



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Åsa Romson demands action against endocrine disruptors

Published 07 March 2016 Updated 07 March 2016

Note: This press release was published on 4 March 2016. The European Commission must establish scientific criteria to determine what constitutes an endocrine disruptor. It is expected that this demand will be made jointly by EU environment ministers today. Establishing scientifically based criteria is crucial to being able to regulate the use of endocrine disruptors, which are currently used in a considerable number of products.

But to date, the Commission has neglected to produce scientific grounds of this kind. Sweden therefore brought an action against the European Commission in 2014, and in December 2015, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled in Sweden's favour. But the European Commission has yet to confirm that it will comply with the judgment. The issue will now be taken up by today's Council meeting of environment ministers.

"Endocrine disruptors may be found in baby food jars, canned foods, skin creams and cash register receipts, and may pose serious health risks. This is a grave situation that the EU must take very seriously," says Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

"When even the Court of Justice of the European Union finds in our favour, it is unacceptable that Commission does not provide scientific criteria to enable the preparation of strong protection," says Ms Romson.

The outcome of the international climate negotiations and the new climate agreement will also be discussed at today's Council meeting. The Commission is currently analysing the agreement, and the environment ministers will have a first discussion on what impact the agreement will have on the EU's climate and energy policy. Sweden welcomes the outcome of the COP21 climate change conference that was held in Paris in December. It is important that Sweden become party to the agreement as soon as possible, and that the Member States fully implement all of its aspects.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Sweden wins court case on criteria for endocrine disrupting substances

Published 16 December 2015 Updated 16 December 2015

The General Court agrees with Sweden in the court case between Sweden and the Commission on criteria for endocrine disrupters. The judgement means that the Commission has failed to act and that this is contrary to the Treaties.

– We are very pleased. The important task of identifying and phasing out endocrine disrupting substances need to get started. The Commission must now adopt a delegated act with criteria in order to comply with the judgement, said the Swedish minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

Sweden initiated proceedings against the Commission in July 2014 for failure to adopt a delegated act with scientific criteria for identifying endocrine disrupting substances within the deadline set out in the Biocides Regulation. According to the Regulation the Commission should adopt the delegated act no later than 13 December 2013.

The Commission has the necessary supporting data to adopt the delegated act. Despite this, the Commission has ignored the deadline in the Biocides Regulation and has instead decided to carry out a public consultation and an impact analysis. The Court found that the deadline in the Biocides Regulation is binding.

The judgement of this case concerns the obligation on the Commission to adopt a delegated act in accordance with the Biocides Regulation. It will

however have an impact also on other areas, such as the use of endocrine disrupting substances in plant protection products and cosmetics. People are exposed to endocrine disrupting substances via every day products like cosmetics, food packaging and clothes. Endocrine disrupting substances can also be found as contaminants in food and drinking water.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Climate agreement concluded in Paris

Published 12 December 2015 Updated 12 December 2015

The countries of the world have agreed on a new global and legally binding climate agreement. The decision came after difficult final negotiations at the COP21 Climate Summit in Paris. The new agreement will provide the framework for the countries' climate efforts for a long time to come.

"A global climate agreement is a milestone for the world and for cooperation on sustainable development. Sweden has long been pushing for an agreement that strengthens climate efforts. For the first time we have a global climate agreement where everyone is contributing and this is extremely important," says Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

The legally binding agreement means that the countries of the world now have a joint plan for reducing climate emissions. The agreement sets out that the global rise in temperature must be kept well below 2 degrees Celsius and that efforts must be made to limit it to 1.5 degrees. The text also states that countries are to gradually step up their commitments.

"This is the start of a considerable stepping up of climate efforts for all countries of the world. The difficult work of reducing climate emissions remains. Sweden must continue to show leadership through concrete measures at home in broad cooperation with all actors in society. We will become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations and, in doing so, inspire and encourage others," says Dr Romson.

Sweden has been pushing for an ambitious agreement with clear objectives and rules for how countries are to report their emissions. These elements are

included in the text, but are not as explicit as Sweden had wanted. Every five years, the countries will gather to see how far our combined climate efforts are taking us, through a 'stocktake'. This review will be important for our ability to increase our ambitions over time.

