

Seminar: Environmental Fiscal Reform (EFR) and economic competitiveness

Brussels, Friday, June 20th 2003

Seminar venue: CENELEC, 35 rue Stassart, 1050 Brussels (metro Porte de Namur)

- **Co-organisers**

EEB, OEGUT (Austrian Society for Environment and Technology)

- **Objectives:**

- promote EFR as an instrument to combat climate change and moving towards greater sustainability in a cost effective way
- promote the positive aspects of EFR on energy/resource efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness
- promote EFR as an opportunity to reform taxation systems and mentalities
- counter-act the “anti-competitiveness” arguments against EFR and offer policy recommendations to mitigate impacts in some sectors
- show how EFR can benefit competitiveness
- create a synergy between ENGOs and business about EFR
- debate the EU situation in terms of EFR/ energy taxation and related instruments
- present the new EEB publication on EFR that aims at offering ways of moving forward at the EU and national levels

Draft agenda

Morning chaired by John Hontelez

09.00-09.30 Registration

09.30-09.45 1. Introduction EEB John Hontelez

- motivation for this seminar

09.45-10.15 2. The point of view of NGOs EEB / DEC Christian Ege

- definition of EFR, benefits from EFR
- issues of competitiveness : the “competitiveness argument” is one of the main obstacles against the implementation of effective EFR
- EU state of play
- proposal for implementing ambitious EFR in Denmark without harming industry or economy’s competitiveness
- EEB proposals and new publication

10.15-10.45 3. Issues of competitiveness and EFR, the point of view of the OECD

Nils-Axel Braathen, OECD

- definition of competitiveness
- EFR impact on competitiveness, evidence from experiences in OECD region

10.45-11.05 Coffee break

11.05-12.00 4. The point of view of industry on EFR and competitiveness

- Paul Metz, E⁵ (The European Business Council for a Sustainable Energy Future) : *Sustainable Finance Reform*
- Britta Schreiner, Community of European Railways : *EFR and the railway sector : how EFR can help promoting public transport*
- Claude Füssler, World Business Council for Sustainable Development : *position of the WBCSD on EFR and competitiveness*
- Faye Clamp, Federation of Small Businesses: *position of small businesses on EFR and competitiveness*

12.00-13.00 5. Strategies to counter-act the “competitiveness argument”

Presentation by Andrew Field of HM Treasury, UK (*invited*)

Business consultation and participation in the setting-up of the Climate Change Levy (CCL), and business attitude towards the CCL two years on

Answers by Faye Clamp of the FSB

Work session

all participants

actions and alliance building for counter-acting the “competitiveness argument”

13.00-14.15 Lunch break

Afternoon chaired by Paul Metz

14.15-14.45 6. Positive impacts of EFR on energy/resource efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness

Herbert Greisberger, ÖGUT (*Austrian Society for Environment and Technology*)

14.45-15.15 7. The point of view of Trade Unions ETUC (*invited*)

- the views of the different federations (European, national or sector level)
- are some sectoral unions against EFR/ energy taxation? How to convince them of the necessity and positive effects of EFR ?

15.15-15.45 8. The point of view of the European Parliament

Alain Lipietz MEP (Group of the Greens) (*invited*)

- the position of the European Parliament on EU energy taxation, EFR and perspectives at EU level
- Mr Lipietz's position on EFR and competitiveness

15.45-16.15 9. The point of view of the European Commission

Daniel Boeshertz of DG Taxud (Taxation and the Customs Union)

- perspectives for EFR at EU level after the agreement of March 20th
- the competitiveness dimension : is it the main obstacle against EU minimum harmonisation on EFR or higher energy taxation?

16.15-16.45 10. Open debate on the “competitiveness argument”

16.45-17.15 Coffee break

17.15-17.45 11. Other EU developments: road infrastructure pricing

Catharina Sikow-Magny

European Commission, DG Energy and Transport

- EU road pricing policy and projects
- socio-economic impacts of pricing

17.45- 18.00 13. Conclusions

John Hontelez