



Strasbourg Flash

Priorities for the Greens/EFA group for 19-23 November 2012

Completing the EU's economic union

Tues. 20 Nov. - EP debate and vote (Thyssen report)

MEPs will vote on a report on the ongoing moves towards economic and monetary union. With the social and economic hardship in crisis-hit Eurozone members continuing to worsen, it is clear that moves towards a true economic union need to be stepped up. For the Greens, this means addressing the sovereign debt crisis by moving towards debt mutualisation and Eurobonds. It means a proper EU budget and investment to stimulate economic recovery and employment in the periphery. It means finally tackling tax avoidance and ending the counter-productive one-sided focus on fiscal contraction.

Shale gas: a health and environmental risk

Tues. 20 Nov. - EP debate; vote Weds. (Sonik, Tzavela reports)

Shale gas and the controversial practise of its extraction will be the subject of two different reports to be voted on this week. The Greens have major concerns about shale gas, notably through the extraction process of fracking, but also the wider negative health, environment and climate impacts. Given the mounting evidence on these risks, the group believes that a moratorium is the most sensible approach ultimately and will be hoping MEPs endorse this. At the very least, tougher regulation and bans on extraction in sensitive areas are needed.

Strasbourg priorities press briefing

with Greens/EFA co-presidents **Dany Cohn-Bendit** and **Rebecca Harms**

Tuesday, 20 November, **10.30-10.50** - Press Conference Room EP, Strasbourg

Rules for marketing agricultural products

Tues. 20 Nov. - EP plenary vote (Bové report)

The EP will vote on a report dealing with the marketing of agricultural exports from the EU, as well as the general marketing of agricultural products. Green MEP and EP draftsperson José Bové believes the goal should be to promote high quality agricultural products and local food chains and to prevent export policy being used to dump excess production onto international markets. The EU should be seeking to promote small scale farmers, with information about production methods and the origin of quality food, and propose legislation to this end.

Future EU budget - decision time nears

Weds. 21 Nov. - EP plenary debate; Thurs./Fri. - EU summit

EU leaders meet for a summit on the EU's multiannual financial framework for 2014-20 at the end of the week and MEPs will hold a debate in advance, having voted on their red lines last month. The EU budget should be a key tool for stimulating economic recovery, funding research, education, green technologies, and the sustainable transformation of our energy sector. The latest proposals fail to reflect this ambition and must be increased. It is also high time for a real system of own resources for financing the EU budget to end the damaging annual haggling.

Enforcing EU law

Tues. 20 Nov. - EP debate; vote Weds. (Lichtenberger report)

The implementation and enforcement of EU legislation remains a major problem, as revealed in this report by Green draftsperson Eva Lichtenberger. The report highlights some of the problem areas, as well as singling out EU member states that are laggards when it comes to implementing EU laws. It also points to the persisting problems with enforcement by the European Commission and the infringement procedure, outlining possible solutions.

Vote on new EU commission candidate

Weds. 21 Nov. - EP plenary vote (secret ballot)

Parliament will vote on whether or not to approve Malta's nomination for its vacant EU commission post, Tonio Borg, as part of the appointment process. While the smoke has yet to clear following the controversial dismissal of John Dalli as health commissioner, there are a number of concerns about the candidacy of Tonio Borg, notably his views on minorities, women's rights and reproductive health and rights. The Greens believe Mr Borg has failed to dispel concerns about his views and will be opposing his nomination.

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Greens/EFA Press Team

- **Helmut Weixler (Team head):** Mobile +32 475 671340, Ph. +33-3-88174760
- **Isabelle Zerrouk:** Mobile +32 477 319474, Ph. +33-3-88174032
- **Richard More O'Ferrall:** Mobile +32 477 443842
- **Steven Cornelius (EFA Press Service):** Ph. +33-3-88172936



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Gaza and the re-emerging conflict

Weds. 21 Nov. - EP debate with Council and Commission

After the worrying escalation of violence in the Gaza strip, with Israel having launched airstrikes in which civilians were killed, MEPs are set to debate the situation with the Council and Commission. Four years on from the last Gaza war, and the humanitarian tragedy that resulted, this latest disturbing escalation comes at a time when hopes for a peaceful settlement were being raised. The Greens condemn acts of violence on both sides and urge the EU to urgently engage to ensure a peaceful solution in Palestine.

UN climate talks and the EU position

Weds. 21 Nov. - EP plenary debate; vote Thurs.

Ahead of this year's UN climate summit in Doha (COP18), the EP will adopt its opinion on the EU's role. The EU's position in the negotiations has run to standstill. Despite the 2020 greenhouse gas reduction target of 20% being outdated and lacking ambition, there has been no change. Moving to a more ambitious target of 30% would give momentum to the talks and be good for the EU economy. Another outstanding issue in the talks, where the EU has also failed to evolve, is the question of surplus emissions allowances under the Kyoto protocol. These should be scrapped.

Banning shark finning in EU fisheries

Weds. 21 Nov. - EP debate; vote Thurs. (Patrao Neves report)

After years of debate, the EU is moving closer to adopting legislation banning the odious and wasteful practise of shark finning (catching sharks, removing their fins and throwing the carcass back into the water), with MEPs set to vote on proposals to this end. The Greens have long supported an outright ban. Regrettably, the EP fisheries committee supported loopholes that would allow fins to continue to be removed from sharks. The Greens will be tabling amendments to ensure the legislation results in an unequivocal ban on shark finning.

Tackling the external dimension of EU fisheries

Weds. 21 Nov. - EP debate; vote Thurs. (Lövin report)

MEPs are set to adopt a report by Green draftsman Isabella Lövin on the external dimension of EU fisheries. 28% of fish caught by the EU fleet are caught outside EU waters, while 60% of fish consumed in the EU is imported. The CFP should address this, tackling the activities of the EU fishing industry outside EU waters or jurisdictions. The EU should be pushing for better management of regional organisations, with binding independent advice on fisheries management that must be swiftly implemented and sanctions for states in non-compliance.

Greens/EFA Press Team

- **Helmut Weixler** (head): Mobile +32 475 671340, Ph. +33-3-88174760
- **Isabelle Zerrouk**: Mobile +32 477 319474, Ph. +33-3-88174032
- **Richard More O'Ferrall**: Mobile +32 477 443842
- **Steven Cornelius (EFA Press Service)**: Ph. +33-3-88172936

Press officers from national delegations

- **Paul Alex** (Germany): Mobile +32 495-402328
- **Marie Shand** (France): Mobile +33-6-43271757
- **Dirk van den Bosch** (Netherlands): Ph. +33-3-88177881, Mobile +31 627-015080
- **Anne Hilden** (Finland): Mobile +32-473-735136
- **Hans van Scharen** (Belgium - Flemish speaking press): Ph. +33-3-88177642, Mobile +32 484-729776
- **Marita Pahlen** (Sweden): Ph. +33-3-88177273, Mobile +46 706 750373



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