"I am pleased to see that we have a long-term objective and a five-year review cycle for getting countries to raise their commitments. Sweden has been clearly pushing for a high level of ambition in the agreement and it is clear that our hard work has yielded results. Now we must continue to work to ensure that countries increase their ambitions so that the objectives can be turned into reality," says Dr Romson.

During the summit, Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson was entrusted with the task of acting as mediator on two key issues for the agreement: adaptation and the issue of loss and damage. Prior to the summit there were many disagreements, especially in the discussions concerning loss and damage. Despite this, the countries have now agreed on a compromise solution meaning that countries will cooperate to increase knowledge and improve the management of loss and damage caused as a result of the impacts of climate change.

"The negotiations on loss and damage were tough. After long talks we managed to find a solution in which the countries have now agreed to increase measures and support to help vulnerable countries address the most serious impacts of climate change. The fact that this issue is a part of the agreement is a major success," says Dr Romson.

The agreement states that developing countries must continue to receive support to reduce their emissions and adapt their societies to a changed climate. The agreement also says that developed countries are to increase their financial and technical support in future. The most vulnerable countries are to be given special priority, and effective access to financing is to be ensured. Adaptation measures are given a clear role in the new agreement, which was important for many developing countries.

The agreement sends a clear signal to businesses, municipalities and countries that efforts to limit emissions and build resilience to climate change have just begun.

"I feel particularly hopeful for the future after having seen an almost unbelievably strong commitment from businesses, cities, regions and, not least, people in the environmental movement prior to and during the summit.

Together we can tackle the climate challenge," says Dr Romson.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Åsa Romson facilitator for adaptation issues during climate summit

Published 07 December 2015 Updated 07 December 2015

Yesterday evening, the French Presidency appointed Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson as facilitator for adaptation negotiations during the COP21 Climate Conference. Sweden has also been appointed EU negotiator for issues concerning financing, technology diffusion and capacity building.

The Presidency's appointment as facilitator means that Ms Romson, together with Minister of Planning and Development René Orellana from Bolivia, will try to get the countries of the world to agree on how adaptation to climate change is to be tackled in the new agreement.

"Sweden has long built up its credibility among developing countries, a credibility that will be crucial in my role as facilitator for adaptation issues," says Ms Romson.

Åsa Romson and Sweden will also negotiate on issues concerning financing, technology development and capacity building on behalf of the EU. This will be done together with Sharon Dijksma, the Minister for the Environment of the Netherlands.

"The issue of financing is reflected in all parts of the negotiations on a new climate agreement, and is a difficult issue to resolve. Sweden's extensive contributions to climate financing mean that other countries know we take these issues seriously and are keen to find solutions," says Ms Romson.

Entrusting these assignments to Sweden and Åsa Romson is an expression of the faith the French Presidency and the EU have in Sweden as a bridge builder. The appointment means that Ms Romson now has a broad mandate to do what is necessary to get the countries to agree on a new climate agreement.

"I remain hopeful that the countries of the world will agree on a new climate agreement here in Paris. Many difficult negotiations remain to be conducted, but we ministers are well prepared. Our task is to act for an ambitious and fair agreement that stands up over time. The week ahead will be crucial for the future," concludes Ms Romson.

An initial negotiation session at ministerial level was held on Sunday evening. The negotiations are now continuing in both formal and informal contexts to try to find understanding for the positions of different groups of countries and to reach compromises. It is currently not clear when the formal negotiations on adaptation will begin.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Government brings together companies, municipalities and organisations for Fossil-free Sweden

Published 16 November 2015 Updated 16 November 2015

Sweden will become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare countries, with an energy system based on renewable energy sources. Ahead of the climate change conference in Paris, the Government is launching the Fossil-free Sweden initiative, where Swedish companies, municipalities and organisations are given the opportunity to highlight their climate change efforts. At the same time, the world's countries and companies are challenged to take part in a race to become fossil-free.

Many cities, municipalities and companies in Sweden are already pointing the way towards a fossil-free society through their active climate change efforts. Ahead of the climate change conference in Paris, the Government wants to give these actors the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership, under a Swedish umbrella, to an international audience. The objective is to show the ongoing efforts in Sweden – while challenging other actors and countries to boost their commitment.

“There is already great interest in the business world, in cities and municipalities, which is very positive. These actors play a main role in developing products and solutions that are needed for a fossil-free society,” says Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

ABB Sverige is one of several companies that support the initiative.

