to 2015, but also to give certainty to investors, Member States and industry for the investments needed in emissions reduction, energy efficiency and renewable energy."

[Memo](#)

## ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS

### Green Week 2013 "Cleaner Air for All"



Europe's largest environment conference was held from 4-7 June under the banner "Cleaner Air for All". This year's edition of Green Week was dedicated to air, and saw some 3000 participants gather for three days to discuss air-related issues.

Stakeholders, NGOs, government representatives and EU officials reflected on solutions to air pollution, like how to safeguard air quality against the backdrop of rising industrial and energy production, the rise in road traffic and urbanisation, the burning of fossil fuels, and climate change. All sessions can be viewed on the internet [here](#).

Organisations and companies showcased best practices at a 40-stand exhibition, and numerous side events included an outside exhibition of alternative fuel vehicles and test drives of electric cars. The week also featured the Best LIFE Nature and Best LIFE Environment award ceremony.

Commissioner Potočník has declared 2013 as the Year of Air, and over the course of the year the EU's current air policy is being reviewed, with a focus on finding ways to improve the quality of the air we breathe. Despite good progress in recent years, several air quality standards are still widely exceeded in the EU's most densely populated areas, especially from pollutants such as particulate matter, ground-level ozone, and nitrogen dioxide.

In the autumn, the review will deliver a revised strategy for EU Air Policy, including new or confirmed objectives for 2020 and beyond, together with a list of key initiatives and instruments to reach them.

[Press release](#)

## CHEMICALS

### Consultation on the modification of the REACH Annexes on Nanomaterials

The Commission is envisaging proposing a possible amendment of the REACH Annexes in 2013, which would be accompanied by an Impact Assessment. The objective of this consultation is to provide the Commission with the best possible evidence base for its work with the above tasks. Citizens, organisations and public authorities are welcome to send their contributions from 21.06.2013 to 13.09.2013

The objective of the possible amendment is to ensure further clarity on how nanomaterials are addressed and safety demonstrated in registration dossiers. REACH must ensure a high level of health, safety and environmental protection. At the same time it should permit access to innovative products and promote innovation and competitiveness. The regulatory environment affects time to market, marginal cost structure and allocation of resources, especially for SMEs. It also creates new business opportunities and contributes to consumer and investor confidence in technology.

Specifically, the policy initiative shall provide clearer REACH requirements for nanomaterials to ensure that industry demonstrates safe use in the registration dossiers in accordance with the aims of REACH Article 1(1) "to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment, including the promotion of alternative methods for assessment of hazards of substance, as well as the free circulation of substances on the internal market while enhancing competitiveness and innovation".

[Consultation](#)

## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Climate change talks in Bonn

Commissioner Hedegaard made the following statement on 14 June: "I'm pleased that the EU's suggestions for encouraging Parties to make ambitious commitments under the 2015 agreement have gained traction in the discussions, and the great strides the EU has made in reducing our own emissions already have certainly helped with this. I am also glad to see that there has been a groundswell of support for the EU's proposal for a global phase-down of HFCs.

Finally, we have made headway towards implementation of some of the decisions we've collectively taken at recent climate conferences, such as in better understanding how to manage the role of agriculture and of forests in the context of climate change.

However, I remain concerned that many of our major negotiating partners do not yet seem ready to engage beyond restating positions of principle. We are all familiar with and embrace these principles but now must face the long neglected challenge of building a set of ambitious commitments that reflect these principles.

While the outcomes of these negotiations are good news, the last two weeks also illustrate that a lot more work will be needed to get solid results from COP 19 in Warsaw in November. Warsaw needs to achieve a strong package of implementation measures to show climate action is progressing on the ground. It needs to set out a clear pathway for adopting an ambitious legally binding agreement in 2015 and it needs to make substantive and tangible progress on raising pre-2020 ambition."



[Press release](#)

Follow the latest developments on EU ETS on the dedicated [website](#)

### Statement on President Obama's Climate Action Plan:

President Barroso said:

"I very much welcome President Obama's renewed push to tackle global climate change. The plans set out today are positive steps that will create further momentum for international climate action.

The European Union is a confident climate leader. We have ambitious legislation in place. We are reducing our emissions considerably, expanding on renewables and saving energy. And we are getting ready for the next step: a climate and energy framework for 2030.

Climate action can be a tremendous opportunity to modernise our economies, create jobs and growth, and invest in the dynamic industries of the future.

Finding global solutions to the climate challenge is a shared responsibility. They can only be reached on the basis of leadership from all the world's major economies. President Obama's announcement will help give the world confidence that it's possible to win this fight, if we fight it together."

Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard said:

"I am glad to see that the United States is finally moving on climate. After a number of important speeches from President Obama and Secretary Kerry, Europe has been eagerly waiting for the US to set out concrete steps. This plan is a most welcome step forward and, if implemented, it can put the US on a path towards a low carbon future.

Internationally, the White House plan contains a number of good intentions which have now to be translated into more concrete action. The first opportunity will be for the US to support an ambitious deal this September in ICAO on a global solution to limit international aviation emissions. And by 2015, a robust US commitment to reduce its domestic emissions over the longer term as part of a binding climate treaty.

Europe will continue working to get all our partners on board for the ambitious action our planet demands. But we need all the world's major economies to play ball. And this announcement from Washington, and growing signs of domestic action in China and elsewhere, are positive signals that the world is finally moving on climate. Slowly, but moving. This is of course encouraging news as Europe embarks on the design of our climate and energy policies for 2030". [Press release](#)

## **BOOKSHOP**

[Natura 2000 Newsletter](#) welcoming Croatia and its rich biodiversity

## **CALENDAR**

### **Upcoming events**

30/09/2013 Conference on Plastic Waste: The role of plastic and plastic waste in a circular economy

3-4/10/2013 Science for the Environment Conference : Identifying knowledge gaps for the Climate Action and Resource Efficiency Challenge in Horizon 2020 (Denmark, Aarhus)

[Read more...](#)

### **Events related to Environmental Technologies and Innovation**

Follow EU Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#).

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