



**The Community Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy 2007- 2013 –
report by Constanze Krehl MEP for REGI Committee
Exchange of views – 22 February**

Recommendations by the Coalition for Sustainable EU Funds

A clean and healthy environment is fundamental to people's quality of life and is part of the legacy we pass on to our children through our vision of sustainable development.

Cohesion Policy must continue to contribute to the protection and improvement of the environment, at the same time as delivering the Lisbon growth and jobs agenda. It is essential that the Community Strategic Guidelines build on current legislative requirements and environmental best practice.

Natural resources form part of the wealth of the EU and underpin its economy in urban and rural areas. The economic rationale for environmental investment could not be clearer: it is fundamental for providing environmental services such as clean water in a cost effective way; it lays the foundations for the long term sustainability of economic growth (e.g. reducing dependence on road transport) and well being; and it can stimulate innovation and job creation.

The European Parliament has in the past fought hard to achieve a high level of ambition in the EU's legislative framework by adopting Directives for Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Natura 2000 (Birds and Habitats) and the Water Framework.

We ask MEPs to ensure that the following recommendations are reflected in the Community Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy:

- Add **Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive and the EU's 6th Environmental Action Programme** to the list of priority environmental investments. (Section 4.1.2)
- Require Member States to show how they intend to **finance environmental needs**, such as Natura 2000, which must be co-ordinated at the level of national strategic reference frameworks (Chapter 3 - concentration of resources).
- Ensure that **Strategic Environmental Assessment** is fully applied to all draft operational programmes and – as a matter of best practice – to the national strategic reference framework. Ensure results of SEA are fed into the operational programmes.
- With regard to **partnership**, recommend that training, capacity building and the coverage of direct costs linked to the duties of partners are covered through Technical Assistance. (Section 3.5)
- Prioritise an **integrated and sustainable development approach** to investment at all levels across the convergence, regional competitiveness and territorial co-operation objectives and the territorial dimension.
- Add requirement for thorough cost and benefit analyses and environmental impact assessments of **transport infrastructure projects** and encouragement for projects that decrease traffic. (Section 4.1.1)

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