

Press Release: EU's increased demand for low-carbon liquid fuels can be met sustainably, study shows

More countries could adopt higher ethanol fuel blends to reduce transport emissions, improve air quality and boost engine performance – without exceeding the existing cap on crop-based biofuels

BRUSSELS, 14 November 2019 – Europe's need for better-performing, low-carbon fuels to reduce emissions from existing and new cars could be met by the ethanol industry, within the RED II framework, that is without exceeding the cap on crop-based biofuels and as a response to the advanced biofuels sub-target, according to new research.

A study by sustainable energy consultancy E4tech looked at scenarios involving countries adopting petrol blends with up to 20% renewable ethanol. It found that under two potential 2030 scenarios of increased demand for renewable ethanol – one with a mix of E10 and E20 and another maximum-demand scenario with 100% E20 – EU supply increases are achievable. In other words, there is no barrier to EU countries increasing their use of renewable ethanol through the introduction today of E10 and tomorrow of a mid-blend such as E20 as a proven climate solution.

“Renewable ethanol is expected to play a key role in the realisation of the EU's energy and climate ambitions. One of the main factors limiting the potential contribution of renewable ethanol to decarbonisation of the road vehicle fleet is the level at which ethanol is blended into gasoline,” the report's authors write. “One option to overcome this is through the standardisation and use of mid-level ethanol blends.”

Already, EU ethanol delivers [more than 71% average greenhouse-gas emissions savings](#) compared to fossil petrol. Blending more of it into petrol could increase emission savings for the existing petrol fleet and unlock the full potential of future engines.

A conservative yet optimistic scenario with 20% market share of E20 would require an additional 3.2 billion litres of ethanol, a 58% increase compared to 2017 volumes. An extreme high demand scenario, in which all petrol sold in the EU would be E20 would require trebling the volumes of ethanol (+11.1 billion litres) compared with today's supply volumes. The study shows that in both scenarios demand could be met without exceeding the RED II crop cap and supplying the ethanol volumes for the advanced biofuels sub-target.

Nine countries across the EU already use [E10 petrol](#) – which reduces GHG emissions and works in today's cars and infrastructure – and more are considering adopting it as part of their efforts to achieve renewables targets. In October, the Netherlands began using E10 petrol; Slovakia, Hungary and Lithuania are in the process of adopting E10 beginning in 2020. Other countries, such as Brazil, use higher blends to reduce emissions.

“Europe's need to reduce auto emissions is more urgent than ever, and renewable ethanol is already an important part of the solution,” said Emmanuel Desplechin, Secretary-General of ePURE. “But EU countries could do a lot more by moving to E10 and higher blends such as E20. This new study shows there's nothing holding them back. Now Europe's policymakers, regulators, ethanol producers, fuel blenders and auto manufacturers should work together on a solution that can deliver real benefits for the climate and the economy.”

Read the full E4tech report [here](#).

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