

PRESS RELEASE

Mobility: Blow for climate protection as EU lawmakers opt for one-sided focus on e-cars and ban on conventional cars

Brussels/Berlin, June 9, 2022 – The European Parliament delivered a setback for consumers and climate protection as a majority of MEPs voted to ban combustion engine cars, rejecting a technology-mix in road transport that – alongside e-mobility – would embrace all climate-friendly ways to accelerate the phase-out of fossil fuels.

If the European Parliament has its way, conventional cars with combustion engines will be banned in Europe from 2035. A majority of European lawmakers approved an electrification-only strategy for road transport in their vote on stricter CO₂ emission standards for new cars and vans on Wednesday.

An amendment, also considered on Wednesday, to count the CO₂ savings of sustainable renewable fuels towards the fleet targets of new cars, failed by only 44 votes. Had it passed, this would have offered consumers another climate-friendly alternative to fossil-fuelled cars.

„Cutting emissions, not choices – this should be the guiding principle of European climate policy. Unfortunately, many MEPs have opted for exactly the opposite, simply ignoring the key role that sustainable renewable fuels like eFuels can play in reducing transport emissions,” said Dr. Monika Griefahn, managing chairwoman of the eFuel Alliance.

“Instead of pitting climate protection technologies against each other, we must focus on phasing out the use of fossil fuels. A voluntary crediting system counting CO₂ emission savings from renewable fuels towards EU fleet targets for new vehicles, would have allowed for a technology-mix of climate-friendly solutions that could complement Europe’s electrification efforts. This would speed up the decarbonisation of transport while respecting the diverse realities of people’s needs,” said Monika, Griefahn.

By focusing solely on tailpipe emissions, the current EU regulation on CO₂ standards for cars and vans will not ensure a timely transition to climate-neutral mobility. This is because emissions that occur in earlier or later phases of a vehicle’s life cycle, such as during the production of the vehicle or the generation and provision of its operating power, are being ignored. The EU’s electricity mix is still heavily dependent on fossil energies (37% in 2021) – in countries such as Poland, fossil energy carriers even account for more than 80% of electricity generation. Yet, perversely, an e-car that is charged with predominantly fossil fuel-generated electricity still qualifies as a zero-emission vehicle under the current regulation.

Moreover, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has highlighted the dangers for European societies and economies of energy-related dependence on non-European nations. “We should actually have learnt the lessons from recent events and not now knowingly exchange dependence on energy suppliers for a new dependence on raw materials for battery production,” Ralf Diemer, managing director of the eFuel Alliance warned. According to the International Energy Agency, China processes 87% of the world’s rare earth deposits, 65% of cobalt, 58% of lithium and 40% of copper.

“It is now up to national governments in the European Council to take responsibility and mitigate this risk by diversifying the way we future-proof European mobility. This is why we must acknowledge the contribution that eFuels can make to the energy transition in the passenger car sector,” said Ralf Diemer

However, the end of the combustion engine is not yet a done deal. The Environment Council is currently busy revising the regulation – a General Approach is still pending.

Further information: www.efuel-alliance.eu

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>>> The eFuel Alliance e.V. <<<

The eFuel Alliance is an interest group working for the political and social acceptance of eFuels and for their approval. We represent more than 170 companies, associations and consumer organizations along the eFuel production value chain.

We stand for fair competition and a level playing field for all relevant emission reduction solutions. We are clearly committed to greater climate protection and want to see the significant contribution of eFuels to sustainability and climate protection more widely recognized. Our goal is to enable the industrial production and widespread use of CO₂-neutral fuels from renewable energy sources.

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