

Topic: letter to EU Commission President, Jose Barroso
Context: On March 17th a letter is sent to EU Commission President, Jose Barroso, requesting an update on the status of the roadmap for the elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies. This letter has been signed by 89 organisations.

89 organisations call on President Barroso to end environmentally harmful subsidies.

(Budapest, March 17, 2011) – 89 European and international organisations have called on President Barroso to honour the Commission commitment to end environmentally harmful subsidies.

In 2006 the EU committed to defining a roadmap for the removal of environmentally damaging subsidies by 2008. The European Commission reiterated this commitment in 2007. And in 2010 the Europe 2020 Strategy stressed the need to phase out environmentally harmful subsidies. This is in addition to numerous calls by EU heads of state and the European Parliament for the phasing out of environmentally harmful subsidies.

“We are really concerned that the European Commission is failing to develop a roadmap for the abolishment of environmentally harmful subsidies. It is ignoring its own commitment and the requests of both the Parliament and Council.” said Veronika Kiss from CEEweb for Biodiversity. “It is nonsensical that in this day and age public funds are still being used to subsidise activities that are damaging the environment on which we all depend.”

Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and Common Agricultural Policy are advancing without any obvious analysis of the environmental effects of the massive subsidies handed out in these sectors.

“The EU is reforming both the Common Fisheries Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy. How can we know these two policies will be supporting sustainable sectors if there is no assessment of the potential environmental harm of these subsidies?”

- ENDS -

NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

1. The EU's sustainable development strategy, <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/>
2. DG Environment has commissioned a study (Contract 07.0307/2008/514349/ETU/G1) providing methodology for identification, assessment and quantification of environmentally harmful subsidies, but it does not have an official status. [<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/taxation/pdf/EHS%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>]
3. The full list of signatory organisations can be found at www.ocean2012.eu/barroso

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