“The transition to renewable energy used properly is one of the most important issues of our time and we must go from words to action. Fossil-free Sweden is a call to all of us to take part in the work to curb climate change,” says Johan Söderström, CEO of ABB Sverige.

The companies, cities and other actors taking part in Fossil-free Sweden endorse the following message ahead of Paris:

1. The world needs to become fossil-free. We welcome the fact that Sweden is taking the lead. This will create a better environment, more attractive cities and new opportunities for jobs.
2. Our activities will contribute. By presenting our own concrete measures to reduce climate emissions within the framework of the UN Action Agenda, we demonstrate to the whole world our determination to act here and now.
3. We challenge others, in Sweden and throughout the world. We invite our counterparts to join in, start their own initiatives and challenge themselves and us.

Companies, municipalities and organisations already taking part in the initiative include:

ABB Sverige, Fourth AP Fund, H&M, Preem, the City of Stockholm, the City of Gothenburg, the City of Malmö, Östersund, Uppsala, Växjö, the Haga Initiative and the Climate Municipalities.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to attend Nordic Council in Reykjavik on 27–28 October

Published 27 October 2015 Updated 27 October 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in Reykjavik on 27–28 October for the annual session of the Nordic Council. His schedule includes meetings with the Nordic prime ministers, the Nordic Council Presidium and the three self-governing territories of Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland. Subjects including migration, climate, the environment and Syria will be on the agenda.

On Tuesday 27 October, the Prime Minister will take part in the award ceremony for the Nordic Council prizes.

While in Reykjavik, Mr Löfven will also attend a meeting of the Nordic and Baltic prime ministers, focusing on security policy cooperation in our neighbourhood.

In connection to the Nordic Council session, the Nordic–Baltic heads of government will also meet the Prime Minister of the UK within the Northern Future Forum.

Attending alongside Mr Löfven will be Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation Kristina Persson, Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist, Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson, Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke and Minister for International

Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin. For details of the respective programmes, please contact the relevant press secretaries.

Press briefings

Wednesday 28 October

11.15–11.45 Press conference with the Nordic prime ministers.

Venue: Harpa – Kaldalón

14.00–14.30 Press conference with the Nordic and Baltic prime ministers.

Venue: Harpa – Kaldalón



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Deputy Prime Minister Romson invites the press to meet Deputy President of South Africa

Published 19 October 2015 Updated 19 October 2015

Deputy President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa is visiting Stockholm with a ministerial delegation and a number of business representatives. The reason for the visit is the Binational Commission (BNC) between Sweden and South Africa, which is meeting in Stockholm on 19–20 October 2015. The meeting will be hosted by Deputy Prime Minister Åsa Romson.

On Tuesday 20 October, Ms Romson, who is also Minister for Climate and the Environment, and Mr Ramaphosa will meet the press.

Time: 20 October 2015, 11.00–11.30

Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs International Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Binational Commission Sweden-South Africa

Published 16 October 2015 Updated 16 October 2015

This weekend, Deputy President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa will arrive in Stockholm with a ministerial delegation and a number of business representatives. The reason for the visit is the Binational Commission (BNC) between Sweden and South Africa, which is meeting in Stockholm on 19–20 October 2015.

During his visit Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa will meet with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Deputy Prime Minister Åsa Romson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Strategy, Future Issues and Nordic cooperation Kristina Persson.

The Binational Commission meets every other year and is a platform for regular dialogue between the countries, intended to develop our relations in a broad sense. This year's meeting is the ninth.

The meeting will be hosted by Deputy Prime Minister Åsa Romson. The South African delegation will be led by Deputy President Ramaphosa, who will also meet several other Swedish government representatives and business leaders in the course of his visit.

“The Binational Commission is an important platform for Sweden's cooperation with South Africa and I look forward to constructive discussions with my South African colleagues,” says Ms Romson.

A new committee on environmental, water and energy issues is expected to be established at this year's meeting. This will create a space for cooperation

between Swedish agencies such as the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Chemicals Agency and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and their South African counterparts. The intended purpose of the committee is to have constructive discussions on shared social challenges, where exchanges of knowledge and closer cooperation in the area can contribute to finding new solutions.

