

12898/18

(OR. en)

PRESSE 49
PR CO 49

OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3640th Council meeting

Environment

Luxembourg, 9 October 2018

President **Elisabeth Köstinger**
Federal Minister for Sustainability and Tourism of Austria

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175 B – 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press>

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¹ • Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
 • Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
 • Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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ITEMS DEBATED**CO2 emission standards for cars and vans**

The Council reached a general approach on the recast regulation on CO2 emission standards for cars and vans.

The Council agreed a new target for the CO2 emissions of cars for 2030 and maintains the other targets as proposed by the European Commission.

	2025	2030
Cars	15%	35%
Vans	15%	30%

Ministers also agreed that car manufacturers will have to **report more robust and more representative data** concerning the emissions of cars and vans.

[Press release](#)

[Infographic](#)

General approach

Commission proposal ([14217/1/17](#) + [ADD1 REV 1](#))

CO2 emission standards for heavy-duty vehicles

Environment ministers held a policy debate on the proposed regulation on CO2 standards for heavy-duty vehicles (HDVs) which concerns trucks, buses and lorries sold between 2020 and 2030.

The regulation will, for the first time, make heavy-duty vehicles subject to greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The Commission proposal sets an overall CO2 emission reduction target for the EU's fleet of new heavy-duty vehicles of 15% from 2025 onwards compared to 2019 emission levels. The overall target is translated into manufacturer-specific CO2 emission targets on the basis of fleet composition and characteristics. The proposal also includes an aspirational reduction target of at least 30% from 2030 onwards.

The Austrian Presidency guided the debate by structuring the discussion around the following questions.

- Do you agree with the approach of the Commission proposal as regards a binding 2025 target and an aspirational 2030 target combined with the review mechanism? Do you consider that the proposed targets provide the appropriate level of ambition?
- In your view, is the proposed system of super credits adequate for providing incentives for zero- and low-emission vehicles, including categories of vehicles which are not subject to the CO2 targets? If not, have you considered alternative approaches?

Shifting towards a modern, low-carbon transport sector was seen as important by member states, and several ministers highlighted the need for road transport decarbonisation, and the need to make sure that the EU delivers on our collective commitment to tackle climate change. Some ministers saw it as imperative that the heavy-duty vehicle sector should contribute a significant share to the overall emission reduction effort the EU is undertaking.

Many delegations are still studying the Commission proposal in detail. They nonetheless shared their preliminary views on several key aspects of this legislation.

Concerning the CO₂ emission reduction targets, some ministers called for higher targets, whereas other ministers expressed their preference for a prudent approach in light of the fact that zero- and low-emission technologies in heavy-duty vehicles do not have a significant market presence at the moment.

Several ministers agreed that there is a need for robust testing procedures based on real world emission and fuel consumption data of trucks, buses and lorries.

Today's policy debate provided guidance for further work on the regulation under the Austrian Presidency. The chair concluded that she will strive to make quick progress and that the Austrian Presidency aims at working towards achieving a Council position on the text.

[Presidency note](#)

[Commission proposal](#)

Conclusions on climate change

Environment ministers adopted conclusions on climate change which emphasise the unprecedented urgency which is needed to step up global efforts to avoid the dangerous effects of climate change. Environment ministers decided to send a strong political signal in these conclusions, which constitute the basis for the EU's position at the forthcoming COP24 climate conference in Katowice, Poland, in December.

In the conclusions, ministers also reacted to the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels which was published the day before the Environment Council.

Ministers reconfirmed the EU's commitment to the Paris Agreement and stressed that the EU was implementing ambitious policies. Ministers recalled the progress made in recent months by the EU on legislation which delivers on its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These include the new EU 2030 renewable energy target of 32%, the new energy efficiency target of 32.5%, the reform of the EU emission trading system, the emission reduction targets in sectors falling outside the scope of ETS and the integration of land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) in the EU's climate and energy framework.

[Council conclusions](#)

Conclusions on biodiversity

Environment ministers agreed conclusions on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. The conclusions set out the general political framework of the EU's negotiating position at the Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Egypt in November 2018.

In the conclusions, the Council acknowledged that good progress has been made towards meeting some parts of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, however called for increased efforts to fully achieve these targets.

The Council expressed its deep concern that the natural resource base and ecosystem services that humanity depends upon are at high risk and that most pressures driving biodiversity loss, including habitat loss and change, land degradation, climate change, invasive alien species, terrestrial and marine pollution and the unsustainable use of biodiversity, continue to increase. The Council therefore urged the Commission and its Member States to work hard in the next two years to fully implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

Ministers called for an ambitious strategic plan for biodiversity beyond 2020 which provides an overarching biodiversity framework across the UN and for all stakeholders towards the 2050 vision on biodiversity.

