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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Transport Decarbonisation Alliance: Speeding up the transition to a fair and zero carbon transport system via TDA and by ensuring the quality of exported used vehicles - Information from the Dutch delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note from the Dutch delegation on the above subject, to be dealt with under ‘Any other business’ at the Council (Environment) meeting on 10 June 2021.

Transport Decarbonisation Alliance (TDA)

Speeding up the transition to a fair and zero carbon transport system via TDA and by ensuring the quality of exported used vehicles

Information from the Dutch delegation

Transport is a key sector for climate change solutions and is therefore crucial in the drive to realise the ambitions set out in the Paris Agreement. We have the technology, tools and opportunities to accelerate new markets, unlock investments and scale up action. At the same time, transport is the only major sector in the EU where greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are still on the rise. With 24% of GHG emissions worldwide stemming from transport fuel combustion, transport is a vital part of the solution to the puzzle of a net zero emission economy.

In order to align the transport sector with the Paris goals, setting ambitions is not enough: we must combine efforts to scale up implementation. Collaboration between the public and the private sector, as well as between national and local governments, is key. The Netherlands currently chairs the Transport Decarbonisation Alliance (TDA) which was launched in 2018 to form a ‘coalition of the willing’ comprising countries, cities or regions and companies to accelerate the global transformation of the transport sector. Frontrunners are working together in Communities of Interest to share experiences, work on a joint agenda and scale up good practices. The topics are urban freight, active mobility, charging infrastructure and hydrogen. France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and Portugal are already members of the TDA¹. Ambitious countries, cities/regions and companies in the EU are invited to join this alliance to put zero emissions transport ambitions into practice.

¹ www.tda-mobility.org

Zero emissions freight

Road freight emissions represent over 60% of freight transport CO₂ emissions and they could double by 2050 due to continued growth in freight demand. Therefore urgent action is needed to achieve a zero emissions freight transport system. This requires an integrated approach that reduces transport movements (avoid), uses cleaner and healthier transport modes where possible (shift) and, where motorized vehicles are still needed, makes sure to use zero emissions vehicles (improve).

When it comes to the use of zero emissions vehicles, the market for cars is changing but the light duty segment is lagging behind even though the technology is already available. Therefore governments should work with the private sector to ensure that the uptake of zero emission vehicles is in line with the 2050 target. By setting intermediate targets governments can create enabling market conditions and support implementation by industry. It is important that CO₂ reduction targets and 100% new zero emissions sales targets (i.e. the phasing out of the internal combustion engine) for vans are aligned with those for cars.

For the medium and heavy duty segment, The Netherlands is working with other countries on a global Memorandum of Understanding for zero emissions freight vehicles, building on the TDA work on vehicle availability for freight. This global MoU will align leading nations around ambitious targets for zero emissions medium- and heavy-duty freight vehicles (ZE-MHDVs), with a floor target of 30% new MHDVs to be zero emissions by 2030, and 100% by 2040-2050.

Export of used vehicles

As new vehicles in many EU countries all become cleaner, safer, and more efficient, the quality of exported used vehicles should also gradually improve to follow this trend. However a study conducted by The Netherlands showed that the majority of used vehicles currently exported to African countries are of poor quality.² Many vehicles are old, do not meet EURO 4 emissions standards, have high mileage and often do not have a valid periodic roadworthiness certificate. Some also fail tests for emissions requirements. This contributes disproportionately to transport-related local air pollution, GHG emissions, road injuries and fatalities

² Dutch Inspectorate <https://english.ilent.nl/latest/news/2020/10/26/ilt-older-vehicles-no-longer-welcome-in-west-africa>

It is important to address this issue since the numbers are rising. The fleet of light-duty vehicles and heavy-duty vehicles in the developing world is expected to double in the next 15-20 years. Much of that growth may come from used vehicles imported from the developed world.

Importing countries are already taking action. For example the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is working with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries to develop import restrictions on used vehicles that are old and have a low emissions classification.

The EU should take responsibility for ensuring that used vehicles that are exported are of better quality and have a better environmental performance. An EU approach is necessary to monitor and improve the quality of used vehicle exports. The revision of the directive on shipments of waste (planned this year) and of the End of Life Vehicles (ELV) directive (consultation to be started this year) provide a concrete opportunity to address this issue, for example by using a valid roadworthiness certificate as a prerequisite for export as well as considering means to discourage or prevent the export of used vehicles with an emissions standard below Euro 4/IV.