A special business delegation from South Africa is also on the trip to Stockholm. Its programme has been organised by Business Sweden and will offer opportunities for discussions with Swedish business representatives.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Government initiates High-Level Group in UN

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

World leaders are meeting in New York today to adopt 17 global Sustainable Development Goals, which are to be achieved by 2030.

The true test of the entire 2030 Agenda and the global goals is not the adoption of the goals, but that they are implemented throughout the world. The importance of maintaining strong political momentum to realise the new goals cannot be overstated.

The Swedish Government has therefore taken the initiative to start a High-Level Group consisting of nine leaders from various parts of the world to ensure that the 17 global goals and the 2030 Agenda are implemented at all levels of society.

The High-Level Group will work in various ways to promote exchange of experience and discussions on challenges and solutions between governments, civil society, the private sector and international organisations.

Through personal discussions with other world leaders, the High-Level Group will contribute to far-reaching and genuine commitment to implementing the global goals and the 2030 Agenda.

The following are members of the High-Level Group:

- Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff
- Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos
- Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
- Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

- South Africa's President Jacob Zuma
- Tanzania's President Jakaya Kikwete
- Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel
- Tunisia's President Beji Caid Essebsi
- Timor-Leste's Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of the Environment

EU climate and environment ministers united behind strong stance for Paris

Published 21 September 2015 Updated 21 September 2015

At an extraordinary meeting of the Environment Council today, the EU Member States agreed on their joint negotiating position ahead of the COP21 Climate Change Conference in Paris later this year. The conclusions adopted give the EU a mandate to pursue an ambitious agreement that is sustainable in the long term, binding all countries to more rigorous climate efforts.

The Swedish stance had a clear impact on the conclusions, particularly the agreement among the EU Member States that a mechanism for clear and regular review of countries' commitments should be written into the agreement. The EU considers that such reviews should take place every five years. This would strengthen global commitments to reduce emissions over time.

“The EU climate and environment ministers have now adopted a strong negotiating position ahead of the climate summit, with demands for an ambitious process that binds all countries,” says Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

Other issues that Sweden particularly raised in the negotiations were climate financing and adaptation, including loss and damage. With today's decision, the EU has clearly shown that it considers adaptation a crucial part of the future agreement, in which all countries must contribute to continuously

enhancing their adaptation measures. The Council decision also sends a strong signal that climate financing in support of the most vulnerable countries is a key part of the future agreement.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government to take part in global summit and UN General Assembly

Published 02 September 2015 Updated 10 September 2015

Reminder. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson will take part in the opening of the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in late September.

This year, the week will begin with the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. On 25–26 September, the new global Sustainable Development Goals, that are to replace the Millennium Development Goals, will be adopted by all UN Member States in the presence of representatives of civil society organisations and enterprises. Mr Löfven will give an address at the Summit, take part in seminars and roundtable discussions and hold bilateral meetings with other heads of government. Directly following the Summit, the General Assembly will open the General Debate of the 70th session since the United Nations was founded. Mr Löfven will deliver a speech on Swedish priorities in the UN and participate in panel debates on UN peacebuilding operations.

President Barack Obama, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Pope Francis will also take part during the week.

Mr Löfven and Ms Lövin will be at the UN on 25–30 September. Ms Wallström will be in New York between 25 September and 3 October. Ms

Romson will take part in the Summit on 25–27 September.

Press briefing

Ahead of the Swedish delegation's trip to the Summit and the UN General Assembly, we will hold a press briefing, where State Secretary Hans Dahlgren and State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Annika Söder and others will describe the Government's objective for the trip and the programme.

Time: Thursday 17 September at 16.00.

Venue: Rosenbad

Registration (required) to the press briefing via Dan Lundqvist Dahlin:
dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se

Accreditation

Accreditation for the Summit closes on 9 September.

Information on accreditation is available on the following web page:
<http://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/UNGA70.shtml>

For questions about accreditation, please contact Jeanette Mattsson, Press and Communication Officer at Sweden's Permanent Representation at the UN: jeanette.mattsson@gov.se, tel: 001 212 583 2591.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Sweden and China enter into agreement on climate cooperation

Published 10 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson today signed a cooperation agreement on climate cooperation with China's climate minister Zhang Yong during a visit to Beijing.

