



15 organizations from the transport Sector call for a bold and realistic European Green Deal

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The Communication on the European Green Deal sets very ambitious objectives for the EU and sends a strong message to the rest of the world regarding Europe’s ambition to reduce emissions by at least 50% by 2030 and to transform its economy to become carbon-neutral by 2050.

The European supporting associations shown above (hereafter ‘the associations’) representing logistics service providers, seaport and inland port authorities, shippers, shipping lines, inland waterways, combined transport operators, rail freight operators, port operators and terminal operators, marine equipment manufacturers and shipyards welcome the Green Deal and believe that it can be an opportunity for Europe, particularly if it enables EU industries to benefit from a “new growth strategy” that will boost their competitiveness while becoming more sustainable. Such an ambition should be achieved while preserving a level playing field with other regions of the world.

The EU transport sector must continue to be a key enabler of sustainable trade and economic growth. It should therefore be supported in its effort to face the energy transition and remain a key priority for policy makers and Member States.

The success of the Green Deal will depend on the regulatory framework and financial instruments that will be mobilized to support innovation and the implementation of the proposed actions. Legal certainty for private investments as well as a financial stimulation of “first movers” will be an important cornerstone for the ultimate success of the Green Deal.

Equally important for becoming successful is the mindset that will lead all stakeholders to focus on a better integrated transport system rather than on stand-alone transport modes and other logistic services.

Another factor determining the Green Deal's success will be the EU's ability to play a leadership role in convincing non-EU countries to engage in the same direction. The associations therefore welcome the Commission's efforts to enhance its "green deal diplomacy" and seeks to convince other governments to set bold climate targets in order to keep a level playing field.

Achieving a carbon neutral transport sector

The associations appreciate that the Communication will serve as a basis for the longer-term strategy to achieve a carbon neutral transport sector. The strategy should equally define the schedule of the net zero-emission target and the measures required at the EU level to provide legal certainty for private investment.

Achieving the reductions in transport can be divided into replacing fossil fuels with alternative fuels, alternative propulsion systems, improving the energy efficiency of the transport means (vehicles, vessels) and boosting the energy efficiency of the entire transport system. This should be done without compromising industry standards with respect to health and safety.

Reference can be made here to WATERBORNE (European Technology Platform) and similar initiatives such as ETP-ALICE which recommends necessary measures for an overarching view on logistics and supply chain planning and control, in which shippers and logistics service providers closely collaborate to reach efficient logistics and supply chain operations

Thinking "end to end supply chains" when reducing GHG emissions

In the end, logistic services only exist because goods are to be moved between industrial parties or between industrial parties and their consumers.

Supply chain management, starting from an end to end perspective, whereby managers of both manufacturers and service providers try to find a balance between the use of different transport modes, warehousing and inventory level in order to satisfy their own objectives and the service levels required by their customers, leads eventually to cost optimisation and to GHG-emissions. In the same line of thinking, non-technological initiatives to decarbonise (like fuels) should not be taken in isolation but seen in the perspective of end to end supply chains.

Unleashing the potential for multimodal transport

The Green Deal should be used as an opportunity to arrive at a legal framework that promotes a sustainable combination of all transport modes, taking the strengths and limitations inherent to each mode of transport into account. Combining rail, road, short sea shipping, inland waterways and air transport in a smart and efficient way will enable the further reduction of negative externalities.

A comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility should look to revise key legal texts such as the TEN-T Regulation, the Rail Freight Corridor Regulation, the Combined Transport Directive, and the Eurovignette Directive. Achieving sustainable freight transportation should be part of any comprehensive strategy that the European Commission will propose to deliver the goals of the Green Deal in the field of transportation.

Furthermore, eliminating administrative and regulatory burdens hampering an efficient use of transport modes or negatively influencing the choice for a certain mode of transport will also be important to achieve a reduction of adverse impacts.

An example is intra EU transport by sea, which is still confronted with cumbersome customs procedures, compared to other modes of transport. New technologies can also be used to provide the same or even better levels of safety and security while simplifying – or even totally removing – current bureaucracy.

The transformation of unimodal road haulage into multimodal transport-chains is seen as essential to achieve the European Green Deal's objectives. Successful multimodality will require legislative changes to the key legal texts mentioned earlier.

Providing legal certainty for early movers

Industry will need support with tailored and easily accessible programmes to achieve as quickly as possible the targets for emission reductions and carbon-neutrality.

Specifying as well as maintaining deadlines and targets for emission reductions and carbon-neutrality are key to creating the much needed predictability, and to securing a long-term direction for continuing investments. This will equally be important to encourage early movers.

Furthermore, as the transport sector prepares for technical advancements and innovation in line with international and/or EU policy, legal certainty and predictability, including for early movers, must be guaranteed both at the international level and/or at EU level. This is a necessary condition to underpin and stimulate investments to achieve the targeted reductions.

Mobilizing funding for research and dissemination of innovative solutions

To achieve the goals of the Green Deal, significant investments in research and development of innovative technologies will be key. Even more important will be the need for funding for the deployment of these innovative technologies aiming at making all modes of transport greener and energy-efficient, clean and safe.

There is an urgent need to unlock funding and to propose smart regulations which can provide real added value for the entire logistics chain. At the same time, the opportunity should be taken to make the different funding more aligned and more transparent and easier to access for all the different parties in the transport system. Too often parties see the accessibility as a threshold rather than as an invitation.

Last but not least, the time between project calls, granting projects and presenting end results should be shortened. Currently the duration of projects is far too long compared with the speed of the climate changes.

An appropriate CEF transport budget and innovation fund, which reflect the role of transport in achieving the Green Deal's objectives, will be crucial for its implementation, the dissemination of successful stories and the replication of innovative projects and solutions in the EU.

Ensuring a neutral approach when supporting innovation

The development and uptake of new technologies will be imperative to achieve the European Green Deal ambitions and targets. Given the wide range of possibilities and technologies being explored as well as the diversity and complexity of transport modes, it is important to have a policy and regulatory framework in place that promotes innovation in a technologically neutral way, and helps in sharing knowledge as well as the financial and operational risks of the development and deployment of new technologies. European partnerships in this respect are and will remain key.

In order to ensure an effective and sustainable transition to a carbon neutral transport sector by 2050, all technological options as well as (alternative) fuels should be explored and allowed to compete for reducing emissions across the different transport modes.

Prescriptive approaches in terms of technologies or solutions could have the opposite effect. At the same time, a holistic approach to technological innovations, alternative fuels and transport infrastructure across modes of transport will also be key since the choices for one mode of transport may have an impact on other modes of transport.

The supporting associations shown above look forward to working closely with the European Commission on a comprehensive strategy on sustainable and smart mobility along the principles addressed above to secure a healthy, sustainable and competitive transport sector.

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