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Merkel and Barroso aim to fool Europe on economic recovery and climate commitment

EU summit

Commenting on the EU summit's conclusions on **economic recovery** plans, Greens/EFA Vice-chair **Claude Turmes** said:

"To our disappointment but not our surprise, the EU summit has once again failed to set the right course for the European economy and environment. Barroso and Merkel have set out to deceive on the level and direction of their ambition.

Barroso's recovery plan is a placebo to placate a core of EU leaders, not a real medicine for the ills of the European economy. The summit was right to conclude that the tabled Commission stimulus must be invested by the end of next year. However it overlooked that many of the political pet projects are not ready to absorb the investment. The Commission promise of €5 billion is a cheque that largely can't be cashed: not more than a third of the €3.9 billion for energy projects can be invested before the deadline. (1)

This was the inevitable consequence of drawing up a political shopping list of projects geared more towards the pockets of giant national companies than the long-term needs of Europe's economy and environment. Hopes now turn to the European Parliament, which must fulfil its responsibility as co-legislator to improve the stimulus."

Commenting on the **climate change** aspects of the EU summit and **tax havens**, Greens/EFA Vice-Chair **Rebecca Harms** commented:

"Yet again, EU leaders have chosen to pass the buck instead of committing euros. The summit failed to put a figure on the EU's contribution to a fund for climate mitigation and adaptation measures in developing countries - a vital cornerstone of any successful international climate deal.

While time is running out before Copenhagen, the EU needed to put its cards on the table. Instead, EU leaders delayed any concrete decision on financing to the

Further information:

Chris Coakley

Press Officer

The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament

Tel: Brussels +32 2 2841667 / Strasbourg +33 3 88174375



end of June - beyond the next two intermediary steps in international negotiations (2). As an industrialised bloc, with a substantial historical responsibility for emissions, it is clear that the EU contribution should be no less than €30 billion by 2020.

If other industrialised countries follow the EU's irresponsible attitude and fail to commit funds, the stalemate could scupper an international climate agreement. Scientists have made clear that a significant part of mitigation costs, in addition to adaptation costs, will need to take place in developing countries. If industrialised nations do not commit to climate costs in developing countries, all will pay the price of climate change.

The summit also failed to decide meaningful measures to control tax havens. Weak calls for transparency have not been backed up with firm demands for financial disclosure from three of its own member states and 'associated territories' within the EU. If Europe is not serious about getting its own house in order, it will have little clout in demanding better regulation of tax havens overseas."

Notes to editors

(1) *The off-shore wind projects are an exception. Carbon, capture and storage (CCS) was allocated €1.25 billion, even though these projects offer few new jobs and many do not even have authorisation for sites to store CO₂.*

(2) *UNFCCC meetings to prepare for Copenhagen are foreseen in Bonn on 29 March-8 April and on 1-12 June.*