“It is encouraging that we have now been able to conclude a cooperation agreement on climate issues between Sweden and China. The agreement means that we can arrange an exchange of experts, researchers and companies to help each other with climate-smart solutions that contribute to reduced emissions, both in Sweden and China. It is an important component for an ambitious agreement in Paris later this year,” says Ms Romson.

The cooperation agreement opens the way for deeper dialogue with Chinese negotiators and decision-makers on climate change, and the countries will establish a joint working group to launch the cooperation as soon as possible. It also opens up for cooperation between experts and researchers on economic policy instruments, technical innovations, climate-efficient technologies and system solutions for sustainable cities.

China has taken a number of initiatives in the climate area, but it presented a report at the end of last year on additional measures it should take to guarantee environmentally sustainable development. The report shows that it is possible to combine economic growth with environmentally sustainable development, but that extensive changes to China's economic system and energy consumption are required.

During her visit to Beijing, Ms Romson will meet the authors of the report and several other Chinese climate experts and environmental organisations to learn more about the challenges the country faces and the measures

planned.

Today, China is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases and has bypassed the EU on emissions per capita. During the past number of years, China's share of total global climate emissions has increased dramatically, from 14.6 per cent in 2000 to 27.3 per cent in 2013.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

EU must act on endocrine disruptors

Published 06 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Sweden and the other Nordic countries want to see the incoming European Commission take strong action on chemicals. Endocrine disruptors have been singled out as a particularly important area.

A meeting of Nordic environment ministers was held in Stockholm. Among the topics discussed was how the countries can jointly push for effective and scientifically-based EU legislation on endocrine disruptors. The Nordic Chemicals Group has produced a report on the costs to society of damage to male reproductive capacity. The report shows that it is a matter of several hundred million euro per year – for just a small proportion of the illnesses and damage that can be linked to endocrine disruptors. In a letter to which the report is annexed, the Government now urges the incoming European Commission to take the action necessary to reduce exposure to endocrine disruptors.

- “In contrast to the intensive efforts in the Nordic countries, the efforts of the outgoing European Commission on endocrine disruptors had come to a complete standstill. The Nordic environment ministers now wish to clearly state that we demand measures to safeguard people’s health and environment,” says Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

The Swedish Government has previously brought action against the European Commission because it had neglected its obligation to adopt scientific criteria for endocrine disruptors in accordance with the requirements of the EU Biocidal Products Regulation.

The Government signs letter on ‘Reach up’

At the initiative of Denmark, the environment ministers of Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Norway signed a letter addressed to incoming Commissioners Bieńkowska and Vella at the Environment Council on 28 October. The letter states that compliance with the commitments in the EU's Seventh Environmental Action Programme requires better and more effective implementation of the EU Chemicals Regulation (Reach), reduced exposure to endocrine disruptors and adequate consideration of nanomaterials in all relevant legislation.

On endocrine disruptors

Endocrine disruptors are substances that disrupt the body's endocrine system. Disturbances in the endocrine system due to exposure to certain chemicals can sometimes lead to the development of certain forms of cancer, earlier onset of puberty, malformed genitalia, impaired sperm production, obesity, diabetes and behavioural disorders (ADHD). Endocrine disruptors are found everywhere. We come into contact with such substances through everyday products such as food packaging, clothing and toys.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Investment in climate, energy and Sweden's natural environment

Published 24 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Climate, environmental and energy initiatives in the Government's budget proposal for 2015 include major investments in local climate action, renewable energy and protection of more marine and nature environments.

The Ministry of the Environment's appropriation for 2015 includes a total of some SEK 9.9 billion in expenditure areas 20 and 21, and parts of 6 and 17, in the autumn Budget Bill. This is an increase of SEK 1.4 billion compared with last year's appropriation of some SEK 8.5 billion.

- The new Government's budget introduces clear investments in climate and environment that have long been awaited at both national and regional level. We are proud to present reforms that will unlock local and regional engagement in energy efficiency and climate-smart solutions. At the same time, we are making the necessary investments in biodiversity and the forests that our children will one day enjoy, says Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

A broad climate initiative

It is time to take responsibility. If the earth's temperature continues to rise at the rate currently observed and predicted by scientists, it will have serious consequences for all life on the planet, including our own. The new Government will therefore act at both national and global level to take the lead in this work. Sweden will pave the way and show what is possible, while working to make what is possible a global reality.

