

European strategic energy technology plan

2008/2005(INI) - 28/02/2008

The Council adopted Conclusions in which it welcomes the presentation of the Communication "A European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan)" by the Commission, in response to an invitation by the Spring 2007 European Council.

The Council notes that a European Energy Technology policy is an essential element for the achievement of the European Union's ambitious energy and climate goals for 2020. This policy should increase synergies at Community level and should take into account existing cooperation structures in energy technology Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment (RDD&D).

This policy requires increased and sustained funding, for RDD&D on clean, sustainable and efficient energy technologies including "market pull" measures in areas where the incentives for the private sector are not sufficient. The full engagement of the private sector is essential. Therefore, industry, investors, innovators and researchers must be provided with a stable and predictable policy framework which gives clear signals, regulatory certainty and transparency and concrete commitments, at European as well as national level, so as to allow them to plan and decide in the medium- and long-term.

The Council therefore suggests the following goals and actions:

1. to set up the six priority Industrial Initiatives as proposed by the Commission, and launch each one of them as soon as possible. These initiatives should be of a voluntary nature, and can take the form of public-private partnerships or of joint programming by groups of interested Member States. Proposals for these initiatives should demonstrate their cost-effectiveness and added value. The Commission is encouraged to continue to examine areas with great potential such as marine energy, energy storage and energy efficiency;
2. to further increase efforts on energy efficiency by supporting and stimulating RDD&D on end-use technologies;
3. to set up by the summer of 2008 a group of high level government representatives from each Member State (the "High Level Steering Group"), which convenes in order to exchange information and propose options for an optimisation of overall energy RDD&D efforts;
4. to establish a structured dialogue between research centres leading to a European Energy Research Alliance; to search for ways and means to include other stakeholders, for example by means of a European Energy Technology Summit;
5. to aim for substantial increases in European, and when appropriate, national funding for energy RDD&D;
6. to improve and enlarge the Community's world-class knowledge base of energy researchers and research institutes ("capacity building"), including by reducing barriers to mobility, attracting world-class human capital and improving science education;
7. to develop, where appropriate, covenants between government, industry and researchers for different types of energy-producing and energy-saving technologies, in support of the objectives of the SET-Plan;

8. to make policies and measures, including Community programmes in all relevant areas such as research, state aid, agriculture, transport and public procurement, supportive of the achievement of the energy and climate change goals agreed by the Spring 2007 European Council;
9. to further promote international cooperation on RD&D on clean energy technologies, by developing differentiated strategies and building upon ongoing cooperation with third countries, where mutual interest and benefits exist.

In this context, the Commission is invited to:

- in 2008, start work on the above agreed goals, in close consultation and cooperation with Member States and other relevant actors, including by preparing a Communication on financing low carbon technologies, and by engaging in planning and preparatory steps for the transition to low carbon energy networks and systems;
- review the Strategic Energy Technology Plan at regular intervals, and to establish as a matter of priority an open-access European energy technology information and knowledge management system;
- implement, where appropriate, the relevant Community Programmes in support of the goals of the SET Plan, respecting fully their respective legal bases.