

Brussels, 17 December 2008

Fuel Quality Directive

The amendment to Directive 98/70/EC on environmental quality standards for fuel aims at:

- 1) further tightening environmental quality standards for a number of fuel parameters,
- 2) enabling more widespread use of ethanol in petrol and
- 3) introducing a mechanism for reporting and reduction of the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions from fuel.

Key elements

- Reduction in life cycle greenhouse gas emissions from energy supplied. For now, a binding target of 6% creates a very important first step while leaving open the possibility for increasing the future level of ambition to 10%. To that effect, in a 2012 review, the Commission will need to assess a further increase of the ambition level of 2% from other technological advances, such as the supply of electricity for use in transport. This increases the technological neutrality of the Directive and will encourage innovation. Subject to that review, a further 2% is envisaged to be achieved by the use of CDM credits for flaring reductions not linked to EU oil consumption.
- Incorporation of sustainability criteria for biofuels used to meet greenhouse gas reduction requirement. Creation of specific Committee jointly with the Renewable Energy Directive to coordinate the energy and environment aspects in future development of biofuel sustainability criteria.
- Reduction of sulphur content of inland waterway fuel in one step to 10ppm by 1 January 2011.
- Phasing in of 10% Ethanol (E10) petrol: To avoid potential damage to old cars, continued marketing of petrol containing maximum 5% ethanol guaranteed until 2013, with the possibility of an extension to that date if needed.
- Derogations for petrol vapour pressure for cold summer conditions and blending in of ethanol are subject to Commission approval following an assessment of the socio-economic and environmental impacts, in particular on air quality.
- Introduction of labelling requirement for metallic additives for consumer protection purposes. Limit on the use of the specific additive MMT in line with the precautionary principle. This limit can be raised if it is demonstrated not to cause adverse effects.