

PRESS RELEASE

Good but not enough: heating and cooling in today's REDII agreement

Brussels, 14 June 2018 – Today, co-legislators have found a political agreement on the recast of the Renewable Energy Directive (REDII), opening the way to the decarbonisation of the heating and cooling (H&C) sector. But more efforts are crucial: to reach long-term EU climate objectives, decarbonisation of H&C must become a priority for both European and national policy makers.

The associations representing the renewable heating & cooling (RES-H&C) industries, AEBIOM, EGEC, EHPA and Solar Heat Europe/ESTIF, welcome the agreement on the REDII, as it finally brings to life the first dedicated provision on H&C (article 23) in EU legislation.

While most efforts have been put in the past on promoting renewable electricity, the new REDII is finally addressing head-on H&C too, which represents today half of the EU's final energy consumption.

The RES-H&C industries look positively at this first step but the final compromise - a 1.3 percentage point annual increase in the share of renewables in H&C - lacks real ambition in a context where, under the right political impetus, renewables could deliver much more and reach a 100% renewable H&C sector in 2050. Our associations also regret that the objective is not matched with binding obligations on Member States.

The final agreement is therefore not ambitious enough to meet the EU's mid-century objectives and be on track to limit global warming to 1.5°C. It does however provide an action framework for Member States which have largely ignored the potential of this sector so far.

This objective must now be complemented by a consistent framework that prevents subsidies to fossil technologies and avoids locking-in the fossil fuel infrastructure. Measures such as carbon pricing should be introduced at national level to replicate the success of pioneer countries and ensure a level playing field.

The upcoming negotiations on the Governance regulation should now build on this provision by confirming the inclusion of H&C in long-term decarbonisation strategies and by opening the gap-filler financing platform to decentralised renewable H&C projects.

The European Commission is now preparing a Strategy for long-term EU greenhouse gas emissions reduction in line with the Paris Agreement. The RES-H&C industries urge the Commission and Member States to keep the decarbonisation of H&C high in the political agenda and to recognise a central role to RES-H&C in the Strategy. The Clean Energy Package is just a first step: the EU's long-term Climate and Energy objectives will not be reached if the H&C sector is not tackled seriously.

ANNEX

Quotes:

“The final agreement between co-legislators puts the heating and cooling sector on track to be freed from fossil fuels. Decarbonising the heating and cooling sector can only be done by exploiting synergies between energy efficiency and renewable policies and across various sectors, in terms of actions, technologies and ambitious policies.”

Thomas Nowak, Secretary General of EHPA (European Heat Pump Association)

“While we welcome this new focus on the H&C sector, we regret the non-binding character of article 23. We also regret that this provision, for its lack of ambition maintains the possibility to provide subsidies to fossil technologies on the name of marginal efficiency improvement, locking in fossil fuel infrastructure and endangering the objective of heating and cooling decarbonisation by mid-century.”

Philippe Dumas, EGEC Secretary General.

“The building sector is about 40% of EU’s total energy consumption, and most of this is heating. Switching this energy supply to renewables is essential for a full decarbonisation of our economies. We welcome the new provision on H&C as a first step but hope this is only the beginning of EU’s commitment in decarbonising this sector.”

Pedro Dias, Secretary General, Solar Heat Europe/ESTIF

“The final agreement is pragmatic: now we urge Member States to take concrete measures to phase out fossil fuel subsidies and introduce carbon pricing strategies.”

Jean-Marc Jossart, Secretary General, AEBIOM (European Biomass Association);

CONTACTS

AEBIOM

Nathalie Hemeleers

Policy Director

Nino Aveni

Communications Advisor

EHPA

Oliver Jung

EU Affairs Manager

EGEC

Thomas Garabetian

Policy Officer

Solar Heat Europe/ESTIF

Stefano Lambertucci

Senior Policy Officer

Geoffroy Cazenave

Communications Officer