



José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission
B - 1049 Brussels

CC:
Commissioner Dimas
Commissioner Verheugen
Commissioner Piebalgs

RE: review of the Fuel Quality Directive

Dear President Barroso,

We understand that the Commission is developing, in the framework of the revision of the fuel quality directive 98/70, a target for the 'decarbonisation' of transport fuels. This implies obligatory targets for fuel suppliers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the production, distribution and end-use of transport fuel every year.

We would like to express our strong support for this approach and urge you to swiftly publish a Commission proposal.

To some extent this issue overlaps with the intended review of the biofuels directive 2003/30, as biofuels are seen as one of the options for reducing overall emissions from fuels.

In our view an overall decarbonisation target for all transport fuels is preferable to the biofuels-only approach because:

- it is more effective environmentally and gives more certainty because the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will be clearly defined. In contrast, a volume-target for biofuels gives no indication of the real-world reductions in emissions that would result;
- it is better for energy security as it opens the door to a basket of alternative fuel technologies such as biogas, sustainable hydrogen and sustainable electricity, rather than just one alternative energy source;
- it gives the biofuels market opportunity to develop, and the incentive to *'ensure that the use of poor-performing biofuels is discouraged while the use of biofuels with good environmental and security of supply performance is encouraged'* as your recent 'biofuels progress report' (COM(2006)845) indicates;
- it is perfectly in line with the recently-announced Californian Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), opening the door for transatlantic co-operation and coordination on this issue;
- it is more flexible and generic, and will therefore deliver more greenhouse gas savings per euro spent and avoid proliferation of other technology-specific regulatory targets in the future;

Regardless of the approach taken, decarbonisation, biofuels or both, we consider it essential that a comprehensive and mandatory certification system be introduced as part of a package of safeguard measures to ensure that biodiversity and important habitats are not destroyed as a result of the increased demand in a global market.

Also, a move to low-carbon fuels should not compromise the long-standing EU target on energy efficiency of passenger cars of 120 g/km CO₂ (4.5 to 5 litres of fuel per 100 km) to be achieved by 2012.

A choice for decarbonisation over a biofuels-only approach sends a strong signal to the world that Europe embarks on a consistent and market based approach to climate and energy policy, and send a clear signal to fuel suppliers that investing in low-carbon solutions will pay off in the future.

We would like to receive your assurance that the Commission will present an ambitious decarbonisation target for transport fuels within the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jos Dings', written in a cursive style.

Jos Dings
Director, the European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E)

Also on behalf of
John Hontelez, Secretary General, the European Environmental Bureau
Clairie Papazoglou, Head of EU Policy, Birdlife International