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EU Environment Council of Ministers on Climate Change

EU to decide on future Kyoto commitments

Climate change is already happening, it is strikingly visible, especially in the Arctic area. The Arctic sea ice is melting, since 1979 an area larger than the combined size of Sweden, Norway and Denmark of ice has disappeared. The melting of the Greenland ice sheet is accelerating, and the same is happening in the Antarctic.

On the occasion of the EU Environment Council, **Satu Hassi, Green MEP, said** : *"Our task to protect our planet is urgent. We need a more proactive policy from the EU. The Kyoto Protocol was a necessary first step, and it would not have been born without EU initiatives. We need similar initiatives now. Climate science tells us that industrialised countries need to reduce emissions by at least 30 % by 2020 and 80 % by 2050 compared to 1990 level in order to limit the global warming below 2 degrees. The EU should send a strong message to the rest of the world that we are ready to reduce our emissions and that we are ready for those legally binding emission targets. We should invite other wealthy countries to join this commitment. Agreeing on those binding targets must be completed at the latest by 2008. This end-date guarantees that the agreement will have sufficient time to enter into force and to have an effect by 2015, prompting the strengthening of existing policies and the design of new, longer-term ones. It will encourage investments in climate-friendly technologies and discourage unsustainable decisions. It's time for the EU Ministers to force this decision by 2008. The climate on Earth can not afford just a lip service.*

For further information see the EU Environment Council conclusions on Climate change (pdf, p.17 to 19).

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