



30% CO2 reduction through 80 km/h speed limit

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Research [1] by the respected Dutch consultancy CE Delft has shown that carbon dioxide emissions from road transport could be reduced by 30% if motorway speed limits in the Netherlands were set at 80 km/h.

The research, undertaken for the NGO Milieudefensie, estimates the optimum long-term reduction as 2.8 million tonnes of CO₂ for passenger cars, and a further 0.2mt for delivery vans.

The reduction assumes a uniform limit of 80 km/h which is strictly enforced. Less drastic tightening of speed limits result in emissions cuts of 8-21%.

Although the figures apply only to the Netherlands and will be different in other countries dependent on existing speed limits and vehicle fleets, there are other interesting findings from the research.

For example, it finds that, because of the longer travel times resulting from lower speed limits, fewer car kilometres will be driven and there will be 'a certain shift from private car to public transport'. The researchers also believe this will lead in the longer term to people moving closer to their workplace and shops relocating closer to consumers, thereby reducing overall car kilometres.

It also says the lower limit would bring about improvements in air pollution, noise nuisance, traffic safety and possibly congestion. But it says economic welfare measures lower speeds and reduced traffic volumes as costs.

Tags: | Cars | Climate Change & Energy | Lorries & Road Freight | T&E Bulletin | Vans | Noise

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