Industry lobby campaign to weaken EU climate policy revealed

by ClickGreen
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Corporate lobbyists have engaged in a concerted assault to weaken EU climate targets and keep hold of a surplus of emissions trading permits worth billions of euros, according to a new report launched today by Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) and Carbon Trade Watch (CTW).

The report documents how BusinessEurope, the European employers' confederation; the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) and the European Confederation of Iron and Steel Industries (Eurofer) have engaged in a concerted campaign to weaken EU climate policy and targets.

This included a series of high-level lobby meetings between CEOs and Climate Commissioner Hedegaard in advance of the publication of the Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050.

The European Commission had initially proposed to â€œset asideâ€• 500-800 surplus permits from the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), which it estimated to be worth of â‚¬7 to â‚¬12 billion. The report claims this figure was dropped from the Roadmap in response to lobbying.

Report co-author Oscar Reyes of Carbon Trade Watch said: â€œIndustry has consistently bullied the EU into weaken its climate targets. Emissions trading has converted this lobby pressure into a surplus of bankable pollution permits, worth billions of euros.â€•

The report also shows how corporate lobbyists have sought to exploit divisions within the European Commission on the future direction of climate and energy policy.

Co-author BelÃ©n BalanyÃ¡ from Corporate Europe Observatory added: â€œIndustry has counted on support from DG Enterprise and DG Energy, which have reinforced the attempts to shape climate policy objectives around competitiveness concerns rather than principles of environmental integrity or social justice,â€•

The EU Environment Council will discuss the Roadmap on 21 June, while the European Parliament will vote on a report calling upon the EU to raise its greenhouse gas emissions reduction target from 20 to 30 per cent on 23 June.

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