

General FAQs

1. What is the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP)?

The [LowCVP](#) was established in 2003 to bring the key stakeholders together to take a lead in accelerating the shift to low carbon vehicles and fuels in the UK and to help ensure that UK business can benefit from that shift. It has approximately 200 member organisations from the automotive and fuel industries, the environmental sector, government, academia, road user groups and other organisations with a stake in the low carbon vehicles and fuels agenda.

The LowCVP is providing a coordinating function to develop and deliver public information designed to support the industry and ensure that any market confusion is avoided, should E10 petrol be introduced into the UK.

2. Why are biofuels being introduced as a transport fuel?

The UK is committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions including those from road transport and has introduced mandatory targets under the Climate Change Act. In the area of road transport, renewable fuel usage is mandated under the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) and the Fuels Quality Directive (FQD) which are compulsory for Member States. The RED requires the increase of renewable fuels in the transport sector and thereby will reduce GHG emissions from transport, biofuels are one way of meeting these objectives.

The [European Committee for Standardisation](#) agreed the new standard for E10 petrol, allowing for blends of ethanol in petrol of up to 10% by volume, in 2012. The change to the new standard was made to allow European countries that wish to mandate higher ethanol blends to do so. Currently UK biofuel supply targets set in the RTFO do not require the introduction of E10 petrol, so in the UK the decision on whether and when to introduce higher ethanol blends will be a matter for each fuel supplier.

3. Do we need biofuels?

Transport is currently estimated to be responsible for around 24% of the CO₂ emissions from the UK which only fell by 1.4% in 2011 despite significant progress in several key areas (such as new car emission which fell by 4.2%).

Source: Committee on Climate Change 2012

There are no technology ‘silver bullets’ to reducing the GHG emissions of road transport and internal combustion engines will continue to be important for many years to come. For these vehicles sustainably sourced and low carbon intensity biofuels offer an important means of reducing GHG emissions from both new and the existing vehicle fleet.

4. Can biofuels reduce GHG emissions in road transport?

In the latest period for which statistics are available (April – October 2012) 631 million litres of biofuel were supplied in the UK representing 3% of total road transport fuel. 61% of this was bioethanol with an average GHG saving of 55% versus fossil fuels.

Source: DfT RTFO period 5, Report 2 – April - October 2012

Bioethanol offers significant GHG savings compared with petrol refined from crude oil. Bioethanol sourced from some feedstocks can deliver over 70% saving. The UK government estimates that adding an additional 5% of bioethanol to petrol could save up to 0.6 million tonnes of the current 32.5 million tonnes of carbon emissions from road transport.

Source: Renewable Energy Directive

5. What is the impact of indirect land use change (ILUC)?

It has been argued that increased demand for biofuels in the EU has the potential to displace a proportion of existing agricultural activities thus contributing, indirectly to land use change (ILUC). However this is not certain as there is substantial capacity to increase output by using land more productively while protecting carbon stored in vegetation and soil. Where existing agricultural activity is displaced then ILUC effects are real, and GHG emissions can be significant for some biofuel feedstocks but the risk of ILUC effects are not the same for all biofuels. The latest European Commission proposal recognises that there is a low risk of ILUC effect for cereal and sugar-based bioethanol, and should the European Commission's proposal to put in place legislation which would cap the amount of crop-based biofuels and encourage advanced biofuels, this will reduce the possibility of ILUC further.

Source: COM (2012) 595 final

6. Which vehicles are compatible?

The [Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders](#) (SMMT) has been working with its members, the vehicle manufacturers, to develop a detailed list for all models of car in the UK, both new and old, which are compatible with E10 petrol and those which are not. The SMMT will continue to coordinate the data from the manufacturers to ensure that the list is maintained and up to date.

91% of passenger cars registered in the UK are unaffected by the introduction of E10 petrol. E10 petrol is petrol blended with bioethanol and can only be used in petrol cars and should not be used in diesel vehicles.

87% of the petrol vehicles on the UK roads have already been confirmed as fully compatible with E10 petrol by their manufacturers with 4% still to be confirmed. Many of the vehicles which are not compatible were registered before 1997 and may be historic or low mileage vehicles.

Manufacturers have been making vehicles compatible with E10 petrol since the 1990s and many volume brands have been selling fully E10 petrol compatible vehicles for several years.