



TURNING THE TIDE

2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 26 September

Maison des Associations Internationales
Rue Washington 40
1050 Brussels

AGENDA

9.00 Registration

9.15 Opening

9.30 Key note speech on current consumption and production patterns and the way(s) out (followed by questions)
Joachim Spangenberg, Vice-President, Sustainable Europe Research Institute, DE

10.30 Coffee break

11.00 The EU Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan, introduced by *Environment Commissioner, Stavros Dimas*
Responses by Government representatives:
Mme Michèle Pappalardo, General Commissioner for Sustainable Development and Inter-Ministerial Coordinator on Sustainable Development (France) Minister John Gormley (Ireland)
Vice-Minister Elisabeth Falemo (Sweden)
Vice-Minister Rut Bizkova (Czech Republic)
Saskia Borgers, Director-General Environment (Netherlands)
Responses from NGOs:
Doreen Fedrigo, EU Policy Unit Coordinator, EEB
Claire Roumet, Vice-President, Social Platform
Monique Goyens, Director General, European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC)

Panel debate and questions from the audience.

13.00 Lunch

14.30 EU trends in the use of Market-Based Instruments for environmental purposes, and actions to take.

Introduction by Taxation Commissioner, László Kovács

Responses from:

John Hontelez, Secretary General, EEB

Anselm Görres, President, Green Budget Germany

Professor Paul Ekins (UK)

Minister John Gormley (Ireland)

Vice-Minister Elisabeth Falemo (Sweden)

Vice-Minister Rut Bizkova (Czech Republic).

Mme Michèle Pappalardo, General Commissioner for Sustainable Development and Inter-Ministerial Coordinator on Sustainable Development (France)

Followed by panel debate and questions from the audience.

16.00 Towards a Stockholm agenda for the Next Decade.

Mikael Karlsson, President EEB.

TURNING THE TIDE - EEB's 2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 26 September 2008

Background:

The EEB considers changing production and consumption patterns in the rich industrialised countries as essential for sustainable development. Such changes are necessary in order to ensure that Europe as such and the world as a whole stops living beyond the carrying capacity of the planet. Climate change and biodiversity decline are the most dramatic features of this deterioration, but we see a more general depletion of the natural resources our societies have become so dependent upon.

In Johannesburg in 2002, governments of the world re-affirmed their commitment to changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns. The EU subsequently committed itself to producing an Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), which was published on the 16th July 2008. The EEB has been very much involved in discussions leading up to this Action Plan, particularly as a continuation of its work in waste, product policy and natural resources. EEB regards the Action Plan as presented as insufficient, and is keen on a clear vision with ambitious targets and effective instruments, using a combination of sustainability criteria, product policy, market instruments and general information tools (beyond consumer labels).

At the time of the conference, the discussion on the Action Plan will have started to deliver indications of willingness or resistance from the private sector, governments, and other players; so it will be the right moment to discuss what need to be the next steps. The EEB hopes that the French Presidency will bring this debate to a high and ambitious level, building on ongoing delivery of its national sustainable development programme as developed in the "Grenelle for the Environment". In 2009, we expect the Presidencies of the Czech Republic and Sweden to continue working on SCP, aiming for clear directions to the new Commission.

At its Annual Conference, the EEB wants to concentrate on the consumption side, which is considerably less developed than production side activities. Consumption, or "demand", can also drive further changes in the production side if consumers receive as well as send the right signals. This applies to individuals, but certainly also to public authorities and companies. Making prices tell the ecological truth is an important element to tackle, particularly as we see more and more clear examples of the problems caused by false prices, so economic instruments are important. However, consumers should not be given the entire burden of driving eco-innovation, as they do not oversee the potentials, so better-defined product policy (with sustainability parameters and criteria, linked to implementation mechanisms such as the Ecodesign for Energy-Using Products Directive), shifting from products to services, and mechanisms addressing advertising and education are also essential.

The Conference will have two panels, with a European Commissioner opening each of them, discussing progress on the EU level with Ministers, NGO representatives and others. One session will focus on the Action Plan, the other one in particular on market instruments in the EU. The conference will start with a keynote speaker to describe the challenges we need to face and possible responses. At the end of the Conference, EEB will present its plans for a major debate on a sustainability agenda for the next decade.

THE EEB THANKS THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR THIS CONFERENCE, PREPARATIONS AND REPORT:

- **European Commission**
- **Ministry for Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Spatial Planning (France)**
- **Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (Austria)**
- **Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning (Netherlands)**