



Strasbourg Flash

Priorities for the Greens/EFA group for 11-15 March 2013

Greenhouse gas emissions and EU rules

Mon. 11 Mar. - EP debate; vote Weds. (Eickhout, Arsenis reports)

Important rules on how greenhouse gas emissions are accounted for and reported in the EU will be voted on by MEPs. Green draftsman Bas Eickhout has ensured EU member states will have to report annually on their global climate aid and policies towards the EU's 2050 climate target. As part of key rules on how forest and land use emissions are accounted, the Greens pushed for and welcomed the mandatory accounting of emissions from cropland management but regretted the failure to include wetlands, a significant source of emissions.

EU agricultural policy reboot? CAP reform

Tues. 12 Mar. - EP debate; vote Weds. (various reports)

The EP will vote on legislative proposals revising the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. The Greens were unhappy with the outcome of the committee vote, which failed to provide for true reform. The group believes the CAP needs a radical overhaul to promote resilient, sustainable farming and food systems, with fair incomes and decent employment in rural economies. Specifically, the Greens want a lower ceiling on direct payments to prevent large farmers and the agro-industry from absorbing the lion's share of the CAP and strict cross-compliance rules.

* Press conference Tues. 12 Mar. 11.30 EP press room *

Strasbourg priorities press briefing

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

Tuesday, 12 March, 10.30-10.50 - Press Conference Room EP, Strasbourg

No stress, nuclear tests

Mon. 11 Mar. - EP debate; vote Weds.

Two years to the day after the nuclear catastrophe in Fukushima, MEPs will debate the flawed measures taken at EU level in response: the EU nuclear stress tests. The Greens were critical of the concept for these stress tests, when it was presented by the Commission. The tests fail to properly assess a host of key risks to nuclear reactors, with the result that the stress tests will simply be an excuse for the nuclear industry to continue with business as usual, and no proposals to close unsafe or ageing reactors. The majority of MEPs are not willing to admit this though.

Food scandals and security an EU issue

Tues. 12 Mar. - EP debate with EU Commission

Recent scandals in the food sector (notably horsemeat) have clear EU-level implications. In addition to immediate questions about applicable rules and responsibility for controls and ensuring compliance, there are wider questions in terms of EU legislation and the need to strengthen the capacity and mandate of those tasked with monitoring compliance, as well as prioritising a local supply chain that is less open to abuse. The Greens are pushing for a true CAP reform to address this but also want the Commission to come forward with labeling and monitoring proposals.

Venture capital - new EU rules

Tues. 12 Mar - EP plenary vote (Lamberts report)

New EU rules governing venture capital funds will be voted on by MEPs. The new rules create an EU-wide passport for venture capital funds, whilst strengthening supervision. Green draftsman Philippe Lamberts had wanted to ensure tough new third country rules, introducing the first ever binding EU definition of tax havens, but, in the end EU governments failed to accept these new provisions, reneging on an agreement reached under the Danish EU presidency.

EU economic governance - 2 pack

Tues. 12 Mar - EP plenary vote (Gauzès, Ferreira reports)

An agreement on new EU economic governance rules - the so-called 2 pack - is set to be endorsed by MEPs. The deal provides for greater EU-level budgetary oversight. The Greens broadly welcomed the final legislative agreement, notably the legal provisions increasing democratic oversight over countries under assistance, as well as the commitment by the Commission to outline proposals on further steps towards the mutual issuance of sovereign debt and proactive measures on public investments.

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED OVERLEAF



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Radioactive contamination of drinking water

Tues. 12 Mar - EP plenary vote (Rivasi report)

MEPs will give their opinion on draft EU rules on radioactive contamination in drinking water, when they vote on a report by Green MEP Michèle Rivasi. Crucially, the report calls for the legal base to be changed to ensure the EP has a say on these important public health rules through co-decision. The report also calls for the removal of loopholes in the draft legislation, including weak monitoring of radioactive contamination and the failure to distinguish between natural and manmade sources of radioactivity. It also calls for stricter values on contamination levels.

Future EU budget - EP red lines

Weds. 13 Mar - EP plenary debate and vote

The main political groups in the EP roundly condemned the agreement reached by EU heads of state and government last month on the future EU financial framework (2014-20). The Greens believe the deal falls short both in terms of overall ambition but also in the areas where spending cuts are foreseen. Future oriented spending is to be cut at the expense of backward-looking areas, with no European value-added. The Greens believe the EP must stand strong and not accept an MFF along these lines and will support efforts to ensure this.

Other EU priorities

EP elections and the EU Commission

Tues. 12 Mar - EU Commission proposal

In the same week as MEPs vote on revising seat distribution in the European Parliament, the EU Commission is set to outline a number of proposals with regard to the 2014 EP elections. One anticipated proposal, which is likely to get some attention, is a call on European parties to present candidates for president of the European Commission. The Greens have long been supportive of proposals to create a true European democratic political space (such as trans-European electoral lists) and also want to improve the democratic legitimacy of the Commission.

Bee population decline and insecticide ban

Weds. - Thurs. 13-14 Mar - Council expert group decision

Crucial proposals from the European Commission to suspend the use of neonicotinoid insecticides - due to their damaging impact on bee populations - are set to be decided on by EU member states. Despite an overwhelming and growing body of evidence on the disastrous impact of these pesticides on pollinators, EU governments could reject the Commission's proposal, following intense lobbying from industry. Ahead of the crunch meeting of this Council expert committee, the Greens are calling on EU governments to support the proposed suspension.

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