



## EEL News Service

### Issue 2015/09 of 19 June 2015

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**Dear members of the EEL Network,**

A great deal of political groundwork has been attempted in the first two weeks of June. Climate change negotiations under the UNFCCC resumed in Bonn, Germany, between 1 to 11 June 2015, with the view to streamlining the draft negotiating text released on 25 February 2015 before the Paris Climate talks in November of this year. In this News Service, a special report from co-editor in chief Leonardo Massai, who participated in these negotiations, can be found under the heading 'Climate Change'.

Meanwhile, the G7 annual Summit (held 7-8 June) made some progress, with all countries committing to a 40-70% reduction in emissions by 2050, eventually phasing out fossil fuels completely before the end of the century. Japan and Canada were on board for the first time. For an update about Pope Francis' [encyclical](#), see our Twitter account [@EurEnvLaw](#).

Furthermore, a number of events were held in Brussels this week to mark the [EU Sustainable Energy Week](#). Additionally, the European Commission has launched a public consultation into Ocean Governance (participate [here](#)) and started [infringement procedures](#) against Germany over its new road tax for private

vehicles.

**At the T.M.C Asser Institute,**

Earlier this week (15-16 June), [the T.M.C Asser Institute](#) hosted a workshop entitled "[Governing the Global Climate Regime: Issues of Institutional Integrity and Justice](#)", which was organised as a collaboration between the T.M.C Asser Institute, Griffith University's Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law ([IEGL](#)) and Amsterdam Centre for International Law ([ACIL](#)).

**Asser Summer School: 24-28 August 2015**

We are happy to inform you that it is still possible to register for the Summer Programme in [International & European Law: The Future we Choose](#). Apply [here](#). The 5-day programme will consist of interactive lectures by renowned experts from academia and practice, and a study visit to the International Court of Justice. Prof. Malgosia Fitzmaurice (Queen Mary University of London) will open the programme.

The programme will deal with topics such as [the Climate negotiations](#) and [the implications of the TTIP for the environment](#).

Other confirmed speakers include [Dr. Marcel Szabo](#) (Hungarian Ombudsman for Future Generations) and [Pier Vellinga](#) (Professor in Climate Change) are confirmed speakers.

Moreover, two participants from India are eligible for a full scholarship and may apply for the scholarship **until the 28th June 2015**. Find information on how to apply [here](#).

**Kind regards,**

**Wybe Th. Douma**

**Senior Researcher EU Law / International Trade Law T.M.C. Asser Institute**  
e-mail [w.t.douma@asser.nl](mailto:w.t.douma@asser.nl)

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**Case Law**



**European Commission Press Release:** [Commission refers Romania to Court over failure to transpose legislation on end-of-life vehicles](#) (28/05/2015)

**European Commission Press Release:** [Commission refers Germany to Court for e-waste failings and proposes fines](#) (28/05/2015)

**European Commission Press Release:** [Commission launches infringement case on the introduction by Germany of a new road charging scheme for private vehicles \("PKW-Maut"\)](#) (18/06/2015)

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**CJEU Judgment: *Case C-15/14 P, Commission v MOL Magyar Olaj- és Gázipari Nyrt* (04/06/2015)**

Hungary regulates all mining activities under its Mining Act. MOL is a company established in Budapest, which has as its core activities the exploration for, and production of, crude oil, natural gas and gas products. MOL sought extension of the mining rights for 12 of its hydrocarbon fields and this extension was granted in a 2005 extension agreement (under Article 26/A(5) of the Mining Act), which granted a five-year extension of the deadline to start exploiting those 12 hydrocarbon fields and which set the extension fee that MOL would pay to Hungary. In 2008, the Mining Act was amended and the rate of the mining fee was increased.

The Commission adopted a decision in 2010 which determined that the 2005 agreement and the 2008 amendment ('the measure') conferred an unfair advantage on MOL and therefore constituted State aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU and ordered Hungary to recover the aid from MOL. MOL successfully brought an action for annulment of the decision at the General Court. The Court found that while the measure was 'State aid', it was not selective. The Commission appealed, arguing that the General Court had misinterpreted and misapplied the third condition in Article 107(1) TFEU and that the Hungarian authorities had in fact conferred a selective advantage on MOL.

