

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 13 January

Denmark takes over 6 month Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Denmark has taken over the six-month rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union, starting on 1 January 2012, following on from Poland who presided over the Council in the latter half of 2011. Denmark forms the second Presidency of the 18-month Trio Presidency of Poland, Denmark and Cyprus. The Danish government will form the secretariat for the Presidency and will chair meetings of the European Council and the Council of Ministers. The "Programme of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2012" outlines four strategic priorities for the term of office. These are; a responsible Europe, a dynamic Europe, a green Europe, and a safe Europe. The Presidency's key priority in the first half of 2012 will be to assist in the implementation of the decisions taken in the European Council on 9 December 2011 to enhance fiscal policy discipline and economic governance amongst member states, in order to tackle the debt crisis. In addition the Presidency will prioritise bilateral trade and investment agreements with, for example, India and Japan, further develop the Single Market, and will focus on air quality as an issue, promoting the development of energy efficient vehicles such as hybrids and electric cars, and incorporating air pollution targets in the long-term EU strategies for environment and health. (Source: eu2012dk) http://eu2012.dk/en/EU-and-the-Presidency/About-the-Presidency/~/_media/Files/Priorities%20of%20the%20Danish%20Presidency%20of%20the%20Council%20of%20the%20European%20Union.ashx

'Power-trains for Europe' report published

Consultants McKinsey & Company have published a report, 'Power-trains for Europe', looking at the potential take-up of various low carbon vehicle

technologies. The report documents the role of electric, plug-in hybrid and fuel cell vehicles and was written on behalf of a number of automotive and other interested companies. The report predicted that there would be a balanced scenario for the electrification of passenger cars in the EU by 2020, with ultra-low carbon vehicles having the potential to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions and improve local air quality. Findings from the report also noted that post-2025, the total cost of ownership of various types of power-trains converges, and suggested plug-in hybrid vehicles would be more economic in the short term, with all ultra-low carbon vehicles cost-competitive with Internal Combustion Engine vehicles as early as 2020. Other conclusions were outlined around total cost of ownership and hydrogen infrastructure. Suggested next steps include launching a study of EU market launch plan for fuel cell vehicles and hydrogen infrastructure, as well as co-ordinating the roll-out of electric vehicle recharging infrastructure at European level. (Source: International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy)

http://www.iphe.net/docs/Resources/Power_trains_for_Europe.pdf



European Environment Agency publishes reports on environmental tax reform

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has published new reports on environmental tax reform. The EEA states that European governments could simultaneously reduce income tax, increase innovation and cut pollution by introducing well-

targeted environmental taxes and recycling the revenues back into the economy. Looking into various environmental taxation regimes across Europe, the report shows that policies in countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have had broadly positive effects in increasing innovation. In the German example, the report suggests that the wider economic impact of environmental tax reform resulted in a cut in pension contributions and created an estimated 250,000 jobs. (Source: European Environment Agency)

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/environmental-tax-reform-opportunities>



President of DAF Trucks is new ACEA CV Chair

ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association, has announced that the President of DAF Trucks, Harrie Schippers, will be the new Chair of the ACEA Commercial Vehicle Board. Mr Schippers takes over from Alfredo Altavilla, CEO of IVECO S.p.A. Mr Schippers said: "The year 2012 will be challenging in light of the uncertain development of the economies in major markets around the world and in particular in Europe, where it is extremely important that confidence in the Eurozone be restored. The European commercial vehicle industry strives to maintain its leadership in safety and environmental technologies, thereby contributing to sustainable growth in Europe and abroad. We need a stable environment to underpin our long-term investment strategies". (Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be>

Week ahead

European Commission

No relevant activity

Council of Ministers

No relevant activity.

European Parliament (Plenary Session - Strasbourg)

Tuesday 17 January

Elections of the President of Parliament

Elections of the Vice-President of Parliament

Wednesday 18 January

Danish Presidency Programme

Election of the Quaestors of Parliament

Follow-up to the Durban Climate Change Conference

Thursday 19 January

Conclusions of the European Council Meeting

