



PRESS RELEASE

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Commission's proposal to phase out conventional biofuels ignores science and jeopardises biofuel investments

Brussels, Today – The European renewable ethanol association (ePURE) regrets the European Commission's intentions to phase out, or significantly reduce, the use of conventional biofuels in Europe, contained in the proposed [Renewable Energy Directive](#) for the period post-2020, published as part of the "Clean Energy Package" today. The Commission proposed to reduce the maximum contribution of conventional biofuels, such as ethanol made from corn, wheat and sugar beet, to the EU 2030 renewable target - from a maximum of 7% of transport fuels in 2021 to 3.8% in 2030. The Commission also proposed a binding blending obligation of 6.8 % to promote other 'low emissions fuels' such as renewable electricity and advanced biofuels used in transport.

The proposal conflicts with the proportionality principle and subsidiarity of the EU Member States, as per the EU Treaty, in so far as it conflicts with the Member States ability to decide upon their own renewable energy mixes.

A reduction of the limit on conventional biofuels use to 3.8% undermines the existing €16 billion invested in European biofuel production facilities since 2003 as a result of the EU biofuels policy. The proposed phase out of conventional biofuels means that the Commission has now proposed 4 different changes to the targets for renewable energy use in EU transport since the adoption of its first biofuels policy in 2003. The proposal also backtracks on the compromise agreed by the EU institutions as part of the revision of the Renewable Energy Directive in 2015, which Member States have only begun the process of implementing. This permanent policy flux is diametrically opposite to the Commission's Better Regulation Agenda and has created an impossible policy environment that significantly jeopardises further investments in both conventional and advanced biofuels in Europe.

Significantly, the Commission's proposal does not deliver on the mandate given to the Commission by Council and Parliament to develop a post-2020 policy that will promote sustainable biofuels with high GHG savings. Instead of further promoting renewable alternative fuels, such as sustainable biofuels made in Europe and produced from European feedstock, the Commission's proposal is incredibly friendly to oil. Conventional ethanol produced in Europe has high GHG savings of 64% compared to petrol and the Commission's research proves that it has a low risk of negative land use consequences – it is the type of good biofuel that should be supported by future policy.

"This political decision is not justified and ignores the Commission's own science which shows that ethanol is a low carbon fuel. It is purely a political decision that runs contrary to the Commission's better regulation agenda. The biofuel sector feel betrayed by the Commission because of its complete disregard for the investments made in good faith on the basis of EU policy", said Robert Wright, Secretary-General of ePURE.

"The Commission is totally detached from reality if it expects that its proposal will result in significant investments in advanced biofuels, given that most of the potential investors have already been burned by the Commission's previous biofuels u-turns. ePURE calls on Member States and Parliament to seek the promotion of advanced biofuels in addition to conventional biofuels", added Mr. Wright.

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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 42 member companies, with production plants in 16 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.