The CJEU concluded that the General Court had not erred in law. It accepted that several consecutive measures could be regarded as a single intervention, but only where a close link existed between the measures, taking into account chronology, their purpose and the circumstances pertaining in the undertaking at the time the intervention took place. The CJEU found that no such close link existed between the 2005 agreement and the 2008 amendment, and that the Commission had also not shown that the Hungarian authorities had intended to exercise its regulatory discretion and confer an advantage on MOL. In fact, the CJEU noted, the increase in mining fees occurred in the context of an increase in international prices.

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**CJEU Judgment:** [Case C-5/14, Kernkraftwerke Lippe-Ems GmbH v Hauptzollamt Osnabrück](#) (04/06/2015)

Kernkraftwerke brought a case against Hauptzollamt Osnabrück (the competent tax authority) before the Finanzgericht Hamburg to challenge Germany's excise duty on nuclear fuel (introduced for the period 1 January 2011- 31 December 2016). Kernkraftwerke argued that the duty was incompatible with EU law, in particular with articles 93, 191 and 192 of the EAEC Treaty. Finanzgericht Hamburg asked the CJEU for a preliminary ruling on compatibility.

The CJEU found that this was not a product duty, but rather a duty of a 'hybrid nature' that was levied at the time the fuel was used to produce electricity. The operator of nuclear power plants had either to pay the duty or cease their activity altogether; no alternative was open to them. Thus, the duty was 'more akin in its effect to a tax on the economic activity of operators of nuclear power stations, than to true tax on a product'.

On this basis, the CJEU considered that the duty probably did not engage the EAEC Treaty but nevertheless considered Articles 93, 191 and 192 in turn. It concluded that none of the three articles were engaged by the duty; the duty was not a customs duty, charge having equivalent effect or quantitative restriction on imports (thus Art 93 was not engaged, this was an internal tax under Article 110); the duty did not affect the Community's privileges and immunities (thus Art 191 was not engaged); the duty did not jeopardise the attainment of the EAEC Treaty's objectives because the duty did not relate to the supply of nuclear fuel, only to its use (thus Art 192 was not engaged).

The CJEU noted (*obiter dictum*) that Art 1 EA assigned to 'the Community the general task of creating the conditions necessary for the speedy establishment and growth of nuclear industries'. The Treaty did not 'require Member States to introduce or develop nuclear energy as such, still less nuclear energy exempt from all taxes'.

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**CJEU Judgment:** [Case C-161/14, Commission v United Kingdom](#) (04/06/2015)

The Commission brought this case against the United Kingdom, alleging that the United Kingdom had failed to fulfill its obligations under Article 98 of the VAT Directive because its national laws applied a reduced rate of VAT to 'energy-saving materials' which were installed in housing or which were supplied for installation in housing.

Under this Directive, Member States should apply the same rate of VAT to supplies of goods and services (Art 96) unless one of the exceptions provided for

in Article 98 is applicable. Member States may apply a reduced rate of VAT if the supply of goods and services falls under one of the categories set out in Annex III (Art 98(2)). Reductions can be applied in the case of the 'provision, construction, renovation and alteration of housing, as part of a social policy' (Category 10) and to the renovation and repairing of private dwellings, excluding materials which account for a significant part of the value of the service supplied (Category 10a).

The Commission argued that the national law of promoting the use of energy-saving materials in the general housing stock did not constitute a social policy and thus did not fall within Category 10. The Commission argued that the United Kingdom was motivated by environmental or energy policy objectives which, while in the interests of society as a whole, were unconnected to the issue of housing as part of a social policy. The exception in Category 10a also did not apply, according to the Commission.

The United Kingdom responded that Category 10 did apply and that the reduced rate addressed an obvious social need because it meant that households could more easily maintain their living standards and that household expenditure would be lowered. Regarding Category 10a, the United Kingdom argued that the 'installing' of the materials was equivalent to either 'renovation' or 'repairing' of dwellings.

The CJEU held that while the UK's policy of housing improvement may produce social effects, extending the scope of the reduced rate of VAT to all residential accommodation could not be described as 'essentially social' and did not therefore comply with Article 98 and Category 10. Moreover, it held that because the United Kingdom had applied the reduced rate to all supplies of services of installing energy-saving materials and to supplies of such materials, without differentiating between people's income, age or other criteria, the provisions of national law at issue could not be regarded as having been adopted for reasons exclusively or principally of social interest. Regarding Category 10a, the CJEU also adopted the Commission's position.

The CJEU thus found that the United Kingdom had failed to fulfill its obligations under Article 98 of the VAT Directive. The question now is thus whether the VAT Directive should be changed in order to green EU VAT rules.

