

PRESS RELEASE: EU keeps palm oil in the mix

Draft delegated act would still allow imported feedstock that violates spirit of RED II agreement

BRUSSELS, 11 February 2019 – The European Commission has gone most of the way toward banning the use of unsustainable palm oil in EU transport, but it hasn't quite closed the deal. Instead of acting on the RED II agreement and removing so-called high-ILUC-risk biofuels from the EU's transport mix, it has left a door open.

“Making an exception for feedstock produced by smallholders isn't just allowing high-ILUC-risk biofuels such as palm oil into Europe through the back door, it's allowing it through the front door,” said Emmanuel Desplechin, Secretary General of ePURE, the European renewable ethanol association. “The hard-won compromise reached on RED II couldn't have been clearer in its message that Europe should phase out biofuels associated with the significant deforestation and peatland drainage that has defined most palm oil expansion.”

“Low-ILUC-risk biofuels certified as such could escape from the phase-out, but these were clearly defined as either produced through improved agricultural practices or from unused land. By inventing a third, alternative criterion for smallholders, the Commission is making a mockery of the agreed RED II compromise.”

European renewable ethanol is made from European feedstock and delivers high greenhouse-gas reduction and is not associated with deforestation. Its use cuts GHG emissions by more than 70% on average compared to fossil petrol.

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ABOUT ePURE: ePURE represents the interests of European renewable ethanol producers to the EU institutions, industry stakeholders, the media, academia and the general public. Based in Brussels, ePURE speaks for 34 member companies (including 20 producing members), with around 50 plants in 16 EU member states, accounting for about 85% of the renewable ethanol production in Europe. The organisation, established in 2010, promotes the beneficial uses of ethanol throughout Europe.