



HELLENIC REPUBLIC



Athens, 15 February 2012

Press release on the cooperation agreement between the Greek Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission:

Minister Papaconstantinou had a meeting on the 15th of February, with Mr Giovanni De Santi, Director of the Institute for Energy and Transport of the Joint Research Centre.

The Joint Research Centre is the European Commission's scientific and technical research centre. The mission of the JRC is to provide customer-driven scientific and technical support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of EU policies. As a service of the European Commission, the JRC functions as a reference centre of science and technology for the Union. Close to the policy-making process, it serves the common interest of the Member States, while being independent of special interests, whether private or national.

During the meeting, Minister Papaconstantinou and Mr De Santi discussed in detail the cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission. The cooperation relates to the technical assistance the JRC can provide in determining the optimal location of solar plants and related technology, transmission lines and the necessary infrastructure development for the creation of an Electricity Highway from south-east to central Europe, in order to facilitate the full scale deployment of the Solar Energy Project Helios.

The Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Mr Papaconstantinou made the following statement: "Getting out of the crisis involves reigniting a sustainable growth process, alongside fiscal sustainability and financial stability. In this context Greece is working on the Helios Project, which aims at producing solar energy where the resources are and exporting it towards central Europe. The Helios Project presents a unique opportunity for the establishment of a mutually beneficial cooperation scheme in EU, as it promotes the European interconnection strategy and fits in perfectly with the European growth strategy. The Project can be a success story concerning the realization of the low carbon economy and the common energy market we envision for Europe, based on the further development of renewable energy sources. I am glad that today we have with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre officially discussed their scientific support for the implementation of our project for a green Europe and competitive Greece"

Mr De Santi, Director of the Institute for Energy and Transport of the Joint Research Centre stated that "Large, innovative projects such as HELIOS, with a clear EU dimension, are important for our Union objectives for a low carbon economy, and thus meeting our 2020 renewable energy targets in Europe. Furthermore HELIOS, by stimulating innovation, will deliver on the growth and jobs goals that the EU pursues. Overall, it is a significant initiative and consequently the JRC will assist on the technical feasibility of the project, working together with key European and in particular Greek stakeholders".

After their bilateral meeting, a technical meeting followed with the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, the Joint Research Centre and the

National Transmission System Operator. In the technical meeting a number of important technical issues affecting the implementation of the Helios Project were discussed, namely the allocation of net transfer capacity for solar energy exports from Greece to central Europe, the required storage capacity and flexible generation capacity at a European level for supporting the variable output of the Helios solar parks.