

PRESS RELEASE
Learning by Doing: Roadmap for a Low Carbon Economy in 2050

Eurogas draws attention to the opportunity in the energy sector for earlier and quicker reductions in the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) than is highlighted in yesterday's *Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050*, published by the European Commission.

The *Roadmap 2050* states that EU emissions were estimated to be 16% below 1990 levels in 2009. It does not analyze why or how these reductions were achieved, and so misses the opportunity to learn lessons for the future from what has already been done in the recent past.

Many factors have contributed to progress so far. Prominent among them has been the wide adoption in many EU countries of high-efficiency gas-fired equipment, in many energy sectors, and especially in the generation of electricity. In addition to contributing to lower carbon emissions, natural gas is a flexible and affordable fuel.

In this context, Eurogas welcomes the simultaneously launched Energy Efficiency Plan 2011, which offers a number of pragmatic business and market-oriented approaches to achieving higher levels of energy savings (see separate Press Release).

The *2050 Roadmap* anticipates an accelerating trend in emission reductions from now to 2050—at an average rate of 1% per annum to 2020, accelerating to 1.5% to 2030, then to 2% per annum from 2030 to 2050 “as a wider set of cost-effective technologies would become available.” Eurogas notes that confidence in tomorrow's technologies need not prevent the more rapid adoption of technologies that are already available today. Energy policies should be designed accordingly. In the interest of a competitive European economy, they should take advantage of subsidy-free routes to lower GHG emissions in the immediate future.

The Commission's document anticipates that the development of sectoral policy options will go into greater depths on costs, trade-offs, and uncertainties. In this context, Eurogas hopes that the Energy Sector 2050 Roadmap that will now be developed by the Commission will fully take on board the application of a general principle that the most cost-effective measures to reduce emissions should be taken first, and that the European Parliament will highlight this in its debates.

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