[Council conclusions](#)

Any other business

- ***Directive on single-use plastics***
 - Information from the Presidency. Commission proposal ([9465/18 + COR 1 + ADD 1 to ADD 7](#))
- ***Reports on main recent international meetings: 67th meeting of the International Whaling Commission; High-level political forum on sustainable development***
 - Information from the Presidency and the Commission ([12765/18](#), [12803/18](#))
- ***Berlin declaration on nanomaterials***
 - Information from the German delegation, supported by the Luxembourg delegation ([12487/1/18 REV1](#))
- ***Outcome of a high-level environment conference and a joint preparatory retreat of the bureaux of the UN Environment Assembly***
 - Information from the Estonian delegation ([12699/18](#))
- ***Adoption of measures at EU level to tackle air pollution related to the import of used cars***
 - Information from the Bulgarian, Polish and Slovak delegations ([12681/18](#))
- ***Clean air programme***
 - Information from the Polish delegation ([12682/18](#))

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Accession of Australia to the government procurement agreement

The Council adopted a decision setting out the EU's position within the committee on government procurement of the WTO on the accession of Australia to the revised agreement on government procurement (GPA).

On 2 June 2015, Australia applied for accession to the GPA. In its position, the EU approved the accession of Australia to the agreement. ([11928/18](#))

Accession of Samoa to the EPA with pacific states

The Council decided to request the consent of the European Parliament as regards a Council decision on the accession of Samoa to the economic partnership agreement between the EU and the pacific states.

The agreement was concluded initially with Papua New Guinea and Fiji. It ratified by the European Parliament in January 2011 and by Papua New Guinea in May 2011. The government of Fiji started applying the agreement in July 2014.

Both Samoa and the Solomon Islands are in the process of accession to this economic partnership agreement. ([12281/18](#))

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Structural reform support programme

The Council adopted a regulation increasing the budget of the structural reform support programme (SRSP).

The SRSP was set up on 20 May 2017 to help member states implement structural reforms, with an initial budget of €142.8 million. The financial envelope dedicated to the programme will now be increased by €80 million, reaching a total of €222,8 million. This budget is due to be supplemented by voluntary transfers estimated at €80 million.

EU institutions also agreed that the SRSP could be used to support structural reforms as part of member states' preparations to join the euro area. This will complement the programme's initial objective of helping support the implementation of reforms aimed at sustaining growth in the context of EU economic governance, as well as own-initiative structural reforms. ([PE-CONS 58/18](#))

Benchmarks regulation

The Council confirmed that it had no intention to object to ten delegated acts submitted by the Commission on 13 July and supplementing regulation 2016/1011 on the regulatory framework applying to financial benchmarks. ([12389/18](#))

The delegated acts specify in particular the rules as regards:

- governance and control requirements for supervised contributors;
- form and content of the application for recognition with the competent authority and the presentation of information in the notification to the European Securities and Markets Authority;
- the minimum content of cooperation arrangements with third country competent authorities;
- procedures and characteristics of the oversight function;
- internal oversight and verification procedures for contributors;
- code of conduct for benchmarks administrators;
- criteria assessing the application of certain requirements to significant benchmarks;
- methodology to identify significant benchmarks;
- information to be provided in applications for registration and authorisation;
- contents of benchmark statement to be published by the benchmark administrator.

AGRICULTURE

Placing on the EU market of Japanese shochu

The Council adopted an amendment to regulation 110/2008 as regards nominal quantities for the placing on the EU market of single distilled shochu produced by pot still and bottled in Japan ([PE-CONS 56/18](#)).

The new amending regulation makes sure that, following the signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Japan on 17 July 2018, shochu can be marketed in the EU in traditional bottles although their nominal quantities do not correspond the nominal quantities previously foreseen for prepacked spirit drinks.

EU seed equivalence for Brazil and the Republic of Moldova

The Council adopted a decision ([PE-CONS 32/18](#)) regarding the equivalence of:

- field inspections carried out in the Federative Republic of Brazil on fodder plant seed-producing crops and cereal seed-producing crops
- fodder plant seed and cereal seed produced in the Federative Republic of Brazil, and
- field inspections carried out in the Republic of Moldova on cereal seed-producing crops, vegetable seed-producing crops and oil and fibre plant seed-producing crops
- cereal seed, vegetable seed and oil and fibre plant seed produced in the Republic of Moldova.

FISHERIES

Fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing: joint statement EU-Korea

The Council approved the text of a non-binding joint statement between the Republic of Korea and the European Union against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing) and authorised the Commission to sign the Joint Statement on behalf of the EU.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Public-private partnerships in the EU

The Council adopted conclusions on the Special Report No. 9/2018 by the European Court of Auditors: "Public Private Partnerships in the EU: Widespread shortcomings and limited benefits", set out in 12945/18.

INTERNAL MARKET AND INDUSTRY

EU Customs Action Plan to combat IPR infringements for 2018 to 2022

The Council endorsed a new EU customs action plan to combat infringements of intellectual property rights (IPR). The new action plan will cover the years 2018 to 2022. It will ensure effective enforcement of IPR, tackle trade of IPR infringing goods throughout the international supply chain and strengthen cooperation in this area with the European Observatory as well as relevant law enforcement authorities.

For more information see [press release](#).

Commission regulation on four phthalates

The Council decided not to object to a Commission regulation amending entry 51 of Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 as regards the placing on the market of articles containing the four phthalates (DEHP, DBP, BBP and DIBP) above a certain concentration.

The regulation is a delegated act pursuant to article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. It can now enter into force, unless the European Parliament objects.

TRANSPARENCY

Public access to documents

On 9 October 2018, the Council approved the reply to confirmatory applications

- No 15/c/01/18 (doc. 10391/18).
- No 21/c/01/18 (doc. 11651/18)
- No 22/c/01/18 (doc. 11646/18)