

Environment Action Programme evaluated

Over the past decade the 6th Community Environment Action Programme (EAP) has helped environment legislation to tackle almost all areas of the environment. This is evident from the final assessment of the 6th EAP (2002-2012) adopted on August 31st. Major accomplishments in the field of environment during the past ten years have been the extension of the Natura 2000 network to cover almost 18% of the EU's land area, the introduction of a comprehensive chemicals policy, and policy action on climate change.



However, there is progress to be made in implementing agreed EU objectives and rules and in improving biodiversity protection, soil and water quality. The decoupling of resource use from economic growth has not led to a decrease in overall resources use.

The final evaluation of the 6th Environment Action Programme (EAP) shows that the large majority of actions set out in the Programme have been or are in the process of being completed. The seven thematic strategies identified in the 6th EAP – air, pesticides, waste prevention and recycling, natural resources, soil, marine environment, and urban environment – have been developed in order to strengthen policy. Some strategies drove new policy while others focused to a greater degree on revising existing measures to improve coherence and to address specific gaps.

Ambitious environment policy is an integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy

The programme was successful in providing an overarching framework for environment policy. It served as a reference for member states and local authorities in defending environment policy against competing policy demands, securing appropriate funding and providing predictability for business. The programme also helped to build political will for the adoption of effective targets and timetables, and their subsequent implementation.

Although the 6th EAP is in its final year, the Commission continues to pursue an ambitious environment policy, which is now an integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In this context it will soon present a Roadmap on Resource Efficiency with a vision towards a resource efficient Europe by 2050.

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