



13 April 2011

Dr Henry Adams
55 Hayclose Crescent
Kendal
LA9 7NT

Dear Dr Adams

Canadian Tar Sands

Thank you very much for your recent letter regarding tar sand and your concerns about moves by the Canadian government to bring tar sands-derived fuel into the European Union.

This has been raised on the European Parliament's environment committee, of which I am a member. MEPs directed questions regarding tar sands and EU legislation to the European Commissioner for the environment, Connie Hedegaard. I have attached her response.

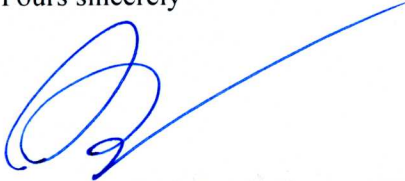
As you are aware, the EU Fuel Quality Directive requires that the EU sets default values for life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions of different liquid fuels. These default values will be used when deciding whether the obligation to reduce life-cycle emissions by 6% has been met.

You will see from the enclosed that Commissioner Hedegaard agrees that tar sand should get a separate, higher, default value. But the Commission has so far not made any proposal to that effect. The Commission tells MEPs that this is because of a lack of solid scientific data. But some non-governmental organisations have accused the EU of bowing to Canadian pressure in the context of an ongoing trade agreement negotiation.

The Canadian concern is not so much that export to Europe would be in danger – almost all Canadian tar sand oil is exported to the US – but rather that US legislation would adopt the EU approach. That is why Canada is lobbying quite heavily in Brussels on the issue

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre began a specific project in September into an EU default value for tar sands and oil shale. I have supported a parliamentary question asking whether the Commission was now in a position to confirm whether this had been done. I will endeavour to provide you with a copy of the Commissioner's further response on this subject once it is given to the committee.

Yours sincerely



Chris Davies MEP

Enc.

Liberal Democrat MEP for the North West of England

CONNIE HEDEGAARD
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 14 July 2010
A (2010) 951 & 1735
D (2010) 660

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letters setting out your concerns regarding the implementation of Article 7a of the Fuel Quality Directive.

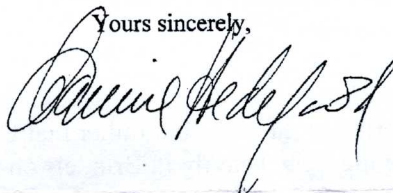
The Commission has so far not made a proposal. However, as I have explained when I had the opportunity to discuss this issue with some of you recently, I have taken the decision that there needs to be a specific default value for tar sands as quickly as possible and I would like to reassure you that this political commitment will be clearly reflected in the proposal which will be put forward to Member States after the summer break.

I have asked my services to look again into the question of how quickly we could establish such a value using sound data. In view of this, I cannot present, at this stage, the final approach that will be followed.

Let me however assure you that the Commission will come up with a balanced proposal, including solid reporting requirements necessary for demonstrating compliance with the target and for facilitating updates to the methodology in the future.

I look forward to our future cooperation on this topic.

Yours sincerely,



Satu Hassi
Sirpa Pietikäinen
Caroline Lucas
Bart Staes

Corinne Lepage
Fiona Hall
Åsa Westlund
Claude Turmes

Chris Davies
Heidi Hautala
Bas Eickhout
Sandrine Bélier
Lena Ek

Linda McAvan
Rebecca Harms
Kriton Arsenis
Yannick Jadot
Jo Leinen

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