



Achieving air quality targets with  
innovative approaches and realistic  
intermediate steps

Mercedes-Benz



As part of the Green Deal and as part of the European Commission's "Vision Zero Pollution 2050", European policymakers have agreed on measures to improve air quality with concrete targets for 2030. These will be addressed as part of the revision of the Air Quality Directive. Mercedes-Benz remains committed to revising the European Air Quality Directive in line with the needs of individual mobility and climate protection.

Part of Mercedes-Benz's corporate responsibility as an automobile manufacturer is to reconcile individual mobility, climate protection and air pollution control. Inner-city air quality is an important environmental aspect for us. The recommendations published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2006 contained guideline values for the most important harmful air pollutants, such as particulate matter and nitrogen oxides (NOx). These recommendations were taken into account in a European directive in 2008, which has already led to a significant improvement in air quality.

European policymakers have now agreed to move closer to the recommendations issued by the WHO in 2021 from 2030 onwards. This means a significant tightening of air quality targets, which affect all sectors – transport, industry, heating and agriculture. Mercedes-Benz has always supported the revision of the directive and advocated for a broad political discourse that considers the goals of future air quality targets in cities and creates more transparency on levers and possible social impacts. The Group therefore particularly welcomes the fact that the compromise that has now been reached gives cities with challenging conditions in the area of the measuring point more time.

The transport sector has already introduced many measures in recent years, e. g. the fleet renewal towards EU6d vehicles with very low emissions. In addition, with the ramp-up of electrified vehicles – such as plug-in hybrids with long electric ranges and purely battery-electric vehicles – the share of the transport sector in emission in the city will continue to decrease.

- **Innovative technology solutions and feasible intermediate steps**

From Mercedes-Benz's point of view, the strategic long-term goal of the European Commission – pollutant-free air by 2050 – can only be implemented meaningfully with new technologically innovative solutions and in intermediate steps.

- **Individual mobility as a valuable asset**

Cities must keep an eye on all sectors regarding to future air quality compliance requirements. Transport is one of several sources of pollutant emissions. Since traffic has already made a major contribution to improving air quality in recent years, traffic density is coming to the fore as the last lever. For Mercedes-Benz, stronger restrictions, such as an extension of entry bans into cities for vehicles with very low emissions, are not the right way to go. Individual mobility is a valuable asset for our customers and society. Rather, in addition to the transport sector, other sectors should also make a meaningful contribution to achieving good air quality in cities.