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## Commentary:

**EurActiv Article:** [UK's Green VAT ruled illegal by EU judges](#) (04/06/2015)

Ashley Fox, leader of Britain's Conservatives in the European Parliament, said, "When you consider the importance these days of promoting energy-saving, this judgment is most unfortunate and thoroughly unwelcome. It defies common sense. Commission taxation spokeswoman Vanessa Mock said the UK must take immediate measures to comply with the judgment and that the Commission would follow the matter closely."

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## General



**viEUws:** [Brussels briefing on Environment: All you need to know for June 2015](#) (03/06/2015)

Includes: 2015 edition of Green Week, UN Climate talks in Bonn, EU ETS, The Commission's circular economy consultation, greening transport and air combustion rules for large combustion plants.

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**European Commission:** [Moving towards a circular economy](#)

The Commission says it is aiming to present a new, more ambitious circular economy strategy late in 2015, to transform Europe into a more competitive resource-efficient economy, addressing a range of economic sectors, including waste. As previously reported, an [earlier proposal](#) on circular economy went through public consultations but was withdrawn by the new Commission.

The Commission launched a public consultation on the subject on the 28 May 2015 and it will run until the 20 August 2015. The public consultation can be accessed [here](#).

The Commission is organising a Circular Economy Conference in Brussels on 25 June 2015, of which details can be found [here](#).

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**EurActiv Article:** ['Better Regulation' won't hurt environment, vows Timmermans](#) (04/06/2015)

The European Commission's First-Vice President Frans Timmermans, in charge of "Better Regulation", said that a controversial "fitness check" of environmental rules would go ahead, despite campaigners' warnings it could destroy decades of nature protection work.

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**European Parliament Article:** [President of United Nations General Assembly: Environment vital for sustainable development](#) (04/06/2015)

During a visit to the European Parliament on the 3 June, Sam Kahamba Kutesa, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, said: 'We cannot have sustainable development without addressing social, development and environmental issues'. He also indicated that an environmental aspect would be added to the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are set to be agreed upon in New York in September of this year.

**EurActiv Article:** [First draft of sustainable development goals exposes gaps, warn NGOs](#) (05/06/2015)

The new set of development goals that will address global poverty, inequality and climate change over the next 15 years are strong on vision, but weak on the methods to make them a reality, NGOs warned this week. A 'zero' draft of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) was published on the 2 June and can be accessed [here](#).



**EurActiv Opinion, Joanna Sullivan:** [Sustainability must become a financial imperative](#)

With a notable few exceptions, Europe's CEOs have been slow to adapt to the changing world and integrate sustainability in their daily modus operandi. Sustainability has to become a financial imperative, and fit within the language of business - profit and loss.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Financial crisis can spur green economies, environment bosses told](#) (09/06/2015)

The financial crisis could transform European Union countries such as Greece into green economies, if leaders can ignore political pressure to deliver quicker "brown" jobs and growth, heads of European environment protection agencies were told in Brussels. Kristín L. Árnadóttir, of the Environment Agency of Iceland, said her country's banking crisis had created the conditions to use green investment to stimulate economic growth.

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## Air



**EurActiv Article:** [Governments ditch EU methane limits](#) (12/06/2015)

National governments have axed methane emission caps to fight climate change and protect public health from draft European Union air pollution rules, ahead of a meeting of environment ministers on the 15 June. The National Emissions Ceiling (NEC) Directive sets limits for certain air pollutants in each EU country. The latest version, currently going through the legislative process, is the first time that the European Commission has tried to cap methane. A [working paper](#) prepared by diplomats ahead of the environment ministers' meeting strikes requirements to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030 from the bill.

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# Chemicals



**EurActiv Article:** [Big Pharma paying for superbug-breeding pollution, says watchdog](#) (12/06/2015)

Major pharmaceutical companies are buying drugs from waste-dumping Chinese factories that create the “ideal breeding ground” for killer superbugs, an investigation published on the 11 June revealed. Antibiotic effluent in the environment can cause antimicrobial resistance (AMR) on land and in waterways near sites. Non-resistant bacteria is killed by the pollution, while resistant bacteria survives and breeds, passing on their resilience to the medicines. The Review on Microbial Resistance, which reports directly to UK Prime Minister David Cameron, has warned that, if unchallenged, AMR could kill 10 million people a year until 2050.

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# Climate Change



## EEL News Service report from the Bonn climate change conference

by editor-in-chief **Leonardo Massai**

The climate change negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) resumed in Bonn, Germany, between 1 to 11 June 2015. They included the 42nd sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) as well as the ninth part of the second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP 2-9).

