



*European Economic and Social Committee*

**Copenhagen Side Event**

# **Climate Change, GDP and measurements of prosperity**

18 December 2009 | 10.30 - 12.30

**European Community Pavillon  
Bella Center  
Schumann Room**

## ***Climate Change, GDP and measurements of prosperity***



Despite continuous criticism, GDP is still used as the main measurement for economic well-being. Recent research has underlined that using GDP as a guideline for policy can be misleading, in particular in the field of climate change. It can report robust growth, while failing to indicate problems which will be passed on to future generations.

The European Economic and Social Committee has repeatedly called for rapid development and use of new indicators that can add to GDP and reflect what really counts for our societies. There are a number of interesting initiatives on environmental, social and other 'well-being' indicators that are already underway. The 'Beyond GDP' process and the Stiglitz Commission's September 2009 report on the 'Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress' have put the topic higher on the agenda. It will, however, need a strong push from all stakeholders to increase the uptake of this vital issue amongst policy makers.

This side event will discuss how other indicators could complement GDP to measure our well-being more appropriately. It will also look at how growth and prosperity are interlinked.

### ***Programme***



**Introduction by Stéphane Buffetaut**, President of the EESC Sustainable Development Observatory

**Karl Falkenberg**, Director General, DG Environment, European Commission

**Enrico Giovannini**, President of Istat and member of the Stiglitz Commission

**Jacqueline McGlade**, Executive Director, European Environment Agency

**Tim Jackson**, UK Sustainable Development Commission

### **Discussion**

**Conclusions by Derek Osborn**, EESC member

## The speakers



### **BUFFETAUT, Stéphane**

Stéphane Buffetaut is President of the EESC's Sustainable Development Observatory and director of relations with the European institutions for Veolia Environment. He was a member of the European Parliament from 1997 to 1999.



### **FALKENBERG, Karl**

Karl Falkenberg has extensive experience as a negotiator in the European Commission. Throughout his career he has served in a variety of posts, particularly in the field of international trade negotiations. Since January 2009, he has been Director General for the Environment in the Commission, with responsibility for environmental policy in both its domestic and international dimensions. Karl is a trained economist and journalist.



### **GIOVANNINI, Enrico**

Enrico Giovannini is President of the Italian Statistical Institute since August 2009. From 2001 to 2009 he was Chief Statistician of the OECD Statistics Directorate. Since 2002 he has been Professor of Economic Statistics at the Economics Department of the University of Rome "Tor Vergata".



### **JACKSON, Tim**

Tim Jackson is the economics commissioner on the UK government's Sustainable Development Commission. He is Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey. He has pioneered the development of an 'adjusted' measure of economic growth for the UK – a so-called 'green GDP'. Tim is also the author of *Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet*.



### **McGLADE, Jacqueline**

Professor McGLADE is Executive Director of the European Environment Agency. She has held academic positions in Europe and North America, and carried out research into climate change, scenario development and the international politics of the environment and natural resources. She has published numerous research papers and presented and appeared in numerous radio and television programmes.



### **OSBORN, Derek**

Derek Osborn is a member of the EESC Bureau and rapporteur on a variety of climate-related opinions. He is chairman of the NGO Stakeholder Forum and was Director General for Environmental Protection in the UK as well as Chair of the Management Board of the European Environment Agency.