

WHO adds pressure for stricter Euro-5 standards

The World Health Organisation has published a report on air pollution which suggests the emissions limits in the EU's proposed Euro-5 standards are far too lax.

The report comes as EU environment ministers are due to discuss the Commission's Euro-5 proposal, and as evidence has emerged that emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) are much higher than EU test cycles lead people to believe.

The WHO's air quality guidelines on particulate matter (PM) and other air pollutants propose maximum levels for both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} that are much stricter than the current Euro-5 proposal.

Flight tax ready for take-off'

Thirteen nations have agreed to sign up to Jacques Chirac's forthcoming tax on air tickets to help development and fight disease in the developing world.

The 13 include four EU members (CYP/F/GB/L) and Norway, in what represents a political victory for the French president in the face of severe opposition from airlines.

In addition to the 13 who will charge a levy on air tickets, a further 25 opted to contribute to the fund established by the income from the 13 countries' levies, which will buy generic drugs and other medicines.

From 1 July, France will charge an extra €1 on short-haul flights, rising to €4 for long-haul. For business and first class passengers, the levy will be €10 and €40. Chirac

The guidelines for PM_{2.5} are 10µg/m³ as an annual average and 25µg/m³ as a daily average. For PM₁₀ they are 20µg/m³ annual and 50µg/m³ daily. The WHO's report says: "These are the lowest levels at which total, cardiopulmonary and lung cancer mortality have been shown to increase ... in response to PM_{2.5} in the [2002] American Cancer Society study."

NO NOx REDUCTION IN 13 YEARS

Meanwhile research by two German technology institutes shows that "real world" NOx emissions from diesel vehicles are much higher than the figures that come from the

hopes to raise €200 million per year. Other countries will decide what their levy will be.

The French foreign minister Philippe Douste-Blazy told the Reuters news agency: "We are creating something that is completely new and revolutionary. This is a decisive step for aid and development. There are six million people on the planet who need urgent treatment against Aids and don't get any medicine."

The USA and the International Air Transport Association (Iata) are both opposed to the tax, saying it will make it harder for people to fly to destinations in developing countries and therefore undermine these countries' economies.

The other signatories are Brazil, Chile, Congo, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Madagascar, Mauritius and Nicaragua.

testing procedures required under EU law for a type of vehicle to be approved.

The institutes TUG and FVT, presenting their findings last month at a workshop for national experts on Euro-5, say NOx emissions were reduced much less between the Euro-1 and Euro-4 standards in real driving conditions compared with the results of type approval testing. In fact, NOx emissions have not seen a significant reduction in the last 13 years (see graph below).

They say part of the reason is that the test cycle relates to a much smaller area of the engine than true road driving conditions. This has allowed manufacturers to tune engines to reduce NOx only on the test cycle, a practice known as "cycle beating".

T&E policy officer Aat Peterse said: "This strengthens our argument for a stricter NOx standard for diesels. It would force car makers to use after-treatment technologies rather than just tune the engine to reduce NOx. As well as stopping cycle beating, this would have another advantage – the makers could retune their engines to optimise CO₂ emissions and

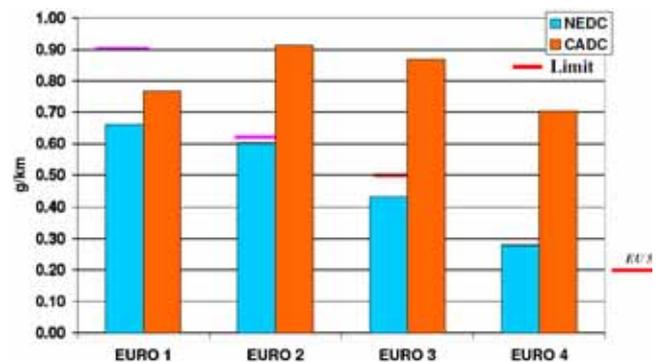
improve efficiency. This would reduce fuel consumption, CO₂ emissions, NOx and thus particulate matter, which NOx contributes to."

The USA has much stricter standards for diesel vehicles than the EU, which means the world's car makers are already working on cars for the US market which meet standards much stricter than those proposed in Euro-5.

In a letter published in the *Financial Times*, Peterse said: "If unchanged, the proposed Euro-5 standard would result in European car makers exporting cleaner diesels to the US than they sell at home. To Europeans more used to bashing the US's environmental credentials, that would be rather embarrassing!"

In a fresh example, T&E's German member VCD has congratulated Mercedes on its efforts to reduce NOx from diesels, but said its technology should be available to all markets. Mercedes unveiled its new catalytic diesel technology at this month's Geneva motor show under the name "BlueTec", with which it aims to break into the US diesel market.

