

EMISSIONS IN EU -LATEST NEWS-

(Sources: AEEC, European Commission & WHO)

German Associations call for Gasoline Particulate Filters

On 27 April 2015 German environmental and mobility associations Deutsche Umwelthilfe (DUH) and Verkehrsclub Deutschland (VCD) and the Institute for Epidemiology at German Research Centre for Environmental Health (Helmholtz Zentrum) in Munich issued a joint press release demanding effective measures to control particles emissions from direct injection petrol engines. In their call, the organisations refer to recent real-world particles emissions measurements carried out on seven vehicles by Axel Friedrich, former head of department at the German Environmental Agency (UBA). Results showed that all gasoline direct injection vehicles emitted considerably more ultrafine particles than modern diesel vehicles equipped with Diesel Particulate Filters. After installing a Gasoline Particulate Filter (GPF), emissions could be reduced to almost zero. "The technology is available and cost-efficient. Cost per vehicle is between €20 and 50," said Axel Friedrich. DUH and VCD are not only urging for vehicles to be brought up to the technological state of the art soon. In addition, particle emissions need to be monitored in road traffic. "It is vital that measures to reduce particle emissions not only take place in the laboratory as part of the approval process, this also needs to happen on the roads. Additional test procedures in the approval process and regular exhaust gas examinations must also be binding for direct-injection vehicles," explained Dorothee Saar of DUH.

More information (in German) is at http://www.duh.de/uploads/media/Hintergrundpapier_GDI-Pressesgesprach.pdf



Old Diesel Cars Scrapping Scheme in France

On 31 March 2015 a new Order was published in the French Official Journal that defines a scrapping scheme for old Diesel cars that are replaced by clean vehicles. As of 1 April 2015 the purchase of a clean passenger car to replace a Diesel car of 14 years or more is entitled to the following subsidy: €10000 for an electric car emitting 20 g/km CO₂ or less; or €6500 for a plugin hybrid car emitting between 21 and 60 g/km CO₂. In addition, buyers who are not subject to income tax will also be entitled to a €500 subsidy for the purchase of any Euro 6 car emitting between 61 and 110 g/km CO₂ and scrapping of their old Diesel.



UK Supreme Court orders New Air Quality Plans

On 29 April 2015 the UK Supreme Court ordered the UK Government to deliver by the end of 2015 new plans to cut air pollution. The court upheld a challenge brought by NGO ClientEarth, stating explicitly that the UK breached the NO₂ limits set in the EU's Ambient Air Quality Directive by failing to put in place sufficiently ambitious plans to secure compliance. Under existing air quality plans, parts of the UK, including London and Birmingham, would not have achieved legal limits on NO₂ until after 2030. The Supreme Court noted that during the five years in which the UK has been in breach of the law, "the prospects of early compliance have become worse, not better" and it disagreed with the lower courts that enforcement can be left to the European Commission. ClientEarth is calling for action to clean up the worst polluting diesel vehicles, including through a national network of Low Emission Zones.

Swiss Report on Air Pollution and Health

On 23 February 2015 the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) released a report on air pollution effects on health. FOEN says that even though air quality has improved in the last 30 years, the air is still far from being clean. Air quality limits for ozone, PM₁₀, and nitrogen dioxide are exceeded not only in urban environments, but also in suburban areas and countryside. Health effects on respiratory system but also cardiovascular diseases, lung cancers, and impact on foetus are detailed in the report, which also provides with recommendations to the public on how to protect themselves and contribute to a cleaner air. FOEN promotes less polluting vehicles that meet the most recent emissions standards for example.

The report is available (in DE, FR and IT) at www.bafu.admin.ch/publikationen/publikation/01798/index.html

France asked to act on Air Pollution

The European Commission asked France in its April Infringement package released on 29 April 2015 to comply with EU PM₁₀ air quality limits. The latest figures from the French authorities show that the air pollution problem persists, with the maximum daily limits for PM₁₀ being exceeded in ten zones: Paris, Lyon, Grenoble, Marseille, Martinique, the Arve valley, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Nice, Toulon, and Douai Béthune-Valenciennes. This new reasoned opinion follows a complementary letter of formal notice sent by the Commission in February 2013. If France fails to act within two months, the Commission may take the matter to the EU Court of Justice.



WHO Report on Economic Cost of Health Impact of Air Pollution in Europe

On 28 April 2015 the World Health Organization (WHO) released a new study on the economic cost of the health impact of air pollution in Europe.

