# ILUC vote at the Environment Committee of the European Parliament’s 2nd reading

The Environment Committee of the European Parliament voted on the 24th of February 2015 on the ILUC dossier for its 2nd reading. The vote was important since it is within its committees that the European Parliament makes specific changes to a legislative proposal, to then be validated in plenary. Following the vote, Nils Torvalds (the MEP in charge of ILUC), can negotiate directly with the Council (member states) to reach a final agreement on ILUC. The trilogue negotiations will start in early March. The official final vote of the Parliament’s plenary is scheduled for the last week of April and a potential compromise with the Council could follow after that.

The main outcomes of the vote[[1]](#footnote-1) constituting the Parliament’s negotiation position for ILUC are the following:

* A 6% cap for conventional biofuels out of the total fuel share used in transport by 2020. In addition, the EP widens the scope, so that the cap not only covers food-based biofuels but also inedible crops.
* Advanced biofuels are to count for 1,25% of the total fuel share used in transport by 2020. This is only half of what the Parliament had initially proposed, but apparently also more realistic and still a high enough target to encourage the production of biofuels from waste.
* Target for energy from renewable sources in petrol (i.e. bioethanol) of 6.5% by 2020. This exclusive target for bioethanol together with the 6% cap on conventional biofuels, could squeeze biomethane out of the energy crops sector.
* ILUC factors (feedstock-specific carbon footprints) are to be included in all relevant EU legislation from 2020 onward. Reporting on the estimated ILUC emissions of biofuels is to start right away. New emission reduction targets to be set through the fuel quality directive after 2020. Amendments 32 and 55 were adopted which give delegated powers to the commission to update and establish new ILUC values.
* Stronger emphasis on waste hierarchy for advanced biofuels made from municipal waste and residues. It states that biofuels “shall not be made from waste which is subject to re-use and recycling targets”. Amendment 210 was passed which requires the status of waste to be “subject to independent verification and certification as to its compliance with the waste hierarchy”. Nevertheless, amendments 194 and 322 proposing to give the Commission ample power on “verification and certification of compliance with the waste hierarchy” were rejected.
* The EC is to measure the quality of biofuels used in vehicles for pollutant emissions, CO2 emissions and overall vehicle performance. Amendment 37 was accepted which gives the EC delegated powers on to introduce specific parameters, test limits and test methods.
* The EP position intends to move away from biofuels by favouring other alternatives. Amendments 289 and 290 passed which require member states to increase their energy efficiency by at least “12% with respect to their current projections for overall energy consumption in the transport sector by 2020". Amendments 291 and 292 passed which set a target for member states of “2% of their overall energy consumption in the transport sector by 2020”.
* Eurostat is to publish more specific information on biofuels produced and/or imported from energy crops (information disaggregated into biodiesel and ethanol). Amendment 217 on this was accepted.
* Amendment 213 listing several 'non-food cellulosic’ feedstock important for biogas was accepted.
* Member states are to bring into force the ILUC legislation within 1 year after its official publication. Amendment 67 passed which would bring implementation a year sooner than previously proposed (i.e. 2 years)
* The CO2 bonus for restored biodegraded land is removed by amendments by amendments 69 and 72 which passed.

With the regard to the upcoming ILUC negotiations, Niels Torvalds, the MEP in charge of the ILUC Dossier, has a clear mandate to start negotiations with the Council (the member states). This is something that Ms Lepage (the MEP previously responsible for ILUC) did not have during the previous round of negotiations. Nonetheless, Torvalds will find resistance from the member states, particularly on the conventional fuels cap, which many countries want to see at 7% and for food crops only. The member states also want a significantly lower and voluntary advanced biofuels target of 0,5%. The new caps that were introduced by Parliament on fuel efficiency and electric transport are also likely to meet opposition by national governments.

Mr Torvalds is committed to reach an agreement with Council during the 2nd reading. If this does not happen, in the next months, ILUC will go to Conciliation for a last compromise attempt, what would keep delaying the file.

1. The official document of the ILUC vote was not published yet by the European Parliament. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)