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No improvement in 13 years: how specific NOx emissions have evolved over the four Euro sets of standards (NEDC = test cycle conditions (left); CADC = "real world" conditions (right))

Biofuels strategy published ... and criticised

The EU now has a "strategy for biofuels" after the Commission adopted a controversial paper last month.

Though the strategy is a general one and was launched by the commissioners for agriculture and development, it is clear from the aims that this is intended to be a major instrument in reducing transport's contribution to global warming.

The strategy has three main aims and seven areas of action. The aims are: to promote biofuels in both the EU and developing countries; to prepare for large-scale use of biofuels by improving their cost-competitiveness; and to support developing countries' production of plants to make biofuels.

But environmental NGOs have expressed serious doubts about the strategy for various reasons. These range

from concerns about insufficient safeguards on eco-certification of the agricultural raw materials used to make biofuels, to outright rejection of the strategy's plan to allow the use of biofuels to count towards carbon dioxide emissions targets for car fleets – the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) described this element as "outrageous" and called on MEPs and ministers to remove it.

T&E policy officer Aat Peterse said: "There is some potential for biofuels to deliver certain environmental benefits, but however surprised some people may be to hear environmental organisations playing down an idea that ought to be suited to them, it is important that we are honest about the limits to what biofuels can do.

"The benefits will only be delivered if the production of biofuels is sustainable in

terms of its impact on biodiversity, water and soil, and if an adequate eco-certification process is applied to all biofuels used in the EU."

One of the strategy's seven areas of action is to see how much biofuels can contribute to removing some of the need for oil in transport.

The EEB's general secretary John Hontelez said: "Biofuels are just one solution to climate change, not a panacea. Europe's transport sector could make much more effective environmental gains through increased fuel efficiency and promoting cleaner transport modes."

- Germany looks set to join the growing trend towards abolishing tax incentives for biofuels and replacing them with a requirement for transport fuels to have a minimum biofuel content. The German finance ministry wants the change to happen in August.

NGOs want energy ministers to act on transport

T&E has joined with four other Brussels-based environmental groups to urge EU energy ministers to put transport on their agenda.

The five NGOs are alarmed at the Commission's wish to weaken energy-efficiency commitments for cars and "decouple" economic growth from transport growth, especially at a time when 70% of Europe's oil is used for transport and oil is rising in price. And they want energy ministers to take a more active role.

This month, energy ministers are due to discuss a "New European Energy Policy" in preparation for the spring summit (23/24 March). The policy is intended to have three pillars: security of supply, competitiveness, and sustainability.

In a letter to all 25 EU energy ministers, the five

NGOs (T&E, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Climate Action Network and WWF) call on the energy council to initiate concrete measures that will make Europe's energy policies "truly sustainable and resource-efficient, and thus more competitive".

The letter says a New European Energy Policy "only makes sense if the transport sector is taken into account", and calls for the main elements of a new energy policy to be energy efficiency, renewable energy, and transport, firmly excluding nuclear power.

T&E director Jos Dings said: "The energy commissioner Andris Piebalgs is a good exception to the current trend, in that he at least publicly acknowledges the importance of transport and shows a desire to engage. But he is being undermined by a

belief among energy ministers that transport is still the exclusive domain for transport, industry and environment ministers."

The Commission has convened its "high-level group" on competitiveness, energy and the environment, but with a composition MEPs and NGOs say is unbalanced.

The European Parliament was so angry it has so far declined to send the four representatives it is entitled to. And in a statement to the high-level group's first meeting, 10 Brussels-based NGOs said the group was dominated by large energy users and traditional energy suppliers, with no representatives from the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors, consumer and health groups, academic and research bodies, public transport providers, or environment ministers.

Environment policy does 'not kill off jobs'

A strong EU environmental policy is "not a job killer" and promotes wide-ranging social and economic benefits.

That is the conclusion of a Commission study published last month into the social and economic impact of environmental measures. It updates a Commission report from 1997, largely following pressure to downgrade environmental policy over fears that it could affect the competitiveness of European industry.

The study dismisses the argument that a strong environmental policy is the enemy of competitiveness. It says:

- the impact on employment is either neutral or slightly positive, suggesting environmental policy does not contribute to overall unemployment;

- there is a "clear positive link" between environmental policy and quality of jobs;

- "eco-industries" are clear beneficiaries of environmental policy, with stricter standards offering incentives for innovation;

- environmental policy promotes social inclusion, as Europe's poorest communities suffer the worst pollution so action to reduce it will benefit these areas most.

The only area where the study is sceptical is over the potential of environmentally motivated taxes to offer a "double dividend" of reducing harmful practices and generating income for employment-boosting purposes. But even here it merely cites a lack of "robust examples" of this happening, which may reflect the fact that there are still relatively few examples of "green" taxation.