It is the first assessment of the economic burden of deaths and diseases resulting from outdoor and indoor air pollution in the 53 countries of the WHO Region.

The economic cost of the approximate 600 000 premature deaths alone accounts for over US\$ 1.4 trillion (€ 1.3 trillion) in 2010. Adding another 10% to this, as the cost of diseases from air pollution, results in a total of almost US\$ 1.6 trillion. The amount is nearly equivalent to one tenth of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the entire European Union in 2013.

The economic value of deaths and diseases due to air pollution corresponds to the amount societies are willing to pay to avoid these deaths and diseases with necessary interventions. In these calculations, a value is attached to each death and disease, independent of the age of the person and which varies according to the national economic context.

The WHO report is at http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/276772/Economic-cost-health-impact-air-pollution-en.pdf



Czech Republic asked by Commission to act on PM10 Air Pollution

In its monthly package of infringement decisions published on 26/03/2015, the European Commission asked the Czech Republic to comply with EU legislation requiring Member States to limit citizens' exposure to fine dust particles (PM10) by defining specific limit values to be observed. The latest air quality figures from the Czech Republic show that the maximum daily limits for PM10 is being exceeded in Praha, Střední Čechy, Severozápad, Severovýchod, Brno, Střední Morava, Moravskoslezsko. As a result, the European Commission is asking the country to take forward-looking, speedy and effective action to keep the period of non-compliance as short as possible. The reasoned opinion follows an additional letter of formal notice sent on 22 February 2013. If the Czech Republic fails to act, the Commission may take the matter to the EU Court of Justice.



Old Vehicles Scrapping Scheme in Finland

The Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy notified the European Commission on 27 March 2015 that it has published guidelines for importers to implement a vehicle scrapping premium. The premium will be paid for scrapped vehicles which are more than 10 years old and replaced with a vehicle whose CO2 emissions do not exceed 120 g/km. The premium amounts to €1000.



WHO Resolution on Air Pollution

On 26 May 2015 the World Health Assembly, the supreme decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO), adopted a resolution to address the health impacts of air pollution – the world's largest single environmental health risk.

WHO estimates that 3.7 million deaths are attributable to outdoor air pollution every year and 4.3 million deaths occur from exposure to indoor air pollution. The resolution highlights the key role national health authorities need to play in raising awareness about the potential to save lives and reduce health costs, if air pollution is addressed effectively. It also stresses the need for strong cooperation between different sectors and integration of health concerns into all national, regional and local air pollution-related policies. It urges Member States to develop air quality monitoring systems and health registries to improve surveillance for all illnesses related to air pollution; promote clean cooking, heating and lighting technologies and fuels; and strengthen international transfer of expertise, technologies and scientific data in the field of air pollution.

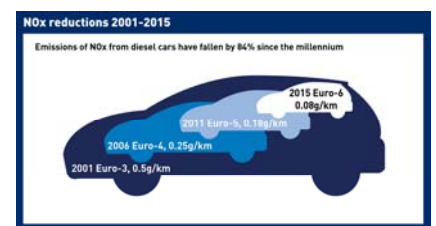
The resolution asks the WHO Secretariat to strengthen its technical capacities to support Member States in taking action on air pollution. At the next World Health Assembly, WHO will propose a roadmap for an enhanced global response by the health sector that reduces air pollution health effects.



SMMT launches Communication Campaign on Diesel in UK

On 11 March 2015, the UK Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) launched a nationwide campaign to challenge the 'demonization' of Diesel. Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said "Today's Diesel engines are the cleanest ever, and the culmination of billions of pounds of investment by manufacturers to improve air quality. Bans and parking taxes on Diesel vehicles therefore make no sense from an environmental point of view. We need to avoid penalising one vehicle technology over another and instead encourage the uptake of the latest low emission vehicles by consumers. The allegations against Diesel cars made in recent months threaten to misguide policy making and undermine public confidence in Diesel."

