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Gas Strategies Group

10 Saint Bride Street
London UK
EC4A 4AD

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T: +44(0) 20 7332 9900
W: www.gasstrategies.com
Twitter @GasStrategies

Editorials

+44(0) 20 7332 9957
editor@gasstrategies.com

Subscriptions

+44(0) 20 7332 9976
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EU deal with it: LNG faces Europe's hazy green plan

On 11 December 2019, the European Commission's president Ursula von der Leyen unveiled the EU Green Deal, a new energy strategy that calls for an ambitious 50-55% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 – increased from the previous target of 40% – compared to 1990 levels, and aims to transform the EU into a net zero emissions economy by 2050.

Ratified by the EU Parliament in January, the deal also contains a contentious border tax and implies a much higher price for carbon, both of which will have as-yet undefined implications for oil, natural gas and LNG imports into Europe. The deal says the EU will use all policy levers at its disposal to drive the transition to net zero emissions by 2050. The actual plan will be updated as needs evolve and policy responses are formulated.

What role the EC envisages for LNG to play exactly under the EU Green Deal is unclear. For a high-level document, it is light on the details of what is actually going to happen under it and what it means for particular routes to decarbonisation. What it does seem to do is set the *aspiration* for the EU to be a net zero emissions economy by 2050, and under it, any gas needs to be decarbonised.

**Consulting**

+44 (0) 20 7332 9900
consult@gasstrategies.com

**Alphatania Training**

+44 (0) 20 7332 9910
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