

Energy transition now

The European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party convening in Palermo, Italy on 23-25 November 2011

Recalling that the supply of fossil fuels is not endless, that the impact of fossil fuels on the environment is irreversible and that the suppliers of a large part of the world's fossil fuels are dictatorships, notes that fossil fuels are still the prime source of energy in the world and also in Europe.

Noting that:

- The European Commission has drafted a "Roadmap for a Low-Carbon Economy" and will release the "Energy Roadmap 2050" in the second part of this year;
- According to these roadmaps, European countries should focus on reductions in greenhouse gas emissions across the EU economy, in the context of the European Council's target of an 80-95% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels by 2050;
- Unfortunately, almost none of the EU member states are on track;

Considering that

- The objectives of EU energy policy, i.e. sustainability, energy security, affordable energy supply and competitiveness, are in themselves focus points of all liberal parties;
- Considering that energy and climate policies need to complement each other in order to create incentives for both a shift to sustainable energy and increased energy efficiency, and to ensure that each type of energy bears its own costs;
- The freedom to be creative and innovative in the energy sector can only be sustained by a market economy. This must be a market that offers fair opportunities for entrepreneurs and real choices for consumers. This means that liberals reject a closed market where freedom is limited by the unofficial monopoly of traditional energy companies;
- Whereas the aviation sector will be included in the Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) from 2012, shipping has yet to show sufficient commitment to combating climate change to motivate it to be included in this system;

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- The core of liberalism 'individual self-determination' stretches into the future, Liberals should take care that future generations have equal resources and a clean environment;
- It is therefore essential that all European liberals confront the challenge ahead, and understand what positive influences a sustainable energy transition would bring them in terms of energy security, economic, occupational and economic growth and the environment.

Urgently calls upon its members to

- Promote measures to increase the share and make clean energy cheaper relative to fossil fuels, such as public-private partnerships and increased investment in smart grids, research and innovation;
- Strive for a swift adoption of the new energy taxation directive;
- Strive for the introduction of an EU-wide tax on CO2 for the sectors outside the ETS, without harming the competitiveness of EU industry and competitiveness;
- Incorporate European shipping under the ETS, without harming the competitiveness of EU industry and companies;
- Be themselves the frontrunners in sustainable procurement and ask their governments to do the same;
- Spare no effort to enable a swift transition to sustainable energy and to conserve as much energy as possible.

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