SMMT is calling for policy makers to adopt a consistent technology-neutral approach towards vehicle incentives and penalties to encourage the uptake of the latest technologies and maximise the benefits for air quality. The automotive industry wants to encourage consumers to continue to choose the cars that fit their lifestyles and is committed to help the UK reach its air quality targets by encouraging the uptake of the latest vehicles, be they petrol, Diesel, electric or any of the multitude of technologies available on the market. The SMMT campaign is at www.dieselfacts.co.uk



Brussels-based Non-Governmental Organization Transport & Environment (T&E) reacted to this announcement with a briefing on "six facts about Diesel the car industry would rather not tell you". This briefing largely focuses on the gap between the Euro 6 NOx emissions limit and real-world performance of Euro 6 Diesel cars. It however fails to make the point about the good performance and environmental benefits of Diesel Particulate Filters. The T&E briefing is at www.transportenvironment.org/publications/6-facts-aboutdiesel-car-industry-would-rather-not-tell-you

France introduces Air Quality Certificates for Vehicles

On 2 June 2015 the French Minister for Ecology Ms Ségolène Royal presented an air quality action plan to the national air council aiming at cleaning the air in cities to a sustainable level within the next 5 years.

Royal announced in particular the introduction on 1 January 2016 of emissions stickers for cars, called “air quality certificates”. Passenger cars will be ranked according to their Euro standard, and local authorities will have then the possibility to introduce access restrictions to certain vehicle categories, based on their emissions levels.



Euro 1 and older vehicles are ranked number 6 while Euro 5 and 6 gasoline cars are ranked number 1. Euro 6 Diesel cars are only ranked number 2, like Euro 4 gasoline cars. Electric cars are attributed a specific blue sticker with no number.

A similar system is introduced for powered-two wheelers, light commercial vehicles, heavy-duty vehicles, buses and coaches. Stickers are not mandatory but will be provided free upon demand in the first six months. Later they will be sold for €5.

Car manufacturers' associations in France (CCFA) and in Europe (ACEA) have released statements condemning the “unfair” treatment of Diesel cars, for which the Euro 6b standard ensures equivalent levels of pollution between Diesel and gasoline cars.



Belgium and Bulgaria referred to the EU Court of Justice over PM10 Pollution

On 18 June 2015, the European Commission referred Belgium and Bulgaria to the EU Court of Justice over persistently high levels of particles which pose a major risk to public health.

Belgium's track record on air quality has seen some improvements in recent years, as only three zones (Brussels, Ghent port and Roeselare port) show continued failures to meet the PM10 targets. Although measures have been adopted they have not so far been sufficient to solve the problem, and as the deadline for compliance (2005) has long expired, the Commission is now taking the case to Court.

In Bulgaria, despite a number of measures taken and some reductions in PM10 emissions at most monitoring points since 2011, the data shows persisting noncompliance with the annual and/or daily limit values for PM10 in all the country's 6 zones and agglomerations other than in Varna, which complied with the annual limit value once – in 2009. The Commission decision to refer Bulgaria to the EU Court of Justice follows a reasoned opinion sent in July 2014.

The Commission also took action against Sweden for poor air quality, sending a reasoned opinion on 18 June 2015. The latest figures show maximum daily limits for PM10 being exceeded in two zones – Middle Sweden (agglomerations of Norrköping, Södertälje and Uppsala, except for 2012) and Stockholm agglomeration. Sweden has previously been condemned by the Court for not meeting PM10 limit values between 2005 and 2007. If Sweden fails to act, the Commission may take the matter to the EU's Court of Justice.

There are currently 16 open infringement actions for PM10 at various stages, against Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Slovakia and Slovenia. Belgium and Bulgaria are the first cases of this type to be brought to Court.

Dutch Report on Euro 6 Cars Real-Driving Emissions Performance

TNO has released a report on a study, conducted on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, that investigated the real-world emissions of Euro 6 Diesel engine passenger vehicles, and in particular vehicles fitted with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) DeNOx systems.

The study is based on emission measurements of sixteen Euro 6 Diesel cars performed in 2010 (phase 1), 2013 (phase 2), and 2015 (phase 3), both in laboratory conditions and on open road.

In this report, no definitive judgment on the two methods have been provided because of their limited set of data, more test results for various driving conditions are therefore needed.

In conclusion TNO writes that over the past decades the three-way catalyst for petrol engines and the Diesel particulate filters have been developed into fully fledged products that in real-world situations achieve conversion rates of 90-99%. This success may now be followed up by EGR, Lean NOx Trap (LNT), and SCR technologies provided legislation regulates real-world emissions.

For further information on that study, please find herewith the link to the TNO report:

<http://publications.tno.nl/publication/34616868/a1Ug1a/TNO-2015-R10702.pdf>.

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