



WWF

ACTION PLAN

EU

2014



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*Fixing failures of budgetary and financial systems is instrumental to shift to a sustainable economy. WWF helped in making the EU Budget more sustainable, with robust analysis and concrete recommendations. MEPs must now further phase out environmentally harmful subsidies and encourage public and private investments to support a low-carbon economy and enhance our natural capital.*

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## SHIFT TO A RESOURCE-EFFICIENT ECONOMY CREATING GREEN JOBS

Europe is in the midst of economic, ecological and social crises that are intertwined and reinforce one another. At their heart is the unsustainable and inefficient use of our natural resources.

Creating a sustainable and fair resource-efficient economy in Europe has the potential to lead us out of these crises and create millions of green jobs. Resource efficiency means doing more with fewer resources: saving natural resources that are finite and increasingly costly is crucial for businesses to reduce their costs. Resource efficiency furthermore limits EU dependency on imports of commodities, including oil and gas.

On-going processes, such as the Europe 2020 Strategy mid-term review and the annual EU Semester recommendations and EU Budget negotiations, can be used to initiate a transformation in the short term. At the same time tools to foster public and private low-carbon and resource-efficient investments are increasingly discussed at EU level.

### HOW CAN MEPs IMPROVE THIS POLICY?

- Support the addition of a binding resource efficiency target in the Europe 2020 Strategy mid-term review in 2014-2015 and the monitoring of annual resource efficiency progress in the EU Semester.
- Ensure the 20% climate spending commitment in the EU Budget is reached as soon as 2016 through annual EU Budget negotiations and the EU Budget mid-term review in 2016.
- Phase-out environmentally harmful subsidies (mainly for fossil fuels, agriculture, fisheries, water and transport) by tracking them, setting up national processes to phase them out gradually and monitoring progress through the EU Semester.
- Support low-carbon and resource-efficient investments from the European Investment Bank by engaging in its climate policy review in 2014-2015
- Incentivise the greening of private investments to support a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy by engaging in the discussion on long term financing policies of the EU economy.



**20mn**

Up to 20 million jobs can be created by 2020 in a European green economy<sup>1</sup>

## YOUR ACTION PLAN

- 1 Urge the Commission and Member States via an own-initiative report and parliamentary questions to agree on an ambitious and binding resource efficiency target under the Europe 2020 Strategy mid-term review, and the monitoring of annual resource efficiency progress in the EU Semester.
- 2 Through the negotiations on the annual EU Budgets, require that the 20% climate spending commitment in the overall EU Budget is reached as soon as 2016.
- 3 Demand via an own-initiative report on the EU Semester for monitoring and phasing out of environmentally harmful subsidies as well as environmental tax reform. Notably, use DG Energy's study on EU energy subsidies from October 2014 to demand the elimination of listed fossil fuel subsidies.
- 4 Call on the European Investment Bank to scale up support for low-carbon businesses and to reduce support to carbon intensive projects, during its climate policy review.
- 5 Integrate sustainability requirements for private finance by actively following up on the Commission's list of actions identified in the communication on long term financing of the EU economy.

## WE MUST ACT NOW!

### Resource efficiency:

- Europeans generate three billion tonnes of waste per year - over 500 kg of household waste per person. It is alarming that in an increasingly resource-dependent Europe, only 40% of solid waste is recycled<sup>2</sup>.
- Reducing the total material requirements of the EU economy by 17% would create between 1.4 and 2.8 million jobs. Every percentage point reduction in resource use could therefore lead to between 100.000 to 200.000 new jobs<sup>4</sup>.

### Harmful subsidies:

- In 2011, Europe spent €26.5 billion on fossil fuel subsidies according to the OECD – almost as much as the amount for renewable subsidies in Europe<sup>5</sup>.

### Green job creation:

- The European renewable energy sector could create up to 3 million additional jobs<sup>6</sup>, and a further 2 million could be created or retained through energy efficiency by 2020<sup>7</sup>.
- Raising revenue through carbon pricing (auctioning of allowances via the Emissions Trading Scheme or carbon taxes) and spending these revenues to reduce the cost of labour would create up to 1.5 million jobs by 2020.

## TIMELINE

**2014-2015:**  
mid-term review of the Europe 2020 Strategy

**September 2014:**  
Commission released its study on EU-wide energy subsidy data

**2014-2015:**  
European Investment Bank reviews its climate policy

Commission follows up on the actions identified for long term financing of the EU economy

**2016:**  
EU Budget mid-term review



# €630bn

European industry could save up to €630 billion per year by fully exploiting our resource saving potential<sup>3</sup>

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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