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Resource efficiency and raw materials

Commission talking the talk on resource efficiency but lack of clear targets regrettable

The European Commission today presented its 'flagship' communication on resource efficiency. The Greens welcomed the general rhetoric but expressed regret at the lack of clear targets. Commenting on the communication, Green MEP **Bas Eickhout** said:

"It is certainly welcome that the Commission wants to put resource efficiency as an overarching EU policy priority but we regret that this flagship communication fails to set out any targets to this end. There is an urgent need to mainstream resource efficiency across policy fields, such as agriculture, transport and energy. The efficient use of resources like water, land and energy is the only way to address damaging commodity price volatility for example. However, truly tackling resource efficiency will require more than just well-meaning rhetoric, and the lack of overarching targets is unfortunate.

"We need to shift tack and start moving towards a recycling economy with real pricing that reflects true environmental costs and ensures a reduction in waste production, and the value of reusing resources. This requires changes in energy, industrial, agricultural and transport systems and behavioural changes of consumers and producers. An overarching target that translates into sectoral targets is essential to this end.

"With increasing pressures on resources like land, water, energy and metals, we need radical changes to the wasteful way we currently use resources. It is therefore disappointing that there is no mention of Europe's ecological footprint, as this is a clear indicator of our unsustainable use of resources."

Commenting on the EU strategy on raw materials, the presentation of which was again delayed, Green MEP and EP draftsman on raw materials **Reinhard Bütikofer** said:

"This latest delay in publishing the raw materials strategy is senseless. However, the latest drafts of the strategy demonstrate a welcome u-turn on the issue of raw materials diplomacy, with the Commission abandoning the emphasis on confrontation and, instead, prioritising cooperation and dialogue. The proposals on an EU recycling policy for raw materials have also improved. However, we are concerned that the scope of the policy has widened to such an extent, that it is losing strategic focus. Industry will also not be happy with this and it is right."

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