

INFORSE-EUROPE

International Network for Sustainable Energy - Europe

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European Commission

DG TREN

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Response to Public consultation on a European Charter on the Rights of Energy Consumers

In addition to the proposed rights of energy consumers described in the consultation paper, energy consumers must have the right to use own, renewable energy production. It is important for consumers as well as for achieving a sustainable development in energy that consumers have the right to use their own local, renewable resources, as part of their own energy mix. The use of these local sources without greenhouse gas emissions gives important contributions to sustainable development and to achievement of climate and renewable energy targets. It is also a possible way for consumers to reduce their exposure to increasing fossil fuel prices.

Consumers right to use local, renewable energy sources must be acknowledged by providers of networked energy (such as gas and electricity), so the consumers can combine networked energy with local sources, just as they can change suppliers of networked energy. For many consumers, the use of local sources is only feasible in combination with networked energy, with use of the network as back-up, and in some applications with use of the network for transport and exchange of energy.

Therefore the consumers rights must include:

- A right to use local, renewable energy sources in combination with networked energy
- A right to send energy from excess production of renewable energy, produced in the consumers own installation, into the network, and receive the same amount of energy back in periods with little or no own production. There should not be a charge for this as long as the annual production is less than annual consumption.
- A right to use the energy networks to send energy from a renewable energy plant owned by the consumer via existing networks to the consumer. If a consumer owns a share of a renewable energy plant, the right should apply for transport of energy from the plant proportional to the share that the consumer owns. The charge for this must not exceed documented and reasonable costs for use of the network, and must not be economic prohibitive to consumers that want to cover own supply in this way, fully or partly.

Rights to consumers' own production of renewable energy are already recognised in a number of countries and must be part of a European Charter on Rights of Energy Consumers.

INFORSE-Europe will be happy to provide further information on consumers right to own production of renewable energy. Contact details are given above.