

Stakeholders discuss the opportunities of synthetic fuels in cities to reduce the environmental impact of road transport

Brussels, 8 October 2008: ASFE, the Alliance for Synthetic Fuels in Europe, presents to participants of the Open Days cleaner fuels that Europe needs

How synthetic fuels can contribute to sustainable mobility and overcome barriers to the uptake of optimal policy measures for consumers, governments and industry was the theme of a workshop organised by ASFE, the Alliance for Synthetic Fuels in Europe, on 8 October as part of the Committee of the Regions' OPEN DAYS.

ASFE's vision is that cleaner synthetic fuels made from biomass (BTL), natural gas (GTL) or coal (CTL) can significantly contribute to reducing exhaust emissions in urban areas. In addition, they can help combat global warming and reinforce Europe's energy security.

During the OPEN DAYS, a panel of experts from the European Commission, fuels producers, car manufacturers as well as public transport companies discussed the practical application of synthetic fuels in urban transport.

"Greening the transport sector and reducing associated emissions, is a priority for Europe. Synthetic fuels can make a real contribution to achieving these goals; they can deliver real emissions reductions today and can be used in existing diesel engines without modifications", **Luc Bastard**, Senior Manager for Public Affairs Renault explained.

Describing EU policy for alternative fuels, **Franz Xaver Söldner** from the European Commission stated: "Synthetic fuels are among favourite alternative fuels for the future since they can help to achieve EU energy and climate objectives. We therefore need to identify what can be done to speed up both their development and deployment."

Nico Venema, senior energy purchaser for Connexxion the largest public transport company in the Netherlands also presented how synthetic fuels have been successfully tested in public buses, with similar performance compared to standard diesel and high satisfaction from drivers: "From an end user perspective, synthetic fuels are more cost-effective and convenient than other alternative fuels. They can be delivered through existing distribution and refuelling infrastructures and are ready to be used in existing fleets."

On the future of synthetic fuels in Europe, **Eric van der Wateren**, General Manager Global Marketing Sasol Chevron said: "Synthetic fuels need an effective EU policy framework to help increase their development and market penetration. In order to drive towards a cleaner transport future, national governments and local authorities should be enabled to support the introduction of synthetic fuels through fiscal measures and other support."

Ends

About synthetic fuels

Synthetic fuels are a new generation of near zero sulphur and aromatics transport fuels made with the Fischer Tropsch process from natural gas (GTL), biomass (BTL) or coal (CTL). Of the three processes, GTL is the most commercially advanced and offers a practical alternative fuel today. A number of plants are being built or planned and product availability will increase from 2007 onwards. BTL needs further R&D investment but has the potential to use domestic resources in Europe. Greenhouse gas emissions associated with synthetic fuels derived from natural gas are comparable with transport fuels made from crude oil, while those produced from biomass can contribute to greenhouse gas reduction of up to 90%. As synthetic fuels can be used neat or blended in existing diesel engines, distribution and refueling infrastructure, they are the most cost effective solution to reducing petroleum dependency. Synthetic fuels can provide significant local air quality improvement by reducing tailpipe emissions (particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons).

About ASFE

Launched in March 2006 in Brussels, the Alliance for Synthetic Fuels in Europe (ASFE) is a unique initiative at the European level bringing together car manufacturers and fuel suppliers working towards reducing the environmental impact of road transport through improved energy efficiency and cleaner fuels. The members of ASFE are:



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