

PRESS RELEASE

Securing the objectives of the EU climate change and energy package

European biodiesel producers call on EU authorities not to undermine the EU renewable energy goals

The European Commission is currently working towards implementing the Renewable Energy and the Fuel Quality Directives, essential components of the climate and energy package adopted by EU leaders in December 2008.

Presenting the results of a study assessing the impact of increased GHG emissions from fossil fuels today in Brussels, Raffaello Garofalo, the EBB Secretary General, warned policy-makers that « *a system that creates a heavy economic and administrative burden for biofuels and leaves fossil fuels free from this same burden would be a failure* ».

Indeed, as important implementation decisions are currently being taken by the Commission, the European biodiesel industry would like to underline the key conditions that it believes are essential to meeting the EU's climate change objectives.

Chief among these is the need to account fully for increasing emissions from oil (both from conventional and unconventional sources) in the methodology and reference values being developed by the EU for measuring the greenhouse gas (GHG) performances of both fossil fuels and biofuels. As things stand, it appears that the Commission has so far underestimated the drastic increase in emissions from oil.

A transparent methodology and calculation of GHG emissions and Directive reference value is crucial. This is particularly important as far as the update of biofuels and fossil fuels reference values are concerned. The JEC consortium is dealing with this today. So far, the JEC includes only the Commission Joint Research Center as well as oil and car industry representatives: it should include as early as possible representatives from the EU biofuels industry and from EU agriculture.

If the EU does not take a coherent and harmonised approach to fossil fuels and biofuels, there is a risk that its GHG reduction commitment of 20% by 2020 will not be achieved. The most polluting source of crude oil would be artificially incentivised, while biofuels would be penalised and limited in their use, resulting in reduced environmental benefits and energy security for the EU.

At present, biofuels in the EU are subjected to much more stringent sustainability and emissions-saving requirements than fossil fuels. Robust measures are being defined, notably with respect to the functioning of the biofuels supply chain. These have the potential to severely impede future trade in biofuels. At the same time, the Commission is studying potential indirect land use change effects resulting from biofuels production, often without solid scientific backing.

These days, sustainability considerations are an essential part of EU policy-making. However, decision-makers must avoid placing an artificial burden on an industry if this will not actually deliver greater sustainability.

EBB believes that action is urgently needed to ensure the Renewable Energy and Fuel Quality Directives succeed in meeting their initial objectives of providing incentives for greater use of greener fuels and reducing GHG emissions in transport. A first step in this direction would be to ensure a coherent benchmarking of fossil fuels and biofuels in both Directives.
