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PRESS RELEASE



MEPs call for the removal of barriers to the deployment of sustainable fuels ensuring transport decarbonisation

- Current CO2 emission standards promote the development of green electricity but hinder the deployment of other sustainable fuels and vehicles.
- Lack of policy support will put at risk the scale-up of the industry and the achievement of climate goals.
- Biomethane belongs to the most promising alternative fuels to decarbonise transport in a swift and cost-competitive way, leaving no one behind.

Brussels 5 May 2021 –MEPs from different political groups¹ have signed a petition asking the European Commission to remove barriers to the deployment of sustainable fuels and technologies in transport by reviewing the current tailpipe approach to measure CO2 emissions. This, coupled with increased shares of green electricity, will ensure the swift decarbonisation of the transport sector. The development of clean mobility will be essential to reach climate-neutrality. The sector needs to reduce its emissions by 90% in 2050, while ensuring that the EU transport industry remains competitive and the transition to clean technologies leaves no one behind.

The EU needs cost-competitive fuels and technologies available right now to achieve this goal. Biomethane belongs to the most promising alternative fuels: it allows emissions reductions already in the short term and by 2030 and its production promotes the deployment of a circular bioeconomy. When well-to-wheel emissions are taken into account, biomethane is clearly among the least emitting transport fuels². This approach considers the whole production and use cycles of the vehicles, compared to the current standard, which measures only tailpipe emissions.

The adoption of a well-to-wheel approach would ensure the recognition of the multiple environmental benefits of biomethane as transport fuel. The 'EU Strategy for Energy System Integration' announced last year '*opportunities for further targeted support to accelerate the development of the market for biofuels and biogases*'. However, considering only tailpipe emissions to measure the environmental impact of transport vehicles will hinder the development of sustainable fuels, rather than support it. Besides, until now, the tailpipe approach has not led to a reduction of transport emissions.

The tailpipe approach measures only part of the emissions produced, compared to a well-to-wheel approach that provides an estimation of the emissions produced over the entire lifetime of a vehicle. Vehicle manufacturers are consequently discouraged by the current legislation from developing and offering cars and vans with Internal Combustion Engines (ICE's), which are currently the most common technology. Instead of stopping ICE's production, they could keep the technology and simply replace diesel or petrol with biomethane. Furthermore, this legislation makes it difficult for those Member States who drive truly technology-neutral transport policies, to support sustainable fuels as a part of the future fuel mix.

¹ **List of MEPs signing the petition:** Franc Bogovič, European People's Party / Slovenia; Jakop Dalunde, Greens / Sweden; Heidi Hautala, Greens / Finland; Pär Holmgren, Greens / Sweden ; Elsi Katainen, Renew Europe / Finland ; Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, S&D Group / Finland ; Mauri Pekkarinen, Renew Europe / Finland ; Anne Sander, European People's Party / France ; Massimiliano Salini, EPP/Italy ; Henna Virkkunen, European People's Party / Finland ; Emma Wiesner, Renew Europe / Sweden.

² <https://www.europeanbiogas.eu/acknowledging-the-full-potential-of-biomethane-as-transport-fuel/>

To ensure a truly energy sector integration, the deployment of renewable electricity should be coupled with the scale-up of sustainable fuels. E-mobility and general electrification of our societies will increase rapidly in Europe over the next decades, but we must not forget that electricity, like gas, it is only environmentally friendly when it comes from renewable sources. **Political decisions should encourage the deployment and growth of all clean technologies and this can only be ensured with a technology-neutral mindset.**

One of the big advantages of biomethane mobility is the current availability of the necessary infrastructure to enable a cost-competitive and swift deployment of sustainable vehicles and fuels without the need for significant investments. The share of biomethane in the gas mix of the EU transport sector is increasing all around Europe and represents today the 18% of the gas mix, according to NGVA Europe, reaching 50% in Germany, 59% in Finland and even 90% in the Netherlands and 95% in Sweden.

The European production of biogas and its upgraded form, biomethane, is expected to at least double by 2030, growing from nearly 200 TWh today to around 370-390 TWh, according to different studies³. If we deploy 117 TWh in the transport sector and the full gas fleet consumption being estimated to be around 300 TWh, the share of biomethane in the gas mix of the transport sector could increase to around 40%. This would create significant emission reductions already by 2030.

The European Commission is expected to propose in June a revision of the CO2 standards for cars and vans. **The MEPs who have co-signed this petition call on the EU Executive body for considering emissions along the whole well-to-wheel chain with a revision of critical pieces of EU legislation that will enable full deployment of sustainable fuels and vehicles:** CO2 emission standards for new vehicles, Taxonomy on Sustainable Finance and Clean Vehicles Directive.

MEP Jakob Dalunde, (Sweden - Greens/EFA group and Member of the Transport Committee): *"We will not achieve carbon-neutrality without the decarbonisation of the transport sector. Full deployment of all sustainable fuels and technologies, including biomethane, is needed to meet the growing demand for renewable and fossil free solutions."*

MEP Heidi Hautala, (Finland - Greens/EFA group): *"Biomethane must be recognized as one important means to reach EU's ambitious 2030 climate targets in transport. Its emissions are very low when measured over the whole lifecycle, from well-to-wheel. Seen in the context of circular economy biomethane gives even more benefits when produced from waste or residues. We call on the EU Commission to stop punishing biomethane and to adopt a truly technology neutral approach."*

MEP Henna Virkkunen (Finland - EPP group and Member of the Transport Committee): *"We must actively combine all the possible alternatives available for cutting transport emissions. Renewable biofuels are one of the readily deployable alternatives, which can be combined with existing car fleet. Different types of sustainable biofuels have an important role to play especially in road transport in the short and medium term."*

- **[DOWNLOAD MEPs PETITION ON CO2 STANDARDS](#)**

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About the EBA

The European Biogas Association is the voice of renewable gas in Europe since 2009. EBA advocates the recognition of biomethane and other renewable gases as sustainable, on demand and flexible energy sources that provide multiple knock-on socio-economic and environmental benefits. The association counts today on a well-established network of over 150 national organisations, scientific institutes, and companies from Europe and beyond.

³ <https://www.europeanbiogas.eu/eba-statistical-report-2020/>