



Press Release

GREEN WEEK 2007 - Youth Eco-Parliament calls for action to stop environmental degradation.

Brussels, 14 June 2007 – Representing 3600 young people from 14 countries, a delegation of the Youth Eco-Parliament (YEP) participated in the 2007 Green Week's environmental policy discussions and presented their ideas and recommendations for stopping the planet's environmental deterioration.

The YEP's proposals for action are outlined in 7 Open Letters that were distributed to the 4000 environmental opinion leaders and decision-makers participating in the Green Week.

Recycling and climate change are among the top priorities for action identified by the YEP. The YEP called for more support for products made of recycled materials, being well aware that much of what is thrown away could be recycled into new products, saving money, resources and energy, or even used to generate energy itself. Another key concern for the YEP is environmental education: *"The environment should be part of school programmes because it is there that future choices are shaped. The sooner we start adopting sustainable habits, the better!"*

European Commissioner for Environment Stavros Dimas, who has been closely following the work of the YEP in the last years welcomed the Open Letters and said: *"It is young people who will inherit the environmental degradation of today – and when we look at the science it is clear that we are still far from a genuinely sustainable development. We need to take decisive action right now to address issues like climate change and the loss of the planet's biodiversity. And for this we need both new ideas and a new way of doing politics. This is why we invited the Youth Eco-Parliament to Green Week 2007 to act as a rapporteur. As we look to the future it will be the ideas and dynamism of young people that can really make a difference"*.

Bernard Hérodin, President of PRO EUROPE (Packaging Recovery Organisation Europe) which initiated this project in cooperation with the Réseau Ecole & Nature, said: *"When young people committed to the environment interact with key decision-makers, real progress is made on the path to environmental citizenship"*. Mr. Hérodin announced a new edition of the YEP for 2007-2008. Building on the success of the two previous editions, the 3rd YEP will unite motivated young people to work out a strategy to move towards the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). They will assess and share best environmental practices in their respective local communities to be assembled in the Environment Report "Let's change our daily habits!" to be published on 15 May 2008. The young people will submit their findings to UN representatives, who have committed to consider their contributions as part of the UN-DESD biennial report.

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Note to the editors

What is the Youth Eco-Parliament?

The Youth Eco-Parliament (YEP) is an environmental education programme initiated in 2004 by PRO EUROPE, in partnership with the *Ecole et Nature* Network. Believing that youngsters from different countries can share a common educational approach and take an active part in today's society on environmental issues, the YEP was created with the aim of enabling young people to act alongside adults to protect the environment as well as offering them an opportunity to experience a form of democracy, exercise citizenship and open their mind to environmental issues.

The YEP aims at helping participants develop skills in observation and finding solutions to environment issues. It teaches youngsters to put environmental values first and encourage them to become involved both individually and on a group level in the social and political life of their country and planet. The programme is also characterised by a multi-cultural dimension, through exchanges between different countries and recognition of the value of each culture. Finally, by experiencing this project, the young people have found it has given them an awareness of the financial challenges related to sustainable management of our environment.

For detailed information on the YEP, please visit www.eyep.info

Who is PRO EUROPE?

PRO EUROPE (**P**ackaging **R**ecovery **O**rganisation Europe) is the umbrella organisation for the packaging and packaging waste recovery schemes which use the "Green Dot" trademark. PRO EUROPE acts as the authoritative voice and common policy platform for its members, representing the interests of all packaging recovery and recycling organisations using the "Green Dot".

PRO EUROPE's members span 24 Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom), 2 candidate countries (Turkey and Croatia), Norway, Iceland, Ukraine and Canada.

For detailed information on PRO EUROPE, please visit www.pro-europe.info