

Specification of petrol, diesel and gas-oil: mechanism to monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fuels. "Fuel Quality Directive"

2007/0019(COD) - 23/04/2009 - Final act

PURPOSE: to introduce stricter transport fuel standards.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Directive 2009/30/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 98/70/EC as regards the specification of petrol, diesel and gas-oil and introducing a mechanism to monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and amending Council Directive 1999/32/EC as regards the specification of fuel used by inland waterway vessels and repealing Directive 93/12/EEC.

CONTENT: following a first reading agreement with the European Parliament, the Council adopted this Directive which will improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through environmental standards for fuel. It will also facilitate the more widespread blending of biofuels into petrol and diesel and, to avoid negative consequences, set ambitious sustainability criteria for biofuels.

It should be noted that this Directive forms part of the climate-energy legislative package containing measures aimed at fighting climate change and promoting renewable energy. (See also [COD/2008/0013](#), [COD/2008/0014](#), [COD/2008/0015](#) and [COD/2008/0016](#) and [COD/2007/0297](#)). The package is designed to achieve the EU's overall environmental target of a 20 % reduction in greenhouse gases and a 20 % share of renewable energy in the EU's total energy consumption by 2020.

Scope: the Directive sets, in respect of road vehicles, and non-road mobile machinery (including inland waterway vessels when not at sea), agricultural and forestry tractors, and recreational craft when not at sea:

- a) technical specifications on health and environmental grounds for fuels to be used with positive ignition and compression-ignition engines, taking account of the technical requirements of those engines; and
- b) a target for the reduction of life cycle greenhouse gas emissions.

The revised directive introduces for the first time a reduction target for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from fuels. Member States shall require suppliers to reduce as gradually as possible life cycle greenhouse gas emissions per unit of energy from fuel and energy supplied by **up to 10 % by 31 December 2020**. This reduction shall consist of:

- a) **6 % by 31 December 2020**. Member States may require suppliers, for this reduction, to comply with the following intermediate targets: 2 % by 31 December 2014 and 4 % by 31 December 2017;
- b) **an indicative additional target of 2 % by 31 December 2020**, to be achieved through certain methods, such as the use of any technology such as carbon capture and storage;
- c) **an indicative additional target of 2 % by 31 December 2020** to be achieved through the use of credits purchased through the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, under the conditions set out in Directive 2003/87/EC.

To enable these GHG emissions cuts, petrol may have a higher biofuel content. From 2011, petrol may contain up to 10% ethanol. In order to avoid damage to old cars, however, fuel with 5% ethanol (E5) will continue to be available until 2013, with the possibility for Member States of extending that period.

The Directive also lays down stringent environmental and social sustainability criteria for **biofuels**, which correspond to those in the Directive on the promotion of energy from renewable sources (see COD/2008/0016.)

The Directive also imposes limits on the content of **sulphur and metallic additives** in engine fuel. In order to minimise emissions of volatile air pollutants, the maximum vapour pressure of fuel is also prescribed.

Reporting: the Commission shall submit by 31 December 2012, and every three years thereafter, a report to the European Parliament and the Council accompanied, where appropriate, by a proposal for amendments to this Directive. At the latest in 2014, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council relating to the achievement of the greenhouse gas emission target for 2020. The Commission shall, if appropriate, accompany its report by a proposal for modification of the target.

The revised environmental quality standards as well as the sustainability criteria for biofuels will apply from 2011.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 25/06/2009.

TRANSPOSITION: 31/12/2010.