



Addressed to:

Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Teresa Ribera

Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition and European Commissioner for Competition

Stéphane Séjourné

Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy and European Commissioner for Industry, SMEs and the Single Market

Wopke Hoekstra

European Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth

Apostolos Tzitzikostas

European Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism

Maroš Šefčovič

European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security

Ekaterina Zaharieva

European Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation

Michael McGrath

European Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection

Subject: Industry frontrunners call on Commission to end ETS exemption for international flights

Dear President, Executive Vice-Presidents, and Commissioners,

We are writing to you as the European innovators developing the most sustainable aviation technologies. These technologies include drop-in synthetic fuels, made from renewable hydrogen and sustainably captured carbon, and zero-carbon emission hydrogen- and battery-powered planes, as well as other stakeholders across the value chain.

With jet fuel prices rocketing and European holidaymakers facing flight disruptions and cancellations, it has never been clearer that true energy sovereignty means weaning aviation off fossil fuels.

In July, the Commission will be making a decision that could be a watershed opportunity to accelerate the pace at which innovators like us can develop our technologies and support the transition to a European industry that is sovereign, secure, competitive and sustainable.

That decision is whether to extend the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) to cover all international flights. The current exemption of flights between Europe and non-European destinations means that 60% of all air travel emissions are unpriced.

This is a huge, missed opportunity. The ETS not only incentivises the adoption of sustainable technologies like ours but generates funds to reinvest in our sector. In the decade from 2012 to 2023, the EU could have raised an additional [€26 billion in ETS revenues](#) if international flights had been covered. We stand to lose €80 billion more by 2035 if we don't act now.

That is why we're calling on the European Commission to:

- End the exemption and extend the ETS to all international flights, and not just intra-European domestic flights.
- Commit to allocating a significant proportion of ETS revenues to support innovators in clean aviation technologies.

As a tool to drive the rollout of clean technologies, the ETS has more than proven its worth. Emissions have gone down by approximately 50% since 2005 in the sectors covered by the ETS, and the ETS has provided a predictable and stable mechanism to incentivise decarbonisation and guide the transition to clean energy sources, all while maintaining economic growth.

These incentives and the revenues set to be generated will be crucial for Europe to maintain its first-mover advantage ahead of fast-growing competitors in the US and China.

As the creators of clean aviation technologies, we know how crucial these next few years will be in ensuring more of Europe's leading innovators make it to final investment decisions and maintain our competitive edge in the global race. ETS revenues from international flights could be a game changer in this equation.

Supporting the EU's domestic production now will help ensure Europe maintains industrial leadership and ensures its strategic autonomy.

Estimates show that for the month of March, the fuel crisis triggered by the Iran war caused the average price of an international flight to surge by €88 per person. The surcharges for Europe's carbon taxes are small by comparison.

And funnelling part of the revenues into these technologies will bring wider benefits to the economy. With over half of global e-kerosene production capacity based in Europe, meeting the EU 2030 targets is projected to create an added value of nearly €20 billion and 4,000 permanent jobs.

The alternative is to stick with the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA) system set by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

But this system only asks airlines to offset a small portion of their emissions. This will mean channelling money to carbon credits schemes with questionable sustainability benefits rather than raising valuable revenues that can be spent strategically to help Europe get on track with developing the clean aviation technologies we need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

Expanding the ETS can help ensure forward-looking companies like ours can accelerate the clean transition in aviation, ultimately reducing Europe's reliance on global supply chains, cutting our exposure to geopolitical chokepoints, and ensuring our world-leading position in the technologies of the future.

Yours sincerely,

Aerleum
ATOBA Energy
Beyond Aero
Carbon Neutral Fuels
Carbonbit Technologies
Carbon Recycling International
Clearwings
Climate Impulse
EcoLiner
ELECTRON
Elysian Aircraft
ETFuels
Evia Aero
HyFlux
IðunnH2
Madoqua
MD Aircraft
MONTE
NEG8 Carbon
Nordic Generation Fuels
Nova Sustainable Fuels (backed by Octopus Energy Generation)
Nordic Electrofuel
NorSAF
Protium
SAF+ International
SaxonAir
Synhelion
Ucaneo

Brussels, 10 June 2026