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## EU falls at first climate hurdle after Bali

### Car CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

The European Commission today presented its long awaited proposal for legislation to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars. According to the Greens, both the emissions limit values proposed by the Commission and the parameter for determining these values will ensure that the legislation falls far short of achieving the necessary CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions from cars, while insufficient infringement penalties risk making the legislation a toothless instrument. Commenting on the proposal, German Green MEP and draftswoman for the EP Industry Committee on tackling CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars **Rebecca Harms** said:

***"Just a few days after the EU was proclaiming global leadership on climate change at Bali, the Commission has presented a legislative proposal on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars that comes far short of what is necessary. We have fallen at the first hurdle. How can the EU expect other developed countries to make the necessary emissions reductions if it is not willing to introduce the necessary measures to achieve the reductions to which it is committed?"***

***"Evidence has shown that only with strict and binding CO<sub>2</sub> emissions limit values, starting with a 120 g/km limit for 2012, will the EU achieve the necessary reduction in emissions from cars to ensure it can meet its climate targets (1). The proposed 'integrated approach', under which carmakers would have to meet a 130 g/km limit with 10 g/km to come from other measures, is a sop to the car industry, which would be impossible to monitor and enforce, allowing carmakers to shirk responsibility for tackling the pollution from the cars they manufacture. Worse, the lack of mid- and long-term targets creates uncertainty for manufacturers and potential investors and will put the brakes on further reductions.***

***"The weight-based parameter chosen by the Commission to apply these limit values across different vehicle types is another massive flaw, which plays into the hands of those manufacturers bent on producing heavy, polluting gas guzzlers. The development and marketing of bigger, dirtier cars by the German car industry has undercut emissions reductions from other carmakers. Assigning limit values based on car weight (when there are more viable alternatives)***

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***rewards this environmental irresponsibility and provides no incentive for manufacturers to reduce the weight of their vehicles (2).***

***"Financial penalties for exceeding the limit values must be considerably higher than the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction measures if the legislation is to be effective. Unfortunately, those penalties proposed by the Commission today (20 euro per gram exceeded until 2012 and only rising thereafter) fall far short of what experts argue is necessary to ensure that manufacturers make the necessary reductions (between 100-150 euro per gram exceeded) and is even at odds with a study made by the Commission itself. Without sufficient penalties for infringements of these limit values, this legislation will be a toothless instrument."***

### **Editors notes:**

(1) An independent study, commissioned by the Greens/EFA group and presented in October, gives a comparison of the actual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions that would be achieved through the different emissions limit values currently under debate and reveals that only with a 120 g/km limit for 2012 and a strong follow-up limit value in 2020, will the necessary emissions reductions from passenger cars be achieved. The study also highlighted that the parameters for deriving limit values for vehicle types must provide an incentive to reduce vehicle weight - hence a weight-based parameter cannot work. In addition, financial penalties for exceeding the limit values must be considerably higher than the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction measures.

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(2) Other parameters include the 'footprint' (which is based on track width and used by the US), 'shadow' (which is based on vehicle surface) and interior volume. Utility to consumers is not linked to weight. By linking CO<sub>2</sub> limit values to weight we fail to give the right incentives for developing alternative materials for cars.