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Press Release

Copa & Cogeca reject plans to cut by almost half targets for conventional biofuels used in transport by 2030 warning it will jeopardise EU climate and energy targets #NobiofuelNofood

Copa & Cogeca rejected in Brussels today EU Commission plans to cut by almost half the targets for conventional biofuels used in transport by nearly half by 2030, warning that it will reduce the EU's ability to meet its climate goals and to decarbonise the transport sector.

Chairman of Copa & Cogecas Working Party Mr Klein said "The EU Commission plans to substantially reduce the share of conventional biofuels in transport fuel from 7% in 2021 to 3.8% by 2030 and to allow Member States to set up national targets below the one of the EU which is totally unacceptable. The plans included in the proposal on promoting the use of energy from renewable energy sources are not realistic since these fuels are the only real alternative in the long term to fossil fuels which are less environmentally-friendly than conventional biofuels. Without them, the EU will be unable to reach its climate and energy targets".

"It will also have a negative effect on the EU agricultural markets mainly on the oilseeds sector and on the EU's domestic supply of protein-rich by-products used in feed. This is because only a part of the rapeseed, wheat, maize and sugar beet is used to produce biodiesel or bioethanol. The rest is used for feed. Biofuels give farmers another outlet for their produce and an alternative source of income which is especially important now given the surpluses on the grain market", Copa & Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen added.

"We welcome plans to gradually phase in the use of advanced biofuels which are still in their early stages of development. They must be promoted in order to be substituted for fossil fuels. But we oppose the Commission proposal to replace conventional biofuels by advanced biofuels. Conventional and advanced biofuels are part of the solution to ensure a more climate-friendly transport sector as well as a sustainable EU agriculture sector, growth and jobs in EU rural areas", Mr Pesonen said.

Mr Klein also underlined that the transport sector will continue to need liquid fuels in the future. "Vehicles that run on electricity are still in their early stages of development and are not feasible in the long term for heavy duty trucks, agriculture machinery, air and marine transport. That is why we urge EU Ministers and MEPs to ensure that the limit is kept at least at 7% until 2030 for conventional biofuels with a review clause in 2025 to take into account the effective scale of advanced biofuels on the market", Mr Klein said.

Mr Pesonen went on to refer to biomass fuels from sustainable forest biomass in the proposal, saying that account needs must be taken of efforts made by forest owners to ensure the sustainable management of forests in a holistic manner. "The new requirements for a risk based approach should be implemented at national level. This should take into account existing laws and systems in place that guarantee sustainable production of forest biomass. Its implementation should not create red tape for Member States or beneficiaries. We need to ensure that the forest sector will be able to continue to contribute to the further development of

the bioeconomy in the EU, to tackle climate change and to ensure viable and sustainable rural areas”, he said.

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