

**E U R O P E A N E C O N O M I C A R E A**

**S T A N D I N G C O M M I T T E E  
O F T H E E F T A S T A T E S**

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Brussels

**WORKING GROUP ON ENERGY MATTERS**

**Comments by the EFTA Working Group on the Communication from the  
Commission "An overall view of energy policy and actions"**

1. The EEA/EFTA States have considered the Communication from the Commission "An overall view of energy policy and actions" within the framework of the EEA Agreement. The Communication gives an overview of the activities of the European Community in the energy field and argues in favour of a strengthened and more coherent framework for energy policy in the future. Although not all items dealt with in the Communication fall within the scope of the EEA Agreement, almost all parts that have a bearing on the internal market in energy are relevant. The SAVE and ALTENER programmes, as well as THERMIE/JOULE, are part of the EEA. In this letter we will limit ourselves to commenting on a few items of particular importance to the EEA/EFTA States.

2. In light of the increased interdependency between the EEA/EFTA States and the European Community in the energy field, in particular, as a result of the development towards a more integrated European energy market, the EEA/EFTA States stress the fact that the Community should regard energy resources in the EEA/EFTA States on an equal footing with the indigenous energy resources in the European Union. A large part of the oil and gas resources in the EEA is located in the EEA/EFTA States. Furthermore, decisions on energy policy development within the European Community would or could directly affect the energy policy of the EEA/EFTA States. Consequently, there is a need to maintain and strengthen the good cooperation which has already been functioning for some time between the Community and the EEA/EFTA States in the energy field. We very much appreciate the positive and open dialogue that characterise our contacts with the Commission in this field.

3. Finally, we would like to express our satisfaction with the participation in the SAVE II and ALTENER programmes. The EEA/EFTA States fully support the objectives and actions of these programmes and find many of the supported projects of considerable interest. Therefore, the EEA/EFTA States would like, already at this stage, to stress that the possible creation of an energy framework programme encompassing the SAVE II and ALTENER programmes should take into account the continued participation by the EEA/EFTA States in these programmes as well as the research programmes.

Moreover, the EEA/EFTA States would like to have a dialogue with the Commission on how the interests of the EEA/EFTA States could be taken into account in a possible energy framework programme.

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