Role of energy savings to be decided later

BRUSSELS, 22 January 2014 – Today, the European Commission presented feeble and incomplete climate and energy plans for 2030, postponing decisions on the role of energy efficiency in the framework, although it is widely recognised as the EU’s strategic choice to reduce costs, increase security and ensure environmental and climate protection. In a major shift away from the current three-target policy framework, the Commission proposes to only keep the greenhouse gas target binding at EU and national levels, even though the analysis accompanying the proposals shows that this option would miss out the substantial benefits of saving energy.

"A climate and energy policy with no long-term energy savings target cannot be called a framework but is piecemeal. It will exacerbate social, environmental and economic problems”, said Stefan Scheuer, Secretary General for the Coalition for Energy Savings. "However, the Commission left itself a chance to fix this omission in the coming months, certainly influenced by the growing support for a 2030 binding energy savings target."

Indeed, the decision to set or not to set 2030 energy savings targets is now postponed to the review of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) that is announced for July and will be informed by new data on energy efficiency.

"This European Commission has one last chance to lead the transition to a sustainable energy system,” said Jan te Bos, Chairman of the Coalition for Energy Savings and Director General of EURIMA, the European Insulation Manufacturers Association. “The Commission should act as Europe’s engine – and not as a handbrake. They can rely on support from the Parliament’s industry and environment committees, an increasing number of member states, civil society and large sectors of industry, all calling for a binding energy efficiency target”. 

The economic and scientific reasoning behind setting up an energy savings target has been taken onboard by the European Parliament’s industry and environment committees in a draft report voted on 9 January. The European Parliament is expected to adopt this report during its plenary session on 5 February, calling for three mutually reinforcing targets – greenhouse gases, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. Several Member States, including Germany and France, have also been vocal in supporting a multi-target approach to EU’s climate and energy policies.

Dora Petroula, Policy Officer for Climate Action Network Europe, a member of the Coalition for Energy Savings, said: "A strong climate and energy policy framework with three ambitious and complementary binding targets will help Europe fulfil its climate goals and boost its economy. Regrettably the Commission chose to present a proposal that is not ambitious and does not include an energy savings target, keeping the corresponding benefits away”.

Research by the Fraunhofer Institute in 2013 has shown that the EU has a 41% cost-effective end-use energy savings potential for 2030. Tapping this potential would reduce greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 by at least 49% to 61%, compared to 1990 levels, as well as boost competitiveness and lower net energy costs for households and industry by over €239 billion annually by 2030.
The Coalition for Energy Savings brings together business, professionals, local authorities, trade unions and civil society associations. The Coalition’s purpose is to make the case for a European energy policy that places a much greater, more meaningful emphasis on energy efficiency and savings. Coalition members represent more than 400 associations, 150 companies, 15 million supporters, more than 2 million employees, 1,000 cities and towns in 30 countries in Europe.

**Notes for editors**