



PRESS RELEASE

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Experts tell MEPs: Proposal to phase out conventional biofuels threatens EU climate ambitions

Brussels, Today - The European Commission's proposed phase-out of conventional biofuels by 2030 threatens to remove one of the EU's best options for reducing greenhouse gases and decarbonising transport, energy experts told MEPs Tuesday morning.

As the European Parliament gets ready to consider the controversial Renewable Energy Directive II proposal to phase out conventional biofuels by 2030, lawmakers and experts met for a first discussion on a way forward for sustainable biofuels – an issue that will heat up later this year.

The breakfast debate was hosted by MEP Julie Girling (ECR, UK), who underlined the importance of “policy stability” and avoiding “confusion” in EU policy. Noting that the Commission had reversed itself on support for conventional biofuels several times in recent years, she said more “certainty” was essential to boost low-carbon renewable energy use in transport.

“Renewable energy use in transport requires a serious and sensible grip on what can be achieved,” Girling said. “To change the policy rules for biofuels – not once, not twice, but three times – doesn’t strike me as a sensible way forward. Policy objectives are key and must be based on robust science. All stakeholders have an interest in this.”

The [Commission's proposed phase-out](#) of conventional biofuels by 2030 would reduce the maximum contribution of conventional biofuels, such as ethanol made from corn, wheat and sugar beet grown in Europe, from a maximum of 7% of road transport energy in 2021 to 3.8% in 2030. But several of the speakers at the event noted that sustainable conventional biofuels are essential to meeting the EU's climate and energy goals for transport.

“This could be a real missed opportunity for the EU,” said Emmanuel Desplechin, Secretary General of ePURE, the European renewable ethanol association. “Instead of further encouraging the use of renewable low-carbon fuels, such as biofuels made in Europe from sustainably produced European feedstock, the Commission's proposal is friendly to oil.”

Road transport is currently 95% reliant on oil and accounts for 20% of total EU emissions. But rather than ensuring the growth of realistic renewable and low-carbon energy sources, like ethanol, in transport by 2030, the Commission's proposal is counterproductive to the EU's climate and energy goals, discourages investment in new technology and ignores the Commission's own science. The Commission proposes only a minimum 6.8% of renewables use in road transport by 2030, down from 10% in 2020, leaving a huge shortfall of nearly 10% from the 15-17% alternative energy needed in transport to meet the 2030 goals.

Expert speakers at the European Parliament breakfast debate included: Dr. Paul Deane of the Environmental Research Institute, University College Cork, who gave an outlook the EU outlook for renewable energy in road transport leading to 2030; Bernd Kuepker, policy officer in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy, who presented the rationale behind the RED II proposal; and Dr. Carlo Hamelinck of Ecofys, who discussed the findings of the GLOBIOM study on the effect of biofuels on land use.

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About ePURE

The European renewable ethanol association (ePURE) represents the interests of European renewable ethanol producers to the European institutions, industry stakeholders, the media, academia and the general public. Based in Brussels, ePURE represents 38 member companies, with 43 production plants in 15 member states, accounting for about 85% of the installed renewable ethanol capacity in Europe. The organisation, established in 2010, promotes the beneficial uses of ethanol throughout Europe.