The latter Working Group resumed its work with the view to streamline the [draft negotiating text](#) released in February 2015 as the main result of the negotiation session that took place in Geneva in that month. In particular, Parties convened in negotiating groups and facilitated groups that undertook streamlining and consolidation, clustering and conceptual discussions of the [Geneva text](#). The themes under discussion reflected the skeleton of the Geneva text, notably: general/objective; adaptation and loss and damage; mitigation; finance; technology development and transfer; capacity building; transparency; preamble; definitions; time frames; implementation and compliance; and procedural and institutional provisions. The ADP also continued its discussion on workstream 2 with the view to agree on a COP decision in Paris that would provide more clarity on the pre-2020 mitigation actions required to increase ambition.

Unfortunately, little progress was made on the text, with basically no time for Parties to start negotiating. Parties did agree to mandate the ADP co-chairs to produce a new streamlined iteration of the negotiating text by the end of July, a few weeks ahead of the next round of talks that will start on 31 August 2015 in Bonn. In fact, during the ADP closing plenary the co-chairs announced that the two following additional documents will be produced ahead of that next session:

- Revised streamlined consolidated negotiation text for Paris (shortened version of the Geneva text based on the discussions held in Bonn)
- Working document

ADP co-chairs made clear several times that the only official text on the table is the Geneva text. It will remain official until Parties decide to change it in Paris at COP21. It will then depend on Parties whether to accept working with the new shortened text or refuse it and go back to the Geneva text. Obviously, given the short amount of time before COP21, the latter option would seriously put in danger the final result of the Paris summit.

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**Independent Report, commission by G7: [A New Climate for Peace: Taking Action on Climate and Fragility Risks](#)** (14/04/2015)

“A New Climate for Peace: Taking Action on Climate and Fragility Risks”, an independent report commissioned by members of the G7, identifies seven compound climate-fragility risks that pose serious threats to the stability of states and societies in the decades ahead. Based on a thorough assessment of existing policies on climate change adaptation, development cooperation and humanitarian aid, and peacebuilding, the report recommends that the G7 take concrete action, both as individual members and jointly, to tackle climate-fragility risks and increase the resilience of states and societies to them.

**G7 Annual Summit 2015:** The G7 annual Summit was held on the 7 and 8 June in Bavaria, Southern Germany. The Leader's Declaration of the G7 Summit can be accessed [here](#)

**Politico Article: [Merkel convinces Canada and Japan on CO2](#)** (08/06/2015)

G7 leaders were able to agree on reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 to 70 percent by 2050, compared to 2010 levels, and on limiting global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. Backed by the German public, and boosted by her own deep knowledge of climate change (Merkel is a trained chemist), her long and steady push is now being lauded for bringing other G7 leaders on board, and eventually forcing the two primary opponents, Japan and Canada, to back down.

**EurActiv Article:** [NGOs unsure of lukewarm G7 climate deal](#) (09/06/2015)

During the concluding statement on the 8 June, heads of state and government agreed on a binding 2 degree target to limit global warming, on a 40-70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and indicated that industrialised countries would phase out fossil fuels before the end of the century. "We commit to doing our part to achieve a low-carbon global economy in the long-term, including developing and deploying innovative technologies striving for a transformation of the energy sectors by 2050," read the communique. G7 leaders also agreed on a fund for climate protection in developing countries, which is set to be stocked with \$100 billion in public and private contributions and pledged to promote renewables in developing countries.

Oxfam criticised the outcome as inadequate. A recent [Oxfam Study](#) showed the devastating effects of coal power on the global fight against hunger. The report states that from 2080, 7 million tonnes of food will be lost every year thanks to emissions from G7 coal power plants. The Oxfam study assumes that global warming will increase by 3-4 degrees.

**Reuters:** [G7 leaders bid 'Auf Wiedersehen' to carbon fuels](#) (09/06/2015)

Leaders of the world's major industrial democracies resolved on Monday to wean their energy-hungry economies off carbon fuels, marking a major step in the battle against global warming that raises the chances of a UN climate deal later this year. [T]he G7 leaders pledged in a communique after their two-day meeting to develop long-term low-carbon strategies and abandon fossil fuels by the end of the century.

