

A sustainable bioenergy policy for the period after 2020

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

EU Member States have agreed on a new policy framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets for the period between 2020 and 2030. The targets include reducing the Union's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40 % relative to emissions in 2005 and ensuring that at least 27 % of the EU's energy comes from renewable sources. They should help to make the EU's energy system more competitive, secure and sustainable, and help it meet its long-term (2050) GHG reductions target.

In January 2014, in its Communication on A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030,[1] the Commission stated that '[a]n improved biomass policy will also be necessary to maximise the resource-efficient use of biomass in order to deliver robust and verifiable greenhouse gas savings and to allow for fair competition between the various uses of biomass resources in the construction sector, paper and pulp industries and biochemical and energy production. This should also encompass the sustainable use of land, the sustainable management of forests in line with the EU's forest strategy and address indirect land-use effects as with biofuels'.

In 2015, in its Energy Union strategy,[2] the Commission announced that it would come forward with an updated bioenergy sustainability policy, as part of a renewable energy package for the period after 2020.

Bioenergy is the form of renewable energy used most in the EU and it is expected to continue to make up a significant part of the overall energy mix in the future. On the other hand, concerns have been raised about the sustainability impacts and competition for resources stemming from the increasing reliance on bioenergy production and use.

Currently, the Renewable Energy Directive[3] and the Fuel Quality Directive[4] provide an EU-level sustainability framework for biofuels[5] and bioliquids.[6] This includes harmonised sustainability criteria for biofuels and provisions aimed at limiting indirect land-use change,[7] which were introduced in 2015.[8]

In 2010, the Commission issued a Recommendation[9] that included non-binding sustainability criteria for solid and gaseous biomass used for electricity, heating and cooling (applicable to installations with a capacity of over 1 MW). Sustainability schemes have also been developed in a number of Member States.

The Commission is now reviewing the sustainability of all bioenergy sources and final uses for the period after 2020. Identified sustainability risks under examination include lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions from bioenergy production and use; impacts on the carbon stock of forests and other ecosystems; impacts on biodiversity, soil and water, and emissions to the air; indirect land use change impacts; as well as impacts on the competition for the use of biomass between different sectors (energy, industrial uses, food). The Commission has carried out a number of studies to examine these issues more in detail.

The development of bioenergy also needs to be seen in the wider context of a number of priorities for the Energy Union, including the ambition for the Union to become the world leader in renewable energy, to lead the fight against global warming, to ensure security of supply and integrated and efficient energy markets, as well as broader EU objectives such as reinforcing Europe's industrial base, stimulating research and innovation and promoting competitiveness and job creation, including in rural areas. The Commission also stated in its 2015 Communication on the circular economy^[10] that it will 'promote synergies with the circular economy when examining the sustainability of bioenergy under the Energy Union'. Finally, the EU and its Member States have committed themselves to meeting the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

[1] COM(2014) 15.

[2] COM/2015/080 final.

[3] Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC (OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 16).

[4] Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 1998 relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels and amending Council Directive 93/12/EEC (OJ L 350, 28.12.1998, p. 58).

[5] Used for transport.

[6] Used for electricity, heating and cooling.

[7] Biomass production can take place on land that was previously used for other forms of agricultural production, such as growing food or feed. Since such production is still necessary, it may be (partly) displaced to land not previously used for crops, e.g. grassland and forests. This process is known as indirect land use change (ILUC); see <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/renewable-energy/biofuels/land-use-change>.

[8] See more details on the existing sustainability framework for biofuels and bioliquids in section 5.

[9] COM/2010/0011 final.

[10] Closing the loop – an EU action plan for the circular economy (COM(2015) 614/2).

1. General information about respondents

★ 1.1. In what capacity are you completing this questionnaire?

- ☐ academic/research institution
- ☐ as an individual / private person
- ☐ civil society organisation
- ☐

- ☐ international organisation
- ☐ other
- ☒ private enterprise
- ☐ professional organisation
- ☐ public authority
- ☐ public enterprise

* 1.2. If you are a private or public enterprise, could you please indicate your principal business sector?

- ☐ Agriculture
- ☐ Automotive
- ☐ Biotechnology
- ☐ Chemicals
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Food
- ☒ Forestry
- ☐ Furniture
- ☐ Mechanical Engineering
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Printing
- ☐ Pulp and Paper
- ☐ Woodworking

* 1.3. If you are a private or public enterprise, could you please indicate the size of your company?

(Medium-sized enterprise: an enterprise that employs fewer than 250 persons and whose annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million or whose annual balance-sheet total does not exceed EUR 43 million.

