

Consultation “Reducing CO₂ emissions from Cars”

Written contribution The Netherlands

Over the last few months in Council and its Working Parties The Netherlands has proposed several suggestions for designing the legislation on CO₂ and Cars. As part of this consultation The Netherlands likes to give an overview of these suggestions.

General ambition

On many occasions The Netherlands expressed its preference for a more ambitious 2012-target: 120 g CO₂/km by improvements in vehicle technology and the introduction of package of additional measures to go beyond 120 g CO₂/km.

The Netherlands, however, is aware that this discussion is outside the scope of this consultation.

General considerations and requirements legislative instrument

In addition to the considerations and requirements contained in the consecutive Council Conclusions (Industrial Policy – 21 May, Energy Strategy for Transport – 8 June, Strategy to Reduce CO₂ Emissions from Cars – 28 June) The Netherlands proposes that the legislative instrument should be:

- a. Offering certainty of environmental outcome
The legislative instrument should, in its design, guarantee that it brings 130 g/km (or 120 g/km as The Netherlands requests) by 2012.
- b. Pushing for developing environmental friendly vehicle technologies and should therefore include a medium- (2016) and long-term (2020) objective
Ambitious European CO₂ objectives of –30% (or –20% unilateral) in 2020 and even deeper reductions in the period thereafter, can only be achieved if accompanied by ambitious CO₂ emissions reduction policy. This requires not only policy to reduce CO₂ emissions of new cars in 2012, but also a comprehensive, consistent and challenging long-term strategy. Following the CARS 21 request for predictability and planning certainty The Netherlands invites the Commission to come up with both a medium- (approx. 2016) and long-term (approx. 2020) objective.
- c. Avoiding further dieselisation, until the Euro 6 stage has been reached
The Netherlands is very pleased with the first reading agreement on Euro 6 for passenger cars and its perspective of clean diesel cars. By 2012, the time-horizon for the 120 g/km objective, however, only a small share of diesel cars will be in compliance with Euro 6. For air quality reasons it will be of the utmost importance to prevent a further shift in market share from petrol cars to diesel cars (“dieselisation”). The Netherlands requests to include the condition to avoid further dieselisation as long as diesel cars are not sufficiently clean.
- d. Pushing for efficiency improvements in all vehicle classes, but be most burdensome for the heavier and more powerful ones, taking into account the polluter pays principle
To reach 130 g/km (or 120 g/km as The Netherlands requests) by 2012 all cars, including the small low CO₂ emitting cars, will have to become more fuel efficient. But the system should also avoid “making cars unaffordable for lower income citizen” and the system should follow the generally adopted polluter pays

principle. Therefore The Netherlands requests the system to be designed in such a way that it's more burdensome for the high(er) CO₂ emitting cars.

General considerations and requirements for the additional measures

The Netherlands strongly supports the Commission's intention to ensure the additional measures will bring CO₂ reductions. In our view car manufacturers should be responsible for the implementation of those measures.

The increased use of biofuels is already covered by other policy measures, such as the Proposal for Amending the Fuel Quality Directive and the announced Review of the Biofuels Directive. Any inclusion of biofuels in the scope of CO₂ and Cars would lead to double-counting with European biofuel policy and would accordingly erode the EU objective of 120 g/km by 2012. The Netherlands asks the Commission to consider the promotion of biofuels as a separate track. A constraint for higher biofuel use is the incompatibility of existing vehicles to cope with high biofuel blends. To keep this option open for the future, as soon as possible new cars should be of a flexi-fuel type, being capable of running on all petrol-biofuel or diesel-biofuel blends.

The Netherlands proposes to reward the introduction of flexi-fuel vehicles in the package of additional measures. This approach avoids double-counting with the (review of) the biofuel directive, as it addresses the car manufacturers.