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Press release | 23.06.2015

Air pollution

European Parliament and Council agree a deal on pollution from medium combustion plants

The European Parliament, European Commission and Council Presidency today reached an agreement on a new Directive regarding pollutant emissions from medium combustion plants (capacity between 1 to 50 MW).[i] Medium combustion plants are used for, among others, electricity generation, residential heating and cooling and providing heat or steam to industry. While they are a major source of air pollution they have until now not been regulated at EU level.

Following the conclusion of the final round of negotiations, Greens/EFA MEP **Michèle Rivasi**, lead negotiator on this report for the Greens/EFA group and member of the Environment Committee, commented:

"The Juncker Commission had threatened to withdraw the legislative package on air quality that had been put forward by the previous European Commission but thanks to public and political pressure it was kept on the agenda. A successful conclusion of the law agreed today is of major importance to the legislation on National Emissions Ceilings as emissions from medium combustion plants account for 20% of the expected reductions in air pollution by 2030 under the NEC proposal.

Despite the urgent need to deal with the increasing impacts of air pollution on health, the Member States' representatives had shied away from taking action on reducing the pollution from medium combustion plants, instead gutting the Commission proposal via a long series of exemptions and extensions.

However, the Parliament refused to give ground to the Council during the negotiations and successfully opposed weakening the emissions limit values for new plants and limited the number of derogations introduced by the Council for existing plants. At the initiative of the Greens, the final law also includes a requirement to develop energy efficiency standards for medium combustion plants on the basis of best available techniques before 2020.

Although the agreement reached today does not go as far as we would have wished, it will be the first time

this source of pollution is regulated and is a step in the right direction."

(1) The agreement still needs to be endorsed by the Member States' representatives, a committee vote and then in plenary

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Opinion

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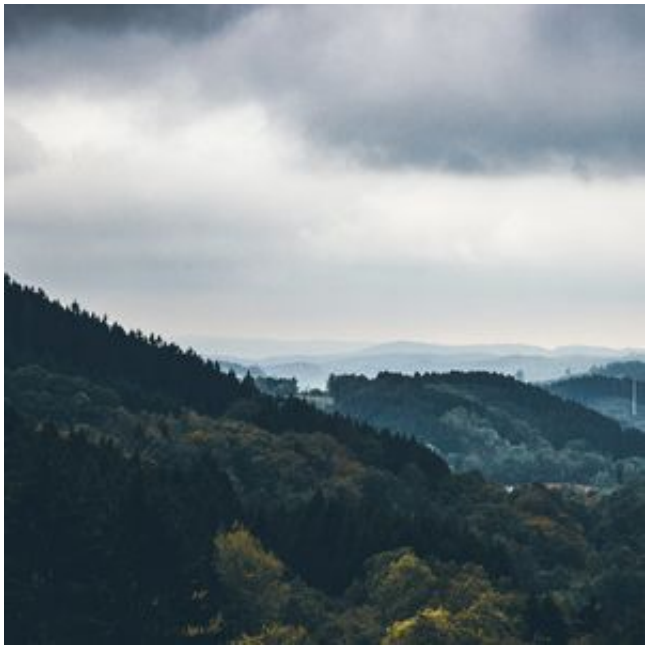


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Responsible MEPs



Michèle Rivasi

Member

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