



**Agriculture ■ Rural Development ■ Environment**

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Dear readers, with the **first issue of our newsletter** we are glad to showcase the latest opinions, events and other relevant information regarding the activities of the Section for Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment of the European Economic and Social Committee.

A lot of work was carried out within the past month and just below you will find outlined further details concerning, among others, the results of the Rio+20 Conference held by the EESC and of the public hearing on **alternatives to GDP indicators**.

Moreover you will find an interview to Martin Siecker who acted as rapporteur for the opinion "GMOs in the EU" as well as different upcoming events about the **Common Agriculture Policy and its future**.

**APPROVED OPINIONS  
JANUARY 2012**

Opinions that were adopted in the last EESC's **Plenary Session in January 2012**

**GMOs in the EU (additional opinion)**

Rapporteur: Mr. Martin SIECKER

➤ <http://bit.ly/A6zeaV>

**6th Community Environment Action Programme - Final assessment**

Rapporteur: Mr. Franco CHIRIACO

➤ <http://bit.ly/AnvRUe>

**Sulphur content of marine fuels**

Rapporteur: Mr. Jan SIMON

➤ <http://bit.ly/yb0CR8>

**Multiannual plan for the Baltic salmon stock**

Rapporteur: Mr. Seppo KALLIO

➤ <http://bit.ly/zn8fFV>

**Multiannual plan for the stock of herring**

➤ <http://bit.ly/xkR2GE>

**INTERVIEW**



**GMOs in the EU**

**Three questions to Mr Siecker, Rapporteur for the Opinion NAT/513**

Biotechnology, or genetic modification, is a thorny issue. The debate is often emotional, which is regrettable, given that this politically sensitive subject merits a better quality of debate.

To improve its knowledge base and contribute to the ongoing debate, the EESC voted a specific opinion on Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the EU, NAT/513; we have asked a few questions to the rapporteur, Mr Martin Siecker.

**Why this opinion and why now?**

Because GMO is a very controversial issue that arouses much interest, and much concern in the EU. It is also very technical. Concerning the timing, development in GMO is going extremely fast. The first EU laws on GMO go back to 1990. They have been adjusted time and again, that turned it into an extremely complex patchwork of legislation, which is again being reviewed at the moment.

As an orientation and preparation for the ongoing debate, the opinion provides a basic outline of the current situation and the discussion about GMOs, as well as their regulation in the EU [...]

**The full interview can be read here:**

➤ <http://bit.ly/AhILGm>

**ONGOING OPINIONS  
FEBRUARY 2012**

Opinions that had to be voted on the **February Plenary Session**

■ **Agriculture and crafts – a winning combination for rural areas (NAT/530)**

■ **Safety of offshore oil and gas prospection (NAT/533)**

■ **The EESC position on the preparation of the United Nations Conference (NAT/542)**

➤ <http://bit.ly/ymcQw4>

## EU - RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

▪ Agriculture and fisheries work programme of the Danish Presidency

➤ <http://bit.ly/wf8A9H>

▪ Website on the 50th Anniversary of the CAP (European Commission)

➤ <http://bit.ly/zpOXtn>

## EESC RIO+20 CONFERENCE'S CONCLUSIONS

On the 7th and 8th February, the Sustainable Development Observatory held a conference entitled **Go sustainable, Be responsible. European civil society on the road to Rio+20.**

The event was organized in order to voice civil society's expectations for the United Nations Conference on sustainable Development that is going to take place in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012.

One message prevailed: **if we want Rio to be the turning point to sustainable development, political leaders have to scale up efforts to achieve clear commitments.**

The final message (or conclusions) of the event is available at the following address:

➤ <http://bit.ly/AzG6GI>

## OTHER INFOS

▪ Agri Cord - Farmers Fighting Poverty, Evidence of Impact 2011

➤ <http://bit.ly/yRRXou>

▪ WWF – Living Planet Report Biodiversity, biocapacity and development

➤ <http://bit.ly/d0tSxs>

▪ OECD- Agricultural Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation

➤ <http://bit.ly/qmAkEu>

▪ IEPP - Mapping the landscape of EU environmental policy: coherence and linkages

➤ <http://bit.ly/z2yNAa>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

7 MAR 2012

PUBLIC HEARING

The 7th Environment Action Programme

➤ <http://bit.ly/yOGZ4p>

14 MAR 2012

MEETING OF THE NAT SECTION

20-21 MAR 2012

CONFERENCE

CAP 50th Anniversary Conference

➤ <http://bit.ly/wQQAyw>

## PAST EVENTS

1-2 MAR 2012

CONFERENCE

FAO Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Animal Welfare (in partnership with the EESC and DG SANCO)

➤ <http://bit.ly/rCi2gJ>

01 MAR 2012

SDO MEETING

29 FEB 2012

LUNCH-TIME DEBATE

The CAP and the future of Europe's agricultural policy (PES Group– Committee of the Regions)

➤ <http://bit.ly/wLrgwq>

07-08 FEB 2012

CONFERENCE

Go sustainable, be responsible!

European civil society on the road to Rio+20

➤ <http://bit.ly/rx0UMR>

26 JAN 2012

PUBLIC HEARING

GDP on the road to Rio+20. Involvement of civil society in the development of complementary indicators

➤ <http://bit.ly/zqpdlo>

26 JAN 2012

PUBLIC HEARING

The Common Agriculture Policy towards 2020 (Berlin, Germany)

➤ <http://bit.ly/w51syx>

The NAT Section on the EESC-website

➤ <http://eesc.europa.eu/nat>

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