

PRESS RELEASE

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European Parliament sets stage for a battle over biofuels

Industry committee vote falls short of what is needed to fix the Commission's RED II proposal

BRUSSELS, 28 November 2017 – The report adopted today by the European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee sets the stage for a real clash with EU Member States over how to decarbonise transport.

Nearly everybody agrees the European Commission's Renewable Energy Directive II proposal – which has low ambitions for renewables in transport and would phase out good biofuels like EU ethanol along with bad ones like palm oil – needs work. But the cryptic statement made today by the lead Committee on the file does not offer enough of an upgrade.

The push by MEPs to reinstate a 2030 renewables in transport target increased at 12%, together with the endorsement of an advanced biofuels sub-target, are a step in the right direction. But at the same time they would not allow Member States to use all sustainable renewable fuels like EU ethanol in their energy mix. As part of a complex architecture setting another 10% obligation for fuel suppliers to blend in low-emission fuels, MEPs voted to prevent Member States from using crop-based ethanol – which delivers 66% average greenhouse-gas reduction compared to fossil petrol. In doing so they reduced its contribution even further than what the Commission initially proposed, putting into question the achievability of the objectives without artificial multipliers.

“It will now be up to the Plenary of the European Parliament and Member States to fix this,” said Emmanuel Desplechin, Secretary General of ePURE, the European renewable ethanol association. “In their plenary vote in January, MEPs need to move the Parliament's position closer to what Council has spelled out coherently in its proposed position. Instead of throwing out existing solutions that work, build on them by leaving in place the 7% cap on crop-based biofuels and promoting advanced biofuels as part of an overall renewables in transport target. It is only by embracing all of these sustainable solutions, and by combining low-carbon fuels like ethanol with renewable electricity, that the EU will have any chance of meeting its climate goals for transport.”

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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 39 member companies, with 43 production plants in 16 EU 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.