**EurActiv Article:** [German Energiewende policy jeopardises EU climate efforts](#) (12/06/2015)

Despite the ambitious 2-degree-target set by G7 leaders, experts warn against premature elation ahead of the UN Climate Summit in Paris, saying Germany's solo run, in particular, is a threat to Europe's efforts to protect the climate. Europe must finally take ETS seriously and oppose the biased criticism of the system. "At the climate summit in Paris (COP21), Europe must campaign for a global emissions trading system," said Joachim Weimann, a professor of environmental economics at the University of Magdeburg.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Poor nations waiting for a deal on climate, says French minister](#) (29/05/2015)

Ségolène Royal, the environment minister and former presidential candidate, will play a leading role in the United Nations conference in December as the French government is working to produce a new “Paris protocol” that would determine the future of global action on climate change for decades beyond 2020. She said that the key to a successful agreement would be for rich countries to come forward with plans to provide financial assistance to the poorer world, to help developing nations with both mitigation and adaptation.

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**European Commission:** [Speech by Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete: The role of innovative, environmentally-friendly technologies in EU climate policy](#) (03/06/2015)

Miguel Arias Cañete: "The world's most competitive economies are the most innovative and energy-efficient. For Europe, quality and innovation are the way to go. This way, we can prove to the world that green growth is not just a utopian vision. It is the smart answer to many of the challenges the world is facing: more intelligent ways of producing, less pollution, energy efficient homes, lower energy bills and cleaner sources of energy".

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**The Guardian Article:** [Bonn meeting ends with last-minute compromise on Paris climate text](#) (11/06/2015)

Slow progress was made until the final hours, as nations wrangled over the wording of an 89-page draft text, intending to cut it down to a more manageable size. After two weeks, the text had only been cut by four pages. Shortly before the talks were scheduled to finish, countries agreed that the co-chairs of the negotiations should be allowed to make their own alterations to the text, and present it to all countries for approval, probably in late July.

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**EurActiv Article:** [European Commission 'hails' fiddled Serbian climate pledge](#) (12/06/2015)

Serbia's new climate pledge for the coming UN summit in Paris has been hailed by the European Commission as an “exemplary” step towards EU accession, even though official figures show that it involves a 15% increase in the country's emissions by 2030.

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# Energy



**IETA Press Release:** [World's carbon markets case studies highlight different models of emissions trading](#) (27/05/2015)

The case studies can be found [here](#).

**IETA Press Release:** [Carbon Expo 2015 finds renewed optimism for future of carbon mechanisms](#) (28/05/2015)

The Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, Christiana Figueres, emphasized the role of the private sector in her opening remarks: "...they can also help towards providing the investment, the finance and the technology developing economies need to pursue a climate-friendly path that is part and parcel of their growth and development".

**Politico Article:** [EU pushes expansion of flawed emissions scheme](#) (03/06/2015)

The European Union's Emissions Trading System has been a bit of a flop so far, but that isn't stopping the bloc's climate negotiators from urging their international counterparts to set up similar systems of their own. While the International Emissions Trading Association praised the submission for pushing for market-based mechanisms, others pointed out that Europe has yet to fulfill its own long-standing carbon market ambitions. "It's one thing to talk about linking various carbon markets together, but the EU has to demonstrate that it can resolve its own ETS" said MEP Ian Duncan, the spokesman for the European Conservatives and Reformists at the COP21 Paris summit talks, during the UNFCCC conference in Bonn.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Europe's energy big six say gas must help in the fight against climate change](#) (01/06/2015)

The bosses of Europe's six largest energy companies press the case for getting out of coal and switching to natural gas in a joint letter to the Financial Times. Although they say renewable energy has "an increasing role to play", they think natural gas will help meet energy needs, arguing that governments must "pursue all options to lower carbon while providing the energy the world needs to meet demand from a growing population seeking better living standards". The six bosses also said that they had written to the United Nations on the matter.

**The Carbon Brief Blog:** [Climate benefits of a natural gas bridge unlikely to be significant](#) (03/06/2015)

Natural gas can only be a worthwhile bridge to a low carbon future if a series of tough conditions are met, according to a [working paper](#) from the influential New Climate Economy initiative. The paper says the climate benefits of gas, including shale gas, could in theory be significant. It suggests a 10% increase in global gas supplies could prevent 500 gigawatts (GW) of new coal capacity being added by 2035, avoiding 1.3 billion tonnes of annual carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. But it warns that any theoretical benefits could easily be wiped out without controls on methane leakage, limits on total energy use and targets to ensure low-carbon energy sources are not displaced.