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How to make the environment matter more to people

Despite Green MPs being elected in several European countries and environmental organisations forming part of the political landscape since the 1960s, environmental action seems to lag behind what the scientists say is required. The discrepancy between the need for action and the effectiveness of environmental MPs and organisations formed the basis for a British study, coordinated by Stephen Hounsham of the T&E member Transport 2000. Here, he gives a summary of the project's findings.

People do care about the environment, and many are worried about climate change in particular. So why do they then fall for sexy car advertising and vote for politicians who make air travel cheaper and build roads? These were the questions behind the "Green-Engage" project, an initiative backed by seven British environmental groups.

A starting point was that people may not see the urgency. Most people get up, travel to work (often by car), work all day while looking forward to their next long-distance holiday, travel home again, put on the dishwasher, turn up the central heating and go to bed. And when they wake up in the morning, look out of the window, and see everything still the same and the trees looking just as nice, they're hardly being confronted with evidence that the environment is in a mess.

Psychologists tell us that climate change comes within people's sphere of concern but not their perceived sphere of influence. In other words, it might worry them but they think they can't do anything about it. It all seems so complicated, expensive, time-

consuming, even unfashionable. We live in a consumerist age when the voice urging us to tread lightly on the planet is often drowned out by the opposing messages urging us to buy that car and take that flight.

So how should the "green" movement, both within nations and transnationally, persuade more people to "go green"?

EMOTIONS

Firstly, let the old assumption that information on its own can save the world be laid to rest! For too long the "green" movement has pumped out information, assuming it leads to awareness of threats and problems, concern and finally action. Unfortunately most of the lifestyle decisions of ordinary people that the environmental movement seeks to influence are not determined by rational facts, but by emotions, habits, personal preferences, fashions, social and personal values, peer pressure and other intangibles.

In other words, to influence lifestyle choices, environmentalists must connect with the heart, senses and emotions. The makers of car adverts are way ahead on this one. When did you last see a car advert that relied on intellectual presentation of facts and figures? Many car adverts use images of freedom, adventure, pure environments, personal success and sex to associate their products with emotions that are hard for people to say no to.

This is the hub of the environmental problem. There is a need for a "green brand" that people aspire to and want to be part of, just as they seek out their favourite breakfast cereal in the



Stephen Hounsham
Transport 2000

FORUM

supermarket. It is surely not beyond the powers of the advertising industry to, say, make going to work on foot or by tram attractive?

It's also no good trying to sell sacrifice.

Humans are essentially selfish animals. Environmentalists should assume that most people they want to connect with are primarily motivated by improving their own quality of life and that of their dependants. Any benefits from environmental acts must be tangible, immediate and specific to the person doing the acts. Long-term benefits, especially at society level, are unlikely to be a significant driver for change. People need to be offered real incentives; they need to know that there will be some, preferably instant, reward for doing the right thing. For example, in the UK some innovative employers are changing the face of the daily journey to work by offering car sharers priority parking and gift vouchers, by providing free bus travel and even offering direct cash payments for people who have left the car at home.

HOPE, NOT FEAR

Most people sign up to hope rather than fear. Why should we expect them to be motivated by images of environmental calamity? The psychology of many people means they can't cope with such thoughts and frequently end up rejecting them. What the environmental movement needs is a positive vision and a message that something better is on the way.

One reason for the failure of environmental campaigns aimed at the public is that the communicating is often done by "green" people and ex-

pressed in their own terms. They are then aimed at the general public who quite often have different values, priorities and motivations, and can be put off by the way environmentalists present things.

Campaigns must express ideas in terms that work for their audiences. George W Bush was re-elected because he identified that the values of a crucial number of key voters were based on patriotism, a stable family environment and a strong moral and religious backbone, and he simply offered them a future based on those values. In his case, it didn't matter what he was going to do in terms of policy; he had already won the hearts of the people he needed. Environmentalists must do the same. It might go against the grain, but we really could learn from the White House.

Society in European countries is based on the triumvirate of government, business and people, but who exactly is in charge? People often feel helpless, but governments rely on people's votes, and businesses rely on people buying their products. This is why the central message of "Painting the Town Green" is not that promoting environmental behaviour is hopeless, but that there might be better ways of doing it. With a more intelligent and creative approach, drawing not just on the skills of campaigners but on those of sociologists, psychologists and especially those people who make the car adverts, we really could mobilise a new kind of people power.

• *Painting the Town Green* is available through Transport 2000, price GBP 20 (including postage within Europe) for a printed copy or GBP 10 for a pdf file (www.transport2000.org.uk).