As early as 2015, the Government wants to implement three important

reforms in the budget, which were presented jointly with the Left Party:

1. Investments to reduce local authority climate emissions

To reduce Sweden's climate impact, the Government proposes special economic support for local climate investments beginning in 2015. This support will amount to SEK 200 million during the first year, while the system is taking shape. The resources will subsequently be increased to SEK 600 million annually from 2016.

2. International climate cooperation

In 2015, the most important climate conference since Copenhagen will be held in Paris. The Government will now take increased responsibility for Sweden's climate impact and proposes to increase the contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) by SEK 4 billion ahead of Paris 2015. Increased climate funding to developing countries and climate action within the framework of development assistance are fundamental to Sweden's and the EU's credibility in the climate negotiations.

3. Climate adaptation and extreme weather

This past summer we clearly saw the type of weather and problems that accompany climate change, even for those of us who live in Sweden. Weeks of abnormal heat were followed by one of the worst forest fires ever to hit Sweden. The Government wants to enhance the adaptive capacity of Swedish society to climate change through increased investments. In 2015, the Government intends to invest SEK 200 million in climate change adaptation, of which SEK 150 million will strengthen local government prevention efforts (allocated by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, MSB), and SEK 50 million will go to a permanent initiative to increase access to climate information and other knowledge and planning support activities for climate change adaptation.

Solar cells

State aid for investment in solar cells was introduced in 2009. There has been great interest in this and most of the SEK 210 million allocated for 2013–2016 has been used. The Government now proposes allocating an additional SEK 100 million annually for 2015–2018. This means both extending and strengthening the budget for this aid.

- From a climate perspective, it is good to produce electricity using solar cells, but even if the price of solar cells falls dramatically, it is still expensive. The aid is necessary to continue the introduction of solar power and to give

electricity customers the opportunity to take a more active role, both as users and producers, says Minister for Energy Ibrahim Baylan.

Major budget appropriation to preserve forests and species

A clear increase in the level of ambition is necessary if we are to achieve the environmental quality objectives that cover biodiversity, the marine environment and water. The Government therefore proposes a major investment in the Swedish natural environment in the 2015 budget. SEK 640 million will be invested in 2015 to prevent harvesting forests worthy of protection and to protect marine environments. Beginning in 2016, SEK 590 million will be invested for these purposes. In addition, the Government proposes allocating SEK 350 million annually from 2015 to preserve species and improve management of protected nature sites, and SEK 75 million annually from 2015 for measures to improve the marine and water environment.

As part of building knowledge on biodiversity, the Government proposes increasing the appropriation to the Swedish Taxonomy Initiative and the Encyclopedia of the Swedish Flora and Fauna by SEK 15 million annually from 2015.

A commission on energy will be appointed

Energy policy is crucial to building a sustainable society, and employment in Sweden is completely dependent on good and reliable access to electricity at competitive prices. A commission on energy for cross-party discussions on energy policy will be appointed with the aim of creating a long-term sustainable energy agreement. The Government's starting point in these talks will be that nuclear power is to be replaced by renewable energy and energy efficiency measures, and that Sweden, in the long term, is to have 100 per cent renewable energy.

Tax reduction for micro-producers of renewable electricity

The Government's goal is that self-production of electricity is to be easy and profitable. To make it easier for private persons and companies to invest in the production of electricity from renewable energy sources for their own

use, the Government proposes introducing a tax reduction for micro-producers of renewable electricity from 1 January 2015. The Government will monitor and evaluate the tax reduction and explore possibilities to simplify the procedure, make the self-production of electricity even easier for private persons, and allow more people, such as joint owners of renewable electricity, to benefit from the tax reduction.

Drinking water and chemicals

The Government's ambition is to make a vigorous effort to increase the pace to achieve the environmental quality objectives, which requires major investments to make achieving the marine and water-related objectives possible. Environmental monitoring is a fundamental part of the efforts targeting the marine environment and water. Better monitoring of the state of the environment would improve the possibilities of detecting risks to health and environment in time. In all, the Government is proposing increased investments of SEK 75 million in 2015 and SEK 50 million from 2016 in increased and improved environmental monitoring, and in particular marine and water-related environmental monitoring.