**energypost Article:** [Going for gas: the risky strategy of the world's largest companies](#) (08/06/2015)

At the World Gas Conference in Paris, the major oil companies all avowed their belief that gas will be the world's "fuel of choice", because it is "the cleanest fossil fuel", "abundant" and "competitive". But Karel Beckman argues they are overstating the case for gas. And may even be betting on the wrong horse.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Europe should 'keep its hands off coal', German study says](#) (03/06/2015)

Forcible displacements, thousands of deaths and harmful CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – the "2015 Coal Atlas", published by Germany's Heinrich Böll Foundation, shows some of the devastating effects of coal power and calls on the EU to stand up to energy corporations. The Report can be accessed in German, [here](#).

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**EU Observer Article: [Norway bans pension fund from coal investment](#)**

(05/06/2015)

The Norwegian parliament has unanimously voted on the 5 June to ban its pension fund from investing in coal companies, a decision which will lead to the largest politically motivated withdrawal of funds from the fossil fuels sector. The pension fund will not be permitted to invest in “mining companies and power producers for whom a significant part of their business relates to coal used for energy purposes”. 'A significant part' has been defined as where 30 percent or more of the revenue is from coal, and/or 30 percent of activities are in coal mining or power. Norway's finance minister estimated that between 50 to 75 companies that are currently being funded by the pension fund could fall under the criteria for the ban, while Greenpeace put its estimations at 122 companies.

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**Carbon Tracker Initiative Report: [Coal: caught in the EU utility death spiral](#)**

(05/06/2015)

A review of the European Union's utility sector shows how betting on new and existing coal plants using out-dated business models, that has slashed returns for the bloc's biggest generators, poses significant future risks for investors. The Report can be accessed [here](#) and downloaded as a [pdf file](#).

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**European Commission Press Release: [Energy Union: Advancing the integration of European energy markets](#)** (08/06/2015)

On the 8 June, the European Commission and the Baltic Sea Region countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding modernising and strengthening the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan. At the same time, 12 European countries signed a declaration for regional cooperation on security of electricity supply within the European internal market. This was followed by the signature of a political declaration of the Pentalateral Energy Forum. Regional co-operation will help achieve EU-wide market integration and further contribute to unlocking the full potential of renewables in the energy system.

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## **EU Observer Opinion:** [EU takes a step backward on fossil fuel subsidies](#)

(09/06/2015)

James Nix: While the G7 leaders took a step forward and agreed to decarbonise the global economy in the course of this century, EU energy ministers took a step backwards during a meeting in Luxemburg. It appears that the previous commitment to tackle fossil fuel subsidies has been dropped. Fossil fuel subsidies reduce the final costs of buying coal, oil and gas. Governments typically use taxpayer funds to lower the final market price of energy or to reduce costs of production, or both.

Up to and including 2014, the European Commission actively encouraged member states to phase-out fossil fuel subsidies. In early 2015, Commission officials advised that 11 member states be asked to tackle their fossil fuel subsidies under the EU's annual cycle of fiscal review known as the Semester. But all eleven draft recommendations were dropped from the final text issued by the Commission itself. When asked why subsidy recommendations were excluded, the Commission said the issue would be taken up under the Energy Union, a commitment since revealed as hollow.

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## **EurActiv Interivew:** [Greens/EFA president: 'The only way to reduce our energy dependency is to cut consumption'](#) (10/06/2015)

Rebecca Harms, the president of The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, has criticised the Energy Union project as outdated. In the interview with EurActiv, she discusses energy efficiency and the problem with nuclear technology. "All experts agree that improving energy efficiency is the biggest source of energy we have, but nobody is going for it! Not only does reducing consumption protect the climate, it also allows countries to save money, which then can be invested in job creation".

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## **EU Commission News:** [Commissioner launches Euro-Mediterranean gas platform](#) (11/06/2015)

Miguel Arias Cañete, European Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, and Dr. Yousef Bataineh, Ambassador of Jordan to Belgium, alongside representatives of the Union for the Mediterranean countries have launched a new Euro-Mediterranean platform for cooperation on gas. It is the first of the three platforms – on gas, regional electricity market, and renewables and energy efficiency – to be launched following the Commissioner's visit to Algeria and Morocco last month.

