

A leaked draft of a key EU policy designed to cut carbon emissions in shipping has been described as an environmental disaster for "promoting" liquified natural gas as an alternative to heavy oil by an NGO, as reported by [The Guardian](#).

The decision will 'lock in the use of fossil fuels for decades to come and make the EU's target of net emissions neutrality by 2050 unreachable', the NGO commented, The Guardian reported.

The green fuel law for EU shipping - FuelEU Maritime - is due to be published on 14 July. A draft of the policy seen by The Guardian revealed that the European Commission has "considered but rejected requiring specific green fuels to be used by shipowners".

Brussels has instead opted for a goal-based approach that would set increasingly stringent "greenhouse gas intensity targets" to be met for the energy used on board.

The commission's leaked paper says this approach, rather than a "prescriptive" fuel regulation, "answers the needs for flexibility, which have been stressed by stakeholders during the consultation activities", the news site reported.

The result, environmental groups claim, is that liquified natural gas (LNG) would be eligible to power EU ships calling at the union's ports until around 2040 and that fossil fuel would probably still be the cheapest compliance option for two decades.

The sustainable transport NGO, Transport and Environment (T&E), has claimed that the policy will encourage price-sensitive shipowners to opt for LNG ships as the cheaper solution over zero-emissions fuels such as green hydrogen or ammonia. Shipowners will then be using them for another 30 years, the average lifetime of a ship.

T&E, which first obtained the leaked policy draft, claims most LNG-powered ships emit more greenhouse gas than heavy fuel oil ships.

The commission still has time to change the policy to explicitly exclude fossil LNG and first-generation biofuels from the scope of the regulation, Faig Abbasov, the NGO's shipping program director was reported as saying.

The EU has set a target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 percent by 2030 and becoming climate neutral by 2050, requiring a 90 percent reduction in transport emissions by 2050.

According to The Guardian, the European Commission spokesperson declined to comment

on the leaked policy document but said: “Air and maritime transport have significant decarbonization challenges in the next decades, due to the current lack of market-ready zero-emission technologies, long development and life cycles of aircraft and vessels, the significant investments required in refueling equipment and infrastructure, and international competition in these sectors.