Small enterprise: an enterprise that employs fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance-sheet total does not exceed EUR 10 million.

Micro-enterprise: an enterprise that employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance-sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million.)

- ☐ large enterprise
- ☐ medium-sized enterprise
- ☒ small enterprise
- ☐ micro-enterprise
- ☐ I don't know

1.8. If replying as an individual/private person, please give your name; otherwise give the name of your organisation

200 character(s) maximum

Forstverwaltung Grafenegg

1.9. If your organisation is registered in the Transparency Register, please give your Register ID number.

(If your organisation/institution responds without being registered, the Commission will consider its input as that of an individual and will publish it as such.)

200 character(s) maximum

1.10. Please give your country of residence/establishment

- ☒ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czech Republic
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Slovakia
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden
- ☐ United Kingdom
- ☐ Other non-EU European country
- ☐ Other non-EU Asian country
- ☐ Other non-EU African country
- ☐ Other non-EU American country

★ 1.11. Please indicate your preference for the publication of your response on the Commission's website:

(Please note that regardless the option chosen, your contribution may be subject to a request for

access to documents under [Regulation 1049/2001](#) on public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. In this case the request will be assessed against the conditions set out in the Regulation and in accordance with applicable [data protection rules](#).)

- ☒ Under the name given: I consent to publication of all information in my contribution and I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication.
- ☐ Anonymously: I consent to publication of all information in my contribution and I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication.
- ☐ Please keep my contribution confidential. (it will not be published, but will be used internally within the Commission)

Perceptions of bioenergy

2.1. Role of bioenergy in the achievement of EU 2030 climate and energy objectives













































Please indicate which of the statements below best corresponds to your perception of the role of bioenergy in the renewable energy mix, in particular in view of the EU's 2030 climate and energy objectives:

- ☒ Bioenergy should continue to play a dominant role in the renewable energy mix.
- ☐ Bioenergy should continue to play an important role in the renewable energy mix, but the share of other renewable energy sources (such as solar, wind, hydro and geothermal) should increase significantly.
- ☐ Bioenergy should not play an important role in the renewable energy mix: other renewable energy sources should become dominant.

2.2. Perception of different types of bioenergy

Please indicate, for each type of bioenergy described below, which statement best corresponds to your perception of the need for public (EU, national, regional) policy intervention (tick one option in each line):

	Should be further promoted	Should be further promoted, but within limits	Should be neither promoted nor discouraged	Should be discouraged	No opinion
Biofuels from food crops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Biofuels from energy crops (grass, short rotation coppice, etc.)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Biofuels from waste (municipal solid waste, wood waste)					
Biofuels from agricultural and forest residues					
Biofuels from algae					
Biogas from manure					
Biogas from food crops (e.g. maize)					
Biogas from waste, sewage sludge, etc.					
Heat and power from forest biomass (except forest residues)					
Heat and power from forest residues (tree tops, branches, etc.)					
Heat and power from agricultural biomass (energy crops, short rotation coppice)					
Heat and power from industrial residues (such as sawdust or black liquor)					
Heat and power from waste					

Large-scale electricity generation (50 MW or more) from solid biomass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commercial heat generation from solid biomass	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Large-scale combined heat and power generation from solid biomass	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small-scale combined heat and power generation from solid biomass	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heat generation from biomass in domestic (household) installations	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bioenergy based on locally sourced feedstocks	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bioenergy based on feedstocks sourced in the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bioenergy based on feedstocks imported from non-EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

integrated production of bioenergy in bio-economy, for instance hydrogen from renewable sources

3. Benefits and opportunities from bioenergy

3.1. Benefits and opportunities from bioenergy

Bioenergy (biofuel for transport, biomass and biogas for heat and power) is currently promoted as it is considered to be contributing to the EU's renewable energy and climate objectives, and also having other potential benefits to the EU economy and society.

Please rate the contribution of bioenergy, as you see it, to the benefits listed below (one answer per line):

	of critical importance	important	neutral	negative	No opinion
Europe's energy security: safe, secure and affordable energy for European citizens	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grid balancing including through storage of biomass (in an electricity system with a high proportion of electricity from intermittent renewables)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduction of GHG emissions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental benefits (including biodiversity)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resource efficiency and waste management	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boosting research and innovation in bio-based industries	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competitiveness of European industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Growth and jobs, including in rural areas	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable development in developing countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

Protein-rich by-products of biofuel production replace geetically modified soy bean imports

3.2. Any additional views on the benefits and opportunities from bioenergy? Please explain

2500 character(s) maximum

Bioenergy creates jobs in rural Areas.

