



EEB STATEMENT ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS 2004

The European Environmental Bureau, a federation of 134 environmental citizens organisations, working for an environmentally sustainable Europe, states that;

- given that the European Parliament is playing a crucial role in the decision-making in the European Union on policies that affect, positively and negatively, the environment and thereby people's well-being today and in the future;
- given that the European Parliament most likely will, through the future EU constitution, gain further importance in decision-making procedures, in particular in areas with a clear relevance to the environment, cohesion policies, agriculture and fisheries, research and industry, a development which the EEB supports and wants to be further completed;
- given that the European Parliament is the direct representative of the EU citizens in political decision-making;
- given that participation in the European Parliament elections by the large majority of EU citizens cannot be taken for granted, given the turnouts in elections in 1994 and 1999, which could undermine the credibility of the Parliament and the EU as such;
- given that the protection and improvement of the environment has been, and remains among the key issues of concern for the EU citizens; and that, according to a 2002 Eurobarometer survey, 86% of EU citizens want to see the environment become an area of policy concern of equal significance as the social and economic policies;
- given that, in the same Eurobarometer survey, 75% of EU citizens think that policy-makers do not think of the environment enough when deciding on other policies;
- given that 48% of EU citizens have a high trust in environmental organisations, but only 13% for the Commission and 12% for national governments;

CALLS UPON ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TAKING PART IN THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS TO:

- recognise the importance of ambitious EU policies that effectively protect and improve the environment, both inside the EU and elsewhere;
- include in their programmes specific commitments to environment-related policies;
- involve environmental citizens' organisations in the formulation of such programmes;
- give their environment-related commitments a high profile during the elections campaign;

- encourage their candidates to consider environmental citizens' organisations as important stakeholders which need to be consulted and informed regularly in order to improve the quality of the European Parliament's decision-making;

AND OFFERS THE POLITICAL PARTIES

- the co-operation and assistance of its members in the formulation and implementation of these commitments;
- the ***ENVIRONMENTAL MANIFESTO FOR EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2004***, produced by eight leading European and international environmental organisations, as a baseline for their programmes and practice in 2004-2005, including 61 concrete steps to achieve the following objectives:
 - Halt the decline of Europe's biodiversity by 2010
 - A chemicals policy that puts safety first
 - Set the agricultural priorities right: clean production and safe food in a healthy social and economic context
 - Make cohesion policy work for the environment
 - From transport expansion to mobility management
 - Secure EU leadership in combating climate change
 - From waste to responsible use of resources
 - The EU taking the lead in the global context
 - Implementation and enforcement of legislation
 - The environment must be fully integrated into the European Parliament's work