



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 23 January 2006

5599/06

LIMITE

**ENV 38
AGRI 12
ECO 7
ECOFIN 18
ENER 14
DEVGEN 10
MI 9
PECHE 19
RELEX 22
SAN 14
SOC 25
TRANS 21
RECH 5
POLGEN 3
EDUC 10**

NOTE

from :	Presidency
to :	Delegations

No. prev. doc. :	5138/06 ENV 13 AGRI 2 ECO 3 ECOFIN 4 ENER 4 DEVGEN 3 MI 4 PECHE 4 RELEX 5 SAN 4 SOC 7 TRANS 3 RECH 2 POLGEN 1 EDUC 3
No. Cion doc.:	15796/05 ENV 601 AGRI 355 ECO 159 ECOFIN 412 ENER 203 DEVGEN 254 MI 143 PECHE 285 RELEX 766 SAN 217 SOC 516 TRANS 285 RECH 242 EDUC 196

Subject :	Review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) - Preliminary questions for a first examination (Friends of the Presidency Group on 3 February 2006)
-----------	---

Introduction

In June 2005, the European Council adopted a Declaration on Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development based on four key objectives:

1. Environmental protection;
2. Social equity and cohesion;
3. Economic prosperity; and
4. Meeting international responsibilities.

In December 2005 the European Council noted the presentation of the Commission's communication on a renewed EU SDS for the next 5 years and looked forward to adopting in June 2006 an ambitious and comprehensive strategy, comprising targets, indicators and an effective monitoring procedure, which should integrate the internal and external dimensions and be based on a positive long-term vision, bringing together the Community's sustainable development priorities and objectives in a clear, coherent strategy that can be communicated simply and effectively to citizens.

The "SDS Review Package", consisting of the above-mentioned communication on the "Review of the Sustainable Development Strategy: A platform for action"¹, and its three annexes, was presented to Coreper and generally welcomed positively as a good basis to start work.

Questions

In this light, the Friends-of-the-Presidency Group on 3 February 2006, is invited to reflect on the following questions, prepared by the Presidency in order to structure the initial discussion:

1) Coverage, balance, coherence

- Do the six key issues selected in the Commission communication cover the ground that an EU SDS should cover?
- Does the proposed package address the four key sustainable development objectives as defined by the European Council in June 2005 in a sufficiently balanced and integrated manner? Is it likely to foster synergies and coherence across policies and result in win-win situations (e.g. development of clean technologies)?

¹ Cf. doc. 15796/05 (COM(2005) 658 final)

2) Ambition

- Can the proposed package meet the ambitious request from the European Council in December 2005, in particular with regard to the objectives it set out?
- Are you satisfied with the objectives, targets, policies and actions which are listed in Annex 2 to the communication? Should these be reviewed? complemented? prioritised?

3) Governance

- Are the measures proposed sufficiently concrete and operational to lead to visible results and measurable progress?
- Would the provisions proposed, in particular with regard to sustainable development indicators (cf. Section 3.1), ensure effective monitoring and follow-up?

4) Communication

- What could be done to raise public awareness, gain public support and create a sense of ownership of the SDS amongst European citizens and stakeholders?
