

Coalition for Energy Savings calls for action on energy efficiency

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A coalition of businesses, professional and civil society organisations has reacted with dismay to the failure of Transport and Energy Ministers to agree on binding measures to achieve energy efficiency targets.

Energy Ministers from across the EU meeting in Brussels on Friday recognised that the EU is not on track to meet its target to reduce energy use by 20% by 2020. Energy efficiency was agreed by Ministers to be the most important priority for Europe's Energy 2020 strategy, but they failed to agree strong measures to address the serious risk of a shortfall. Meeting the energy efficiency target will lower energy bills for consumers by €78 billion annually in 2020, save 560 Mt of CO₂, reduce our dependence on imported energy, generate millions of valuable jobs and spur low-carbon competitiveness.

The newly established Coalition for Energy Savings has called for energy efficiency and energy savings to be at the heart of Europe's energy strategy as it endeavours to reach a secure, sustainable and competitive energy supply. The Coalition, a unified voice for the concerns of 20 business, professional, and civil society organisations, believes that much greater action is needed on energy efficiency and savings as a means of meeting the European Union's short and long-term economic, environmental and social challenges. Its members are advocating for policymakers on the European stage to make binding commitments supported by the necessary financial incentives and instruments aimed at achieving better demand management rather than focusing on securing and developing supply alone. The case for increasing energy efficiency has long been made; greater emphasis is now needed on how to make it happen.

The warning of a shortfall in progress towards the EU's 2020 energy goals was sounded at Friday's Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council debate, where it was acknowledged that current projections show that only 9% savings will be achieved by 2020.

Environmental law organisation ClientEarth is one member of the Coalition for Energy Savings. Marta Toporek, environmental lawyer, says: "The Council's nod today to the importance of energy efficiency now needs to be backed by effective action. Energy efficiency is the cleanest, safest, most cost-effective means of realizing the EU's ambitions for a cleaner energy future, but there is no time for inaction if the EU is to meet its targets for 2020. Energy efficiency and savings need to be top of the agenda for next February's European Council meeting on energy, where binding commitments need to be adopted to ensure efficiency is given the investment needed to fulfill its potential."

Amanda Afifi, Secretary General of EuroACE, another Coalition member, says: "It is essential that policymakers recognise energy efficiency's potential to act as the first and best energy source not just with rhetoric but with clear and mandatory targets. The coalition is calling for binding commitments on energy savings; without them, the EU's goals on security of supply, competitiveness and climate change cannot be met. The broad cross section represented by our Coalition is testament to the widespread support available to policymakers to make energy savings a public priority."

The decisions made at the European Summit next February will be key to Europe's future energy plans, and the Coalition for Energy Savings will be proposing urgent measures in the arena of energy savings which Europe's leaders need to adopt if these are to succeed.

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Notes to editors

The Coalition for Energy Savings is an unprecedented gathering of 20 businesses, professional and civil society associations. The Coalition's purpose is to make the case for a European energy policy that places a much greater, more meaningful emphasis on energy efficiency and savings.

Members of The Coalition: ACE; BPIE; CAN Europe; CECED; CECODHAS; ClientEarth; COGEN Europe; European Copper Institute; eceee; ECF; EEB; ELC; EU CLG; Eurima; EuroACE; Glass for Europe, PU-Europe; RICS; The Climate Group; WWF