

INF RSE-EUROPE

International Network for Sustainable Energy

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Responses from INFORSE-Europe for Consultation on “The external dimension of the EU energy policy”

Question 1: Should the EU promote further energy market integration and regulatory convergence (notably as regards energy market regulation, environmental and safety standards) with its neighbours? Is there a need for a differentiated approach between the Eastern and Southern neighbours or between countries?

Answer:

The EU should promote regulatory convergence for environmental legislation, both for environmental reasons, including the trans-boundary character of pollution, and to create level playing fields with production in the EU.

The EU should not force other countries to open their energy markets to competition, as such opening has created many problems including increased energy poverty, loss of local control over energy supply, local unrest. Instead EU should adopt a principle of balance, so trade between EU and neighbors should take place on equal terms from both sides.

There should be a difference between neighbors with fully developed markets and democratic structures and neighbors with less developed democracies and markets.

Question 2: Should the EU take concrete actions to foster greater investment in renewable energy sources in its neighbouring countries? What actions?

Answer: Yes, EU should use its existing institutions to their full extent, including neighbourhood programs with technical assistance and the European Investment Bank.

A new initiative could be considered towards Egypt and Tunisia as poor people in these countries also have problems with increasing energy prices, to help the stabilisation of these countries

Question 3: What measures should the EU take to reinforce and focus its partnerships with key suppliers (of hydrocarbons and other energy sources) and transit countries? What should be the focus of such enhanced partnerships? (What countries? What topics?)

Answer: Make long-term agreements with Russia and other gas suppliers and transit countries that clearly spell out the roles of each country, in order to use existing infrastructure, as an alternative to large investments in infrastructure for security of supply. The agreement should have a balanced approach regarding market opening and include environmental issues to ensure low environmental impact and low energy losses.

Question 4: How can the EU best support complex infrastructure projects outside the EU that can contribute to enhancing the EU security of supply and diversifying its supply sources and routes? For instance, should the EU seek to coordinate or be party to intergovernmental agreements, which concern projects of European interest?

Answer: First of all EU should reduce its dependency of energy imports to reduce the dependence of such large projects. Then EU should limit its involvement in infrastructure that might be redundant with a transition to renewable energy. If a transition away from fossil fuels is made in about 40 years, the lifetime of new gas infrastructure that is operational 10 years from now will not be over when the transition is finished. This will lead to losses, either because the gas lines will not be used to the end of their life, or because the investments will stall the transition.

Question 5: What focus should the EU give to its energy cooperation with major consuming countries? In what topics and countries could the EU action bring most added- value?

Answer:

Cooperation on energy efficiency, including product efficiency, should be enhanced with major energy consuming countries, such as USA, China, Brazil. The cooperation must not, however, reduce the development in EU. The current energy efficiency partnership seems inadequate for this task (see http://www.inforse.org/europe/eu_partnerships.htm)

Development of new renewable energy technologies could be made with all relevant countries, on topics such as wave power, high-efficient, small-scale biomass power/CHP plants, solar cooling.

Cooperation on energy policies could be used to promote well working policies such as feed-in tariffs for renewable energy, energy taxation and energy charges to pay information on energy efficiency. All countries could be involved in this cooperation. It should not be used to promote less efficient policies, such as the EU-ETS.

Question 6: Should the EU take action to increase its collective weight in global energy discussions and in international organisations and initiatives dealing with energy? How?

Answer:

This would be a good idea in many institutions, including:

- in climate negotiations to propose ambitious mitigation plans and increase the level of sustainability of the Kyoto Protocol mechanisms, to phase out hot air and support for questionable projects
- In the international maritime and aviation organisations (IMO and ICAO) to push through regulation of emissions from international transport. EU should leave the organisations if this is not possible in short timeframe
- in IRENA to support this new organisation for renewable energy
- in the World Bank to stop its lending for fossil fuel infrastructure
- in WTO to increase the room for sustainability criteria
- in IAEA to stop its promotion of nuclear technologies in countries where potential proliferation risks are present and where nuclear power are inadequate, in particular in smaller, developing countries

Question 7: What initiatives could help the EU promote nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation standards globally?

Answer: EU should work clearly for ending the promotion of nuclear power. It is important to have awareness raising of the potential risks of operation and nuclear waste, the environmental and health consequences of an accident, the real costs including waste management and the costs if an accident happens. Renewable energy and energy efficiency alternatives strategies/scenarios/plans should be developed to show alternatives.

These are very important generally, but it is extremely important in countries where potential proliferation risks are present and where nuclear power are inadequate, in particular in smaller, developing countries. This should be done by changing the work of IAEA and by directing support for planning sustainable energy systems in interested countries, showing how developing countries can prosper without fossil or nuclear energy.

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