

## Feckless Commission fails to deliver on energy efficiency

**Brussels, 22 June 2011** – Industry leaders of some of Europe’s most important companies and organisations today slammed the European Commission’s absence of courage on buildings efficiency and other energy efficiency improvements on the energy end-use side. The criticism comes as the European Commission releases its proposal for a framework Directive on Energy Efficiency.

The proposal adopted today by the European Commission clearly falls short of addressing Europe’s daunting climate and energy challenges. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), 2010 was the worst year in history in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, moving the world closer to the point of no return on global warming.

Speaking last week at a UN High-Level Global Sustainability Panel in Helsinki, Climate Commissioner Hedegaard said *"by 2016 we'll have 600bn in fossil fuel subsidies. Think what we could do if we invested this in renewables & efficiency"*. Strong though they are, the Commissioner’s words were not turned into meaningful actions by the rest of the European Commission. As Europe goes through hard economic times, it is justifiable to question the EU’s obsession with subsidizing the use of foreign fossil fuels and prioritizing the building out of energy supply and transmission when investing in the deep renovation of Europe’s building stock could create 2 million local jobs and increase Europe’s energy security.

*"We were shocked by the lack of ambition in the Commission’s proposal"* says Rick Wilberforce, President of EuroACE. *"Europe is already walking on thin, melting ice, yet the European Commission proposes a Directive that experts already consider as a failure. Even the 3% binding renovation target for public buildings was watered-down, the Commission only opting to renovate buildings to minimum standards instead of deep renovation will lead to a significant untapped savings potential whilst at the same time lead to higher costs for public authorities in the future"* he added.

Buildings account for 40% of EU energy demand, and applying existing technologies would already allow saving 83% of total energy demand in buildings. It is already estimated that by 2050, a 3% yearly deep renovation rate of Europe’s building stock, would save 32% of the total primary energy used in Europe. These measures are necessary if the EU is going to have a chance of meeting its 2050 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction target.

The Energy Efficiency Directive brought hopes for groundbreaking energy efficiency policy in Europe; however the Commission managed to disappoint the expectations of people and stakeholders, only to satisfy reluctant Member States who although talk up their green credentials lack the ambition to set a clear vision of how our societies will deal with tomorrow’s energy and climate challenge.

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*“The forces of conservatism have watered down this Directive so much that we find ourselves on the brink of failure” says Wilberforce. “We can only hope that the European Parliament and some of the more progressive Member States will step up and see the opportunity, both for the environment and for the economy that the deep renovation of buildings and improved energy efficiency can deliver for Europe”. -----ENDS-----*

For further information go to <http://www.renovate-europe.eu>

Note to editors:

***The Renovate Europe campaign was initiated by a range of industry leaders, with a focus on EU, national, regional and local policy levels. It is an ambitious roadmap on how to triple the renovation rate in Europe by 2020 and achieve an average improvement in energy performance of ~ 80%. Renovate Europe is solution neutral, each building has its own specificity, therefore policymakers should emphasize performance over specific technology.***

*The companies supporting this campaign stand ready and willing to help national and European policymakers Renovate Europe. We must work together to create local jobs, reduce Europe’s CO2 footprint and ensure that we are less likely to suffer from foreign energy shocks.*

- **MEDIA CONTACT**

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