



PRESS RELEASE

Environment Committee stands strong on Ship Fuels and Ecodesign

(Brussels, 15 March 2005) The EEB, Europe's largest federation of environmental citizens' organisations welcomes today's environment Committee votes on marine fuels and energy using products. Both votes reconfirmed Parliament's determination to strengthen EU standards in order to protect our health and biodiversity from dirty ship fuel and inefficient energy using products, despite opposition from Commission and some Member States.

On marine fuels, the Committee endorsed the report of Finnish MEP Satu Hassi, introducing stricter mandatory limits for sulphur in marine fuels and reducing sulphur emissions from ships by at least three quarters. This is significantly stronger than the Council Common Position, which would only result in a less than 10% reduction.

Her report would extend the directive's application to the Mediterranean Sea and would further introduce a second phase lowering the overall sulphur content of marine fuels from 1.5 to 0.5%. It thereby reinstates the most important elements of the Parliament's first reading position, which were not accepted by the Commission or the Council. *"This shows that Parliament stands strong on cleaning up dirty ship fuel"*, comments Kerstin Meyer, EEB Air Pollution Policy Officer. *"Sulphur in ship fuel needs to be reduced much further to protect people and sensitive ecosystems. At the moment an average ship pollutes 150 to 300 times more per tonne kilometer than a truck. Without additional abatement measures, within ten years air pollution from ships will surpass the total from all land-based emission sources in the EU."*¹

On Ecodesign, the committee also stood firm on its first reading demands, readopting crucial amendments that ensure that the Eco-design directive creates a framework that ensures an ambitious setting of minimum criteria for energy using products (in particular on energy efficiency) to meet multiple environmental objectives – such as Kyoto targets, air pollution standards, hazardous waste prevention etc.

The committee was solid in its support of amendments that can ensure that the directive delivers concrete environmental impact reductions quickly - namely a strong legal environmental basis and unequivocal links to important environmental strategies and targets, clear environmental criteria as a mandate to the Commission for selecting its products to target (Article 12) and a robust procedure for setting up the benchmarks and setting the levels for criteria (in terms of use of comitology, methodology, independent experts and stakeholder consultation)

"The Parliament has sent a clear message to the Council and the Commission today" says Melissa Shinn, EEB Eco-product Policy officer, *"Make this into a serious tool to stimulate eco-innovation and put our EuP industry ahead on eco-design. Don't lose the opportunity to capitalize on one of the most powerful and efficient tools to address greenhouse gas abatement through reducing energy consumption - and other product dependant policies such as waste prevention"*.

¹ **Note to editors:** A final vote on marine fuels is foreseen at the Plenary session of the European Parliament on 13 April. However, Council and Parliament may try to arrive at a compromise (so-called second reading agreement) before that date.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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