

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001494/25
to the Commission
Martin Sonneborn (NI)
(10 April 2025)

Subject: Possible double counting of CO₂ and distortions caused by unclear rules on the use of subsidised options such as biomethane to meet requirements

Regulation (EU) 2023/1805 on the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions produced by maritime transport. The regulation refers to the sustainability and emissions performance criteria in the Renewable Energy Directives (RED II/III). The question of whether or not already subsidised options for meeting those criteria, such as subsidised biomethane and similar energy sources, can be used to meet the targets is left open, however.

This creates a risk that the same CO₂ is counted twice: once in the country of origin — through national support programmes such as feed-in tariffs — and again in calculations relating to the obligations arising from the regulation. In the absence of a clear legal framework, there is a risk that subsidised options are promoted over non-subsidised options, given that subsidised options are often available on the market at lower prices.

Revised Directive 2003/87/EC on the inclusion of shipping in the scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading (EU ETS) expressly and repeatedly calls for double counting to be avoided. It remains unclear whether that requirement is also incorporated into the regulation.

1. Is there a guarantee that greenhouse gas reductions are not counted twice for the purposes of this regulation?
2. Can subsidised options to meet requirements be taken into account, provided that they meet the criteria of the Renewable Energy Directives?
3. Does the Commission intend to issue corresponding guidelines or delegated acts? If so, when are they planned to be published?

Submitted: 10.4.2025

Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(10 July 2025)

Under Directive (EU) 2018/2001 (Renewable Energy Directive — RED) ⁽¹⁾, greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions are counted towards Member States' renewable energy targets, while under Regulation (EU) 2023/1805 (FuelEU) ⁽²⁾ shipping companies are the obligated parties.

FuelEU does not exclude emissions reductions supported via other legal frameworks, such as the support schemes under RED, as doing so might lead to competitive disadvantages for the sector, and slow down investments in decarbonised marine fuels.

Support schemes under RED are specified as transposed by the Member States, taking in consideration the national energy policies' features and priorities.

FuelEU enforcement relies on the well-established framework of the EU Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification Maritime Regulation ⁽³⁾ used by Member States' Competent Authorities.

Shipping companies have to certify fuels' sustainability using RED traceability rules and governance for all fuel batches claimed to count towards their obligation under FuelEU.

The traceability system of the Union database, deployed under Article 31a of RED, will be applied. Thus, fuel volumes and emissions reductions reported under FuelEU and RED can be tracked and verified.

Beyond dedicated webinars, updated THETIS-MRV ⁽⁴⁾ tutorials, and dedicated helpdesk support, the Commission will adopt its guidance document for FuelEU Implementation in the second semester of 2025.

The provision in the EU emission trading system (ETS) Directive 2003/87/EC ⁽⁵⁾ on avoiding double counting of emissions applies to the reporting and surrendering of allowances within the ETS compliance framework.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02018L2001-20240716>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1805/oj/eng>.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2015/757: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2015/757/oj/eng>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://mrvm.ssa.europa.eu/>.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2003/87/oj/eng>.

It does not apply — but rather exerts synergetic effects — to emission reductions in sectoral regulations with which it is complementary, FuelEU being one such case.
