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European Renewable Energies Federation asbl

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EREF sees breakthrough in Council towards a sound new Renewable Energy (RES) Directive for Europe

EREF is very pleased to see that the working group of the European Council on the Proposal for a Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources has with broad majority supported the joint proposal from Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom on the so-called flexibility regime for the new RES Directive.

The Commission Proposal had introduced a flexibility mechanism to help Member States to have some leeway for their obligation to reach their respective national target. But major parts of the Commission proposal met with strong criticism from Renewable industry, NGO's, politicians and Member States, because it would result in the introduction of a harmonised EU wide quota and certificate scheme, thus endangering the successful national support schemes, especially the feed-in mechanisms and putting an end especially to independent power producer driven RE deployment.

“The joint proposal of Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom now re-establishes the necessary investment security for Renewable Energy Projects and clarifies the outstanding role and obligation of Member States to come to terms with a need for rapid uptake of renewable energies in their countries for the sake of energy security, sustainability and climate protection and to ensure the adequate growth conditions”, underlined EREF President Dr. Nikos Vassilakos.

The proposal foresees that in the absence of an EU-wide support scheme and in order to guarantee that national support schemes are able to pursue the purposes of this Directive effectively, it must be left to each Member State to decide if and to what extent it grants energy from renewable sources which is produced in another Member State the right to benefit from its national support scheme and to decide if and to what extent it grants energy from renewable sources which is produced on its territory the right to benefit from the national support scheme of a different Member State.

Guarantees of Origin will no longer become an EU wide trade paper, as was proposed by the Commission, but a reliable document of proof of origin of the related renewable energy.

In order to have a tool of mutual assistance between Member States the trilateral proposal outlines that Member States may make arrangements for the statistical transfer of a specified amount of energy from renewable sources to be transferred from one Member State to another Member State. Dr. Nikos Vassilakos: “This is enough to give flexibility and it avoids pressure on Member States’ own policies to establish and develop a broad range of renewable technologies by a false priority for an EU wide certificate trade which would only put pressure for concentrated deployment of the cheapest RE technologies without any benefit for energy security and sustainability in every single region of Europe.”

EREF is now convinced that the Commission will accept this proposal as well, since Commissioner Andris Piebalgs had always made it very clear that the Commission wants a directive which is supported by a broad consensus and that he would not act against the Member States’ needs for their national target policies.

Nonetheless, as long as we have not 100 percent certainty for success of the trilateral proposal, EREF calls on the Rapporteur Claude Turmes and on the European Parliament to strictly support Mr. Turmes’ proposed flexibility mechanism as amendment, as long as there may still be a danger of sabotage against the trilateral amendment in the Council.

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