Rapporteur criticises Dimas for weakening legislation

Recent EU action on the environment has been heavily criticised by the MEP who led the European Parliament's debate on the sixth environmental action programme (6EAP).

Riitta Myller, the Finnish rapporteur for the programme when it was approved four years ago, said five of the thematic strategies launched by the environment commissioner Stavros Dimas last year fell well short of the commitments in the 6EAP and weakened existing legislation.

"The thematic strategies do not include targets and timetables," she said. "It's difficult to see anything in them to

measure that implementation of the 6EAP is real, and the worry here is that the strategies are weakening existing legislation."

In a response, Dimas implied he wanted to do more but was held back by political pressures, and would welcome pressure for stricter air quality standards from MEPs.

IGNORING RULES REDUCES COSTS

Hauliers using German motorways are ignoring safety and environmental requirements on a massive scale, according to a new book. In their book *Tatort Autobahn* ("Scene of the crime: motorway), the authors Uli Röhm and Wilfried Voigt document what they say are countless deliberate and systematic deceptions that can earn hauliers cost advantages of up to 50%, thereby providing them with a massive competitive advantage. The German pro-rail alliance Allianz Pro Schiene says the book comes as the German office for freight transport has reported one in five lorries stopped by the police has committed some safety or environmental offence.

PATCHY ASSESSMENT

A report by the European Environmental Bureau shows the EU directive on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is being poorly applied. The report "Biodiversity in Strategic Environmental Assessment", says the directive's transposition into national legislation has been "lacklustre and patchy", and this is undermining the EU's efforts in halting the loss of biodiversity. SEA is particularly important in transport infrastructure, as it covers wider environmental implications of a proposed scheme than just the environmental

impact assessment of a specific project.

DISMANTLING DELAY

France has recalled a contaminated military ship which was intended to be broken up in India in what could be a test case for dismantling and decontaminating ships. The highest French administrative court ruled that the aircraft carrier *Clémenceau* should remain in French waters until it is clear how many harmful substances are on board. The issue is the latest example of a growing problem, in which moderately high safety standards at EU shipyards are acting as an incentive for EU firms and governments to send contaminated ships to non-EU countries where standards are lower and shipyard workers are therefore at much greater risk.

LOCAL SHOPPERS

A British survey suggests shop owners overestimate the importance of the car among their customers. The cycle initiative Sustrans questioned 840 shoppers and 126 shop owners in Bristol – the shop owners estimated that 41% of customers arrived by car, whereas only 22% had done so; and the owners thought just 12% of customers lived less than 800 metres away and 40% 3km away, while the real figures were 42% and 88%. Sustrans says the findings suggest local businesses have more to gain from measures to promote walking and cycling than they think.

AVIATION TRADING

A report for the British government says including aviation in the EU emissions trading scheme would not significantly affect the price of emission allowances. The study by ICF Consulting took three scenarios to allow for

various assumptions. This does not mean the price of flying will not increase, only that including aviation in the ETS will not significantly affect the price of carbon emission allowances.

INTERMODAL NEWS

A new twice-a-year newsletter has appeared from Itiss, an initiative to tackle poor and unreliable public transport information, congestion, inefficient road usage, and lack of multimodal integration. The name Itiss stands for "Intermodal Travel Information Systems", and is led by regional public transport authorities in five EU members (D/F/GB/IRL/NL). The Itiss newsletter can be contacted on +353 1 201 7774 or via www.itiss-eu.com.

BETTER PARKING

A new book from Canada on parking says it will change the way people think about and solve parking problems. "Parking Management Best Practices" by Todd Litman describes more than two dozen strategies that result in more efficient use of parking resources, typically reducing requirements by 20-40%. A summary of the book is available at www.vtppi.org/park_man.pdf.

New Publications and Events

- **Aviation Ticket Taxes**, T&E position paper on the potential environmental benefits resulting from the French government's proposed "airline-ticket solidarity tax", www.t-e.nu
- **World Health Organisation air quality guidelines global update 2005**, report on a working group meeting, Bonn, Germany 18-20 October 2005, www.euro.who.int/Document/E87950.pdf
- **The Links between Employment and Environmental Policies**, an analysis by the European Commission, www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/integration/pdf/infonoteempl.pdf
- **Parking Management Best Practices**, by Todd Litman, VTPI Canada, 312 pages, Can \$69.95, www.vtppi.org
- **Tatort Autobahn** (Scene of the crime: motorway), by Uli Röhm and Wilfried Voigt, Campus-Verlag, 222 pages, €19.90, ISBN 3-593-37316-5

Bulletin

T&E Bulletin is the official news sheet of the European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E). It appears 10 times a year and is free to members of the Federation.

T&E has 40 members registered in a total of 21 countries. It lobbies for an environmentally sound approach to European transport issues.

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