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**See also:**

**energypost Interview:** [Exclusive – Jérôme Ferrier, President International Gas Union: “You cannot equate gas with coal or oil. You have to discriminate!”](#)  
(29/05/2015)

**EurActiv Article:** [EU plans major offensive to diversify gas supplies](#)  
(02/06/2015)

**energypost Article:** [The West must do as the Chinese: build renewables systems for energy security and abundance](#) (03/06/2015)

**EurActiv Article:** [Internet of Things creeps into the energy sector](#) (04/06/2015)

**energypost Article:** [IEA sees harsh reality for gas industry](#) (05/06/2015)  
The 2015 “[Gas medium-term market report](#)“ released by the International Energy Agency (IEA) on the 4 June in Paris sounded a warning note to anyone who believes gas is bound to conquer the world.

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## Nature & Agriculture



**viEUws:** [Brussels briefing on Agriculture: All you need to know for June 2015](#)  
(10/06/2015)

An update on organic reform and the proposal to allow national bans on farmers' use of GMO animal feed.

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**Peace Palace Library Interview:** [An Interview with Professor Steven Freeland on his new book, entitled: "Addressing the Intentional Destruction of the Environment during Warfare under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court" \(29/05/2015\)](#)

The book elaborates on the ongoing debate regarding Crimes against the Environment during Armed Conflicts. Professor Freeland underlines the need for all combatants to respect the environment during warfare, because of its importance for sustaining life also after the conflict has ended. Professor Freeland said, "I propose in my book the incorporation of a newly codified crime – 'crimes against the environment' – in the ICC Statute."

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**Council of the European Union Press Release:** [EU institutions provisionally agree on animal health measures \(01/06/2015\)](#)

The focus of the animal health law is on the control and prevention of transmissible animal diseases, whose effect can be devastating for individual animals, animal populations, animal keepers and the economy. It aims to reduce the adverse effects of those transmissible animal diseases and to limit the potential negative effects of the measures taken to prevent and control them. It puts a high emphasis on the prevention of animal diseases and places a special importance on biosecurity measures as a key prevention tool.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\) reform sows seeds of panic among French farmers \(02/06/2015\)](#)

The CAP's complicated new "greening" criteria are causing a headache for Europe's 12 million farmers. In France, the revision of plots eligible for the subsidy has added to the confusion.

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**European Commission Factsheet:** [Q and A: Fishing Opportunities in the EU for 2016 \(02/06/2015\)](#)

**European Commission Press Release:** [Commission plans for 2016 fishing opportunities: North and Atlantic seas fisheries progress to sustainability, serious overfishing in Mediterranean \(02/06/2015\)](#)

[Public Consultation on fishing quotas for 2016, 02/06/2015-01/10/2015](#)

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**EurActiv Report:** [Logging companies plundering Congo's rainforest](#) (03/06/2015)

The Democratic Republic of Congo's biggest logging companies are systematically violating national laws to plunder Congo's forests, undermining efforts to protect the world's second largest rainforest. In a report, Global Witness analyses the findings of independent monitoring inspections into 28 of the country's 57 industrial logging concessions between 2011 and 2014. Each inspection turned up illegal activities, including logging outside of permitted areas, overexploitation and the falsification of records, the report says. Moreover, the report also faults the United States and European Union countries for not enforcing recently-passed laws banning imports of illegally harvested timber. The US and EU countries imported 19.8 million euros' worth of Congolese timber in 2014, according to customs data.

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**European Commission Press Release:** [Green Week 2015 tackles declining biodiversity as new data reveals birds and marine life threatened with extinction](#) (03/06/2015)

Nearly 15% of birds in the EU are threatened with extinction, as well as 7.5% of all marine fish species in European waters, according to new reports.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Goyens: EU law on animal cloning 'falls short of consumers expectations](#) (11/06/2015)

Food from cloned animals has 'novel food' status at EU level, and requires approval before being allowed onto the market. But the EU legislation needs to be more transparent by covering also food from the descendants of clones, with a traceability system for imports of cloned animals embryos and semen, says Monique Goyens, Director General of the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC).

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## Transport



**EurActiv Article:** [Car makers gear up for next round of CO2 emission cuts](#) (29/05/2015)

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**EurActiv Article:** [ACEA boss: Even a zero-emission target will fail to address car CO2](#) (29/05/2015)

Europe's ambition of heavily cutting CO2 emissions from cars won't work if it fails to address the 95% of emissions coming from old vehicles, according to Erik Jonnaert, the Secretary General of the European Automobile Manufacturer's Association, ACEA.

