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E-fuels Technologies in European Transport's Future

According to a report by Ceruly for T&E, e-fuels only have meaningful climate benefits if strict sustainability criteria are observed throughout the production process. Renewable e-fuels can have low greenhouse gas intensities, lower environmental risk than biofuel production, could be used in aviation, and could theoretically be produced in large volumes. On the other hand, there is a lack of regulatory models to either guarantee environmental performance or drive industrial expansion. The production costs are much higher than for fossil fuels in the near future, and it would require massive investment in renewable electricity generation.

Even with electrification and efficiency improvements, there will inevitably be a residual liquid fuel demand from transport in 2050. It is unlikely that sustainable biofuels will be available in the quantities needed, and so there is a clear long-term opportunity for e-fuels to contribute to a sustainable EU energy economy.

Regulators, policy officials and stakeholders need to reflect carefully on the costs and benefits of e-fuels development, and develop a realistic vision for the role of e-fuels. If that role is to include a significant contribution to transport energy needs by 2050, in aviation in particular, it will require demonstration of these technologies within the coming decade, and clear measures to expand production. It will also require an honest appraisal of the costs involved in expanding e-fuels production, and a willingness to pass those costs through consumers.

Source: Transport & Environment

Read more and download study:

<https://www.transportenvironment.org/publications/role-electrofuel-technologies-europes-low-carbon-transport-future>