

## **EURACOAL commends Coal Regions in Transition Platform at its launch in Strasbourg**

**Strasbourg (11 December 2017)** – President, Dr. Wolfgang Cieslik, and members of the EURACOAL Executive Committee represented the European Association for Coal and Lignite in Strasbourg today at the official launch of the European Commission’s initiative to address issues associated with the *energy transition* in the coal and carbon-intensive regions.

Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Crețu, announced new working groups on eco-innovation and advanced coal technologies, covering projects and strategies that can deliver the EU’s long-term vision of a low-carbon society, and on the structural transformations needed when coal mining ends.

To support the advanced coal technologies element, EURACOAL and its partners look forward to working together with the Commission on an accompanying measures project funded by the Research Fund for Coal and Steel. The CoalTech2051 project will respond to EU policy objectives to 2050 and global trends in coal use. EURACOAL members will come forward with concrete projects that show how coal and lignite technologies can contribute to the energy transition. For example, with carbon capture and use, emissions from coal-fired power plants can become part of a circular economy, with the recycling of carbon as fuels and chemicals.

Any initiative to tackle the structural changes taking place in the coal regions with targeted activities must involve industry. The Coal Regions in Transition Platform can facilitate a dialogue on good practices, project ideas and regional strategies, including new sustainable economic developments. EURACOAL welcomes this new initiative of the European Commission, including the working groups and regional pilot projects. The way existing financial instruments are used will also be important (*e.g.* the European structural and investment Funds, the EU Framework Programmes for RTD, the Research Fund for Coal and Steel and the Innovation Fund under the EU ETS).

The aim of providing clean energy for all Europeans is fully supported by EURACOAL. While structural changes are needed in those coal regions in decline, others need a long-term vision for coal mining and energy production from coal that fits with the Paris Agreement, as now reflected in EU climate and energy policy. The deployment of new technologies will be crucial. EURACOAL and its members will promote both these change processes with environmentally compatible, clean coal projects and concepts for the future development of the regions.

../cont.

Dr. Cieslik observed that the energy transition is not going to happen overnight. “We must anticipate a period of transition, with some regions changing more quickly than others”, he concluded, adding that, “there is no model to follow ... we have to go step-by-step and carefully re-evaluate the drivers for change, their impacts and their costs, without risking energy security and creating industrial deserts.”

**Note for editors:**

- The European Association for Coal and Lignite (EURACOAL) represents the interests of coal producers, coal importers and coal users in Brussels. The Association has 31 members from eighteen countries. EURACOAL publishes regular market reports and *Coal industry across Europe*, a detailed review of the European coal industry with insights into the technological developments that will allow coal to support the energy transition ([www.euracoal.eu](http://www.euracoal.eu)).

**Contact:**

Brian Ricketts, Secretary-General, EURACOAL, mobile +44 7804 646620, [ricketts@euracoal.org](mailto:ricketts@euracoal.org)



Left to right: Dr. Lars Kulik, EURACOAL Vice President and Chief Technical Officer – Lignite, RWE Power, Germany; Dr. Renata Eisenvortová, EURACOAL Executive Committee member and European Affairs Manager, Severní energetická a.s., Czech Republic; Ms. Anna Colucci, Head of Unit – Internal Market III: Retail markets, coal & oil, European Commission – DG Energy; and Ms. Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy at the official launch of the *Platform for Coal Regions in Transition*, Maison de la Région Grand Est, Strasbourg, 11 December 2017.