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viEUws: ['Growth in CO2 emissions from transport nullifies progress made in other sectors'](#), [Michael Cramer MEP](#) (08/06/2015)

Michael Cramer MEP (Greens/EFA), chair of the European Parliament's Transport and Tourism Committee (TRAN), talks about the most pressing EU transport issues.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Pollution from ships kills thousands each year](#) (10/06/2015)

Shipping emissions are an invisible killer that cause lung cancer and heart disease, a new study has found, but researchers say the 60,000 deaths they cause each year could be significantly cut by exhaust filtration devices.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Diesel machines need the cleanest technology to relieve our choking cities](#) (03/06/2015)

Implementing consistent emissions standards for all diesel engines would push manufacturers to use the best available technology and improve the EU's air quality, argues François Cuenot, air quality policy officer at Transport & Environment.

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## Water



**European Commission Press Release:** [The European Commission launches a Public Consultation on Ocean Governance](#) (04/06/2015)

Commissioner Karmenu Vella, responsible for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, launched a public consultation on ocean governance at the World Ocean Summit in Portugal on the 4 June. The aim is to collect views on how the EU could contribute to achieving better international governance of oceans and seas to the benefit of sustainable blue growth. This public consultation will run until the 15 September.

[Participate in the Public Consultation on Ocean Governance, 04/06/2015-15/09/2015](#)

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**EurActiv Article:** [Ocean's role highlighted as global warming regulator](#)

(10/06/2015)

The Ocean and Climate Platform, a civil society group, has launched an appeal to recognise the vital role played by oceans in regulating global warming ahead of the COP 21 UN climate talks in Paris later this year.

The [Ocean's call for Climate](#) offers a series of proposals to ensure the role of oceans as the planet's natural thermostat is safeguarded at the COP 21 in Paris later this year.

The document highlights, among other things, the important role the oceans play in capturing carbon dioxide. "The ocean captures 90% of the heat from the greenhouse effect and a quarter of our CO2 emissions," said Françoise Gail, the Ocean and Climate Platform's scientific advisor.

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**EurActiv Article:** [Spain puts water and sanitation at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals debate](#) (11/06/2015)

Madrid wants the topic of water and sanitation, a service that is taken for granted in Western societies but is still considered a luxury for millions of human beings, to be at the core of the debates in the post 2015 development agenda.

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## Events



### 1 May-31 October

**Event:** EXPO 2015

**Topic/Title:** Feeding the planet: energy for life

**Organisation:** Bureau International des Expositions ([BIE](#))

**Venue:** Milan, Italy

[More information/EU at EXPO Milano website](#)

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## 22 June 2015

**Event:** Public Launch

**Topic/Title:** Interactive International Climate Regime Map

**Organisation:** [The Hague Institute for Global Justice](#)

**Venue:** The Hague Institute for Global Justice, Sophialaan 10, The Hague, the Netherlands

[More information](#)

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## 25 June

**Event:** Meeting

**Topic/Title:** The EU Agenda for Environmental Law

**Organisation:** Dutch Association for Environmental Law ([VMR](#))

**Venue:** New Babylon, Den Haag

Information on the event can be downloaded in English [here](#)

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## 25- 26 June 2015

**Event:** Inaugural workshop of the UACES CRN

**Topic/Title:** European Energy Policy

**Organisation:** [UACES CRN on the European Energy Policy](#)

**Venue:** Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, United Kingdom

[More information](#)

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## 24-28 August 2015

**Event:** Summer Programme on International and European Environmental Law

**Topic/Title:** International & European Environmental Law: The Future We Choose

**Organisation:** [T.M.C. Asser Institute](#)

**Venue:** T.M.C Asser Instituut, R.J. Schimmelpennincklaan 20-22, The Hague, the Netherlands

[More information/ Draft programme \(.PDF\)](#)

Note: [Two full scholarships available for participants from India \(.PDF\)](#)

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**2 - 4 September 2015**

**Event:** Conference

**Topic/Title:** Effectiveness of Environmental Law

**Organisation:** European Environmental Law Forum ([EELF](#))

**Venue:** Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Internationales et Communautaires ([CERIC](#)), University of Aix/Marseille, Aix en Provence, France

[More information](#) / [Programme](#) (.PDF)

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## Colofon

### Editors-in-Chief

Wybe Th. Douma (Senior Researcher, T.M.C. Asser Instituut and Lecturer of International Environmental Law, The Hague University)

Leonardo Massai (Senior Lecturer on International and EU Environmental Law, Catholic University of Lille)

### Editors

Katarina Hovden (T.M.C. Asser Instituut, The Hague)

Steffen van der Velde (Researcher, T.M.C. Asser Instituut, The Hague)

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