



PRESS STATEMENT

HEAL welcomes priority given to “health protection” in the 7th EAP

Brussels, 20 June 2013 – The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) commends both the Irish EU presidency and the European Parliament on the agreement achieved last night on the 7th EU Environment Action Programme, “Living well, within the limits of our planet”.

The programme outlines the EU’s environmental strategy and priority action to 2020 and beyond.

HEAL considers the programme to be a clear step forward in protecting not only the environment but also in promoting the health and quality of life of Europe’s citizens. The Commission’s original proposal has been strengthened with additional health prevention measures on exposure to hazardous chemicals and on air quality.

Anne Stauffer, Deputy Director, Health and Environment Alliance says she particularly welcomes the fact that Member States and the European Parliament have indicated that efforts on endocrine disruptors need to be stepped up.

“Whereas the 7EAP proposal from the Commission already included an EU strategy for a non-toxic environment by 2020, earlier target dates have now been set for horizontal measures to reduce exposure to endocrine disruptors and to address combination effects of chemical exposure.”

The special efforts of the environment (ENVI) parliamentary committee made chemicals a priority issue of the programme. The Irish presidency considers the agreement that “the combination effects of chemicals and safety concerns related to endocrine disruptors and nanomaterials must be effectively addressed across all relevant EU legislation” to be one of the main benefits of 7EAP.

The agreement achieved is also an important boost for cleaner air in Europe, which is especially welcome in this 2013 EU Year of Air. “For the first time, the programme gives due weight to improving the quality of the air indoors, and for taking measures to reducing indoor air emissions at source. We hope this clear call from the European Parliament and Member States for an indoor air quality priority will be quickly taken up by the Commission.”

The text is expected to be voted by parliamentarians during the session in Strasbourg in October.

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HEAL is a leading European not-for-profit organization addressing how the environment affects health in the European Union. With the support of its more than 65 member organizations, which represent health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, patients, citizens, women, youth, and environmental experts, HEAL brings independent expertise and evidence from the health community to different decision-making processes. Members include international and Europe-wide organisations as well as national and local groups. Website: www.env-health.org