

BI(16)8692:1 – AP/mvs

Mr Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President
European Commission
200, rue de la Loi
BE-1049 Brussels

Brussels, 14th October 2016

Re: Phasing out conventional biofuels

Dear Vice-President,

Copa and Cogeca are extremely concerned about the EU's strategy for low-emission mobility (COM(2016)501final), which states that the Commission is focusing on gradually phasing out food-based biofuels.

Copa and Cogeca would like to remind you that conventional biofuels are an sustainable, immediate, efficient and economical solution to decarbonising transport. Turning the existing fossil-fuel based fleet of some 290 million road vehicles into vehicles that run on electricity or liquefied fossil natural gas will take some time and will require massive subsidies.

EU certified sustainable conventional biofuels have many advantages to offer to society at large:

- They make it easier to manage agricultural commodity markets, which are much more volatile than they were in the past. It is also in the interest of consumers to have stable foodstuff prices.
- They are part of the bioeconomy and green growth. This helps diversify crops, seek alternative sources of revenue for farmers, use resources more efficiently and better manage the environment.
- They alleviate the EU's feed t protein deficit. The EU imports 70% of its protein-rich by-products for a value of €12 billion per year. Authorising GMOs creates uncertainties and greater instability surrounding imports of feedstuffs such as soya meal from South America. Insufficient protein-rich by-products in the food chain may cause EU meat production to be further outsourced to regions where animal health and welfare regulation and environmental rules are less stringent. Conventional biofuels play a role in narrowing the EU's trade balance and increase food security for European citizens.

The EU's existing production capacity has directly and indirectly created 48,000 jobs in rural areas and generated a turnover of €12.2 billion. The EU has to protect current investments in the biofuels sector if it wants to attract capital to the advanced biofuels sector in the future. This must be part of a long-term, stable EU policy.

Copa and Cogeca therefore strongly oppose phasing out EU support for EU certified sustainable conventional biofuels between 2020 and 2030.

This letter has also been sent to Frans Timmermans, Jyrki Katainen, Phil Hogan, Miguel Arias Cañete, Elżbieta Bieńkowska and Karmenu Vella.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Martin Merrild in black ink.

Martin Merrild
President of Copa

Handwritten signature of Thomas Magnusson in black ink.

Thomas Magnusson
President of Cogeca