Biomass, especially from wood, is and will be the most important source of renewable energy: useable in all sectors of energy demand, easily storable, cheap. Instead of new burdens and barriers for biomass production, the Commission should create a positive Framework to enhance biomass production and thus the creation of Jobs in rural Areas.

Member states with highest sahres of renewable energy (like Austria, Scandinavian and Baltic States) have proved the feasibility of promoting bioenergy and simultaneously expanding their forest area and increasing the growing stock of forests under strict sustainability requirements.

Therefore the Commission should concentrate on

- 1) establishing adequate sustainability criteria for fossil fuels and nuclear energy as well as
- 2) establishing better Guidelines for their extremely harmful production methods and
- 3) stop the harmful subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear energy

instead of elaborating new barriers for european biomass production, where well established, reliable and sufficient sustainability criteria already exist.

4. Risks from bioenergy production and use

4.1. Identification of risks

A number of risks have been identified (e.g. by certain scientists, stakeholders and studies) in relation to bioenergy production and use. These may concern specific biomass resources (agriculture, forest, waste), their origin (sourced in the EU or imported) or their end-uses (heat, electricity, transport).

Please rate the relevance of each of these risks as you see it (one asnwer per line):

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	critical	significant	not very significant	non-existent	No opinion
Change in carbon stock due to deforestation and other direct land-use change in the EU					
Change in carbon stock due to deforestation and other direct land-use change in non-EU countries					
Indirect land-use change impacts					
GHG emissions from the supply chain (e.g. cultivation, processing and transport)					
GHG emissions from combustion of biomass ('biogenic emissions')					
Impacts on air quality					
Impacts on water and soil					
Impacts on biodiversity					
Varying degrees of efficiency of biomass conversion to energy					
Competition between different uses of biomass (energy, food, industrial uses) due to limited availability of land and feedstocks and/or subsidies for specific uses					
Internal market impact of divergent national sustainability schemes					
Other					

4.2. Any additional views on the risks from bioenergy production and use? Please explain

2500 character(s) maximum

Biomass is generally produced in a sustainable manner in the EU, therefore there is no need for further binding sustainability criteria on a European level for biomass originating from the Member States.

The existing framework on a national level (e.g. forest laws, cross compliance) and on an international level (e.g. certification schemes like PEFC for sustainable forest management) already ensure adequately that biomass is produced under the premises of intergenerational sustainability in the Member States. It would thus make no sense to create new sustainability rules for the specific use of biomass as bioenergy. Depending on tree species, wood quality and continuously changing market situations different parts of trees produced on the same site are sold as saw logs, pulpwood or as source for bioenergy.

While there is no significant risk for not sustainable biomass production within the EU, there is a high risk of market disturbances and additional costs by new administrative burdens created by new sustainability criteria of the European Commission (EC) without added value.

The real challenges of the EU for the coming years are to reduce the risky dependency on fossil fuel imports from Middle East and Russia, to reduce ambitiously the risks of climate change by cutting the GHG emissions from fossil fuels according to the outcome of COP21 and to reduce the risks of social instability caused by high unemployment rates of young people by creating new green jobs.

The EC has to focus on the major risks of the EU energy system: How can risks for the climate caused by burning oil, natural gas and coal be effectively reduced? How can the externalities from production, supply and use of fossil fuels be handled with regulations? How can costs for securing the supply with fossil fuels and especially also costs for conflicts in the countries of origin as well as costs for the refugee crisis be made visible for energy consumers? How can disastrous environmental pollutions by losses from pipelines in e.g. Nigeria or Russia be eliminated? What about compliance with human rights? What about the position of women? What about corruption in oil and gas supplying countries?

The EC is urgently required to bring forward serious solutions for the real risks of the European energy system with a clear focus on fossil fuels instead of creating needless burdens for bioenergy.

5. Effectiveness of existing EU sustainability scheme for biofuels and bioliquids

In 2009, the EU established a set of sustainability criteria for biofuels (used in transport) and bioliquids (used for electricity and heating). Only biofuels and bioliquids that comply with the criteria can receive government support or count towards national renewable energy targets. The main criteria are as follows:

- Biofuels produced in new installations must achieve GHG savings of at least 60 % in comparison with fossil fuels. In the case of installations that were in operation before 5 October 2015, biofuels must achieve a GHG emissions saving of at least 35 % until 31 December 2017 and at least 50 % from 1 January 2018. Lifecycle emissions taken into account when calculating GHG savings from biofuels include emissions from cultivation, processing, transport and direct land-use change;
- Biofuels cannot be grown in areas converted from land with previously (before 2008) high carbon stock, such as wetlands or forests;
- Biofuels cannot be produced from raw materials obtained from land with high biodiversity, such as primary forests or highly biodiverse grasslands.

In 2015, new rules^[1] came into force that amend the EU legislation on biofuel sustainability (i.e. the Renewable Energy Directive and the Fuel Quality Directive) with a view to reducing the risk of indirect land-use change, preparing the transition to advanced biofuels and supporting renewable electricity in transport. The amendments:

- limit to 7 % the proportion of biofuels from food crops that can be counted towards the 2020 renewable energy targets;
- set an indicative 0.5 % target for advanced biofuels as a reference for national targets to be set by EU countries in 2017;
- maintain the double-counting of advanced biofuels towards the 2020 target of 10 % renewable energy in transport and lay down a harmonised EU list of eligible feedstocks; and
- introduce stronger incentives for the use of renewable electricity in transport (by counting it more towards the 2020 target of 10 % renewable energy use in transport).

[1] Directive (EU) 2015/1513 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 September 2015 amending Directive 98/70/EC relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels and amending Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (OJ L 239, 15.9.2015, p. 1).

5.1. Effectiveness in addressing sustainability risks of biofuels and bioliquids

In your view, how effective has the existing EU sustainability scheme for biofuels and bioliquids been in addressing the risks listed below? (one answer per line)

	effective	partly effective	neutral	counter-productive	No opinion
GHG emissions from cultivation, processing and transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

GHG emissions from direct land-use change					
Indirect land-use change					
Impacts on biodiversity					
Impact on soil, air and water					

Any additional comments?

2500 character(s) maximum

The repeated discussions of the EC about creation of new and additional sustainability criteria for biomass production and use for energetic purposes is an obstacle given the urgent need to speed up investments in bioenergy. Forests and wood production from forests is already properly regulated by law (forest law, natural protection laws, Natura 2000), beyond that there is the possibility to participate in voluntary certification schemes like PEFC and FSC. For agricultural biomass a similar framework is existing. Additional administrative burdens for certification and auditing schemes are costly, especially for farmers and forest owners and will decrease economic benefits of biomass production. No added value for the sustainability of biomass production in the EU can be expected. Urgently needed investors in bioenergy, create new green jobs, will be unsettled.

Whereas the commission is excessively elaborating on new sustainability criteria for renewable resources and creates continuously new barriers for the European biomass production, there are ridiculously inadequate and simplified comparators for the negative greenhouse gas effects of fossil fuels.

What regulations has the EC put forward to deal with GHG-emissions caused by unconventional gas and oil production? How does the EC propose to reduce for instance the methane emissions caused by fracking or from tar sands? Clear and compulsory rules on "sustainable" production of fossil fuels and legal compliance in producing countries are needed. Any support and subsidies for burning fossil fuels need to be phased out immediately without replacement. The EC has to also focus on implementing common rules in the EU to phase out all subsidies for nuclear energy. As long as the true costs of fossil fuels and nuclear energy are not visible in the energy market, there will be unfair market conditions for renewables, hindering the successful transformation of our energy system.

5.2. Effectiveness in promoting advanced biofuels

In your view, how effective has the sustainability framework for biofuels, including its provisions on indirect land-use change, been in driving the development of 'advanced' biofuels, in particular biofuels produced from ligno-cellulosic material (e.g. grass or straw) or from waste material (e.g. waste vegetable oils)?

- ☐ very effective
- ☐ effective
- ☐ neutral
- ☒ counter-productive
- ☐ no opinion

What additional measures could be taken to further improve the effectiveness in promoting advanced biofuels?

2500 character(s) maximum

The main focus of the EC should be the creation of stable framework for investments in additional biofuel production facilities within the EU. Facing the social risks of high unemployment rates of young people in the Member States and the housing problems in urban areas the core business of the EC is to create new green jobs in rural areas instead of discussing additional sustainability criteria for bioenergy.

An unreasonable stop-and-go framework for biofuels, an extremely inefficient set-up for sustainability schemes by the commission is extremely disadvantageous for the further development of all renewable energy technologies. E.g. since the start of the discussion on ILUC new investments in European biofuel production facilities stopped completely and led to a loss of newly created jobs in the EU.

The EC has been obviously also influenced by market actors who try to implement the right of first retrieval at lowest prices for their specific needs. Under the smokescreen of the "cascading principle" there are unqualified attempts to create planned economy rules for biomass. The EC has to stop immediately these misleading concepts, market conditions have in the past and will in the future optimize the flow of raw material in the EU.

Also unjustified discussions about feedstock scarcity and trials to prevent competition for renewable sources are not compatible with market rules. The EC should trigger new investments in bioenergy by bringing forward concepts to fully utilize the production potential of the forests and agricultural area in the EU.

Instead of increasing all kind of counterproductive burdens for the already high standards of biomass production within the EU, the commission has to focus on giving better guidelines for extremely harmful production methods of fossil fuels and nuclear energy. The internalization of all externalities from fossil fuel production needs to be managed and fully included in their prices.

The Commission has to focus on implementing common rules in the EU to phase

out all subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear energy. As long as the true costs of fossil fuels and nuclear energy are not visible in the energy market, there will be unfair market conditions for renewables, hindering investments in renewable energy.

5.3. Effectiveness in minimising the administrative burden on operators

In your view, how effective has the EU biofuel sustainability policy been in reducing the administrative burden on operators placing biofuels on the internal market by harmonising sustainability requirements in the Member States (as compared with a situation where these matter would be regulated by national schemes for biofuel sustainability)?

- ☐ very effective
- ☐ effective
- ☒ not effective
- ☐ no opinion

What are the lessons to be learned from implementation of the EU sustainability criteria for biofuels? What additional measures could be taken to reduce the administrative burden further?

2500 character(s) maximum

Reviews and more or less complete turnarounds during the time period (e.g. setting a cap or cutting funding possibilities) is extremely disadvantageous for the further development of all renewable energy technologies. Whereas the commission is excessively elaborating on new sustainability criteria for renewable resources and creates continuously new barriers for the European biomass production, there are ridiculously inadequate and simplified comparators for the negative greenhouse gas effects of fossil fuels. Instead of increasing all kind of counterproductive burdens for the already high standards of biomass production within the EU, the commission has to focus on giving better guidelines for extremely harmful production methods in the field of fossil fuels and nuclear energy.

The implementation of sustainability criteria for biofuels has the following main effects: the bureaucratic burden and the costs to fulfill the criteria has increased. A new branch of "control industry" has risen, without giving any adequate added value to sustainable biomass production within the EU. Sustainability schemes from third countries offer advantages in recognition against systems from Member States - this is indeed a strange understanding of fostering home market and feedstock production by the EC!

Any feedstock produced within the EU and complying to common rules (Cross Compliance, Natura 2000 etc.), national regulations (e.g. environmental protecting laws, forest law etc.) or voluntary certification systems such as PEFC have to be granted as sustainable without any additional administrative burden and costs.

5.4. Deployment of innovative technologies

In your view, what is needed to facilitate faster development and deployment of innovative technologies in the area of bioenergy? What are the lessons to be learned from the existing support mechanisms for innovative low-carbon technologies relating to bioenergy?

2500 character(s) maximum

A solid and stable regulatory framework beyond 2020 is needed to encourage continued investment in innovative technologies. In that respect, the bioenergy policy and the REDII need to be tied into a single, sustainable, technology-open framework.

The most important measure would be the swift phasing out of all subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear energy and the implementation of regulatory schemes to make the true costs of fossil fuels (GHG-emissions, war costs, corruption, etc.) and nuclear energy (risk management, dismantling, nuclear disposal sites, etc.) visible on the energy market. Due to the circumstance, that the oil and gas production of the EU faces a sharp drop back to a negligible size since the year 2000, the EU has best conditions to become a global forerunner in phasing out fossil fuel subsidies and creating fair level playing fields for renewable energy.

Following the example of Sweden or Denmark, the Commission should also swiftly put forward a clear concept on phasing oil out of the heat market. Taking into account the general problems with diesel-supply in the EU and particularly the risky dependencies of the EU on diesel-supply from Russia it has to be made clear, that burning diesel (as 'heating oil') to heat buildings is absolute nonsense from an economic, environmental and strategical point of view. Additionally, with the scope of the COP21 targets for 2050 (-80% to -95% GHG emissions), also natural gas has to be phased out of the heat market as soon as possible.

A labelling system for all fossil fuels indicating their origin concerning war regions, corruption index, human rights, etc. could be also very helpful to show the dramatic difference between local renewable energy sources and imported fossil fuels.

All means are welcome to better inform consumers on the origin of the electricity they use and to help them making their own decision for using domestic renewable energy sources.

6. Effectiveness of existing EU policies in addressing solid and gaseous biomass sustainability issues

6.1. In addition to the non-binding criteria proposed by the Commission in 2010, a number of other EU policies can contribute to the sustainability of solid and gaseous bioenergy in the EU. These include measