

Fuels and energy from renewable sources: transition to biofuels to deliver greenhouse gas savings

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The Council held a public orientation debate on the draft directive on indirect land-use change (ILUC) amending the fuel quality (98/70/EC) and renewable energy (2009/28/EC) directives. The proposed directive aims to promote a transition to biofuels that deliver substantial greenhouse gas savings.

Given the cross-cutting policy nature of the proposal, the Permanent Representatives Committee decided on 12 December 2012 to establish an Ad Hoc Working Party on ILUC to examine the proposal, as an effective way of ensuring coherence and consistency between the two Directives. When these Directives were adopted, the European Parliament and the Council called on the Commission to examine the negative impacts that land-use change could have on greenhouse gas emissions and to present, if appropriate, a legislative proposal.

Ministers were invited to answer two questions raised by the presidency:

- the first focussing on whether the draft directive adequately fulfils its objectives of addressing indirect land-use change emissions and encouraging the transition to advanced biofuels, and
- the second relating to its support for the achievement of the existing energy and climate change objectives in the EU.

The same questions will serve as a basis for the policy debate at the meeting of the Environment Council on 21 March.

The European Parliament committee vote is scheduled for July 2013.