

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt of Sweden, which will assume the rotating EU presidency next month, called Tuesday for European nations to tax carbon emissions to reduce greenhouse gases.



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Sweden introduced such a tax on carbon dioxide as far back as 1991, deeming it an inexpensive way of helping the environment without resorting to costly new infrastructure and technology.

The move has proved very effective, Reinfeldt told reporters during a trip to Brussels.

Reinfeldt, who was presenting the priorities of his country's six-month term at the EU helm, did not specify any suggested tax level, adding that Sweden would be re-evaluating that point itself.

"It puts a price on carbon emissions. It gives the signal in a market economy on what to reduce and it works," he said.

Reinfeldt said such a policy, already in place in another three EU nations, was particularly pertinent at this time of economic crisis and recession when governments are complaining about a lack of resources to tackle climate change.

Most eco-friendly tactics involve "much more investment, much more pressure on the EU budget," he said.

Sweden calls for national carbon taxes

Written by AFP / The Swedish Wire

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It is under the Swedish EU presidency that the bloc will finalise its joint position for international talks on climate change in Copenhagen in December.

The goal is to forge a global deal to tackle global warming after the existing Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

The 27 EU nations in 2007 committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020.

That broad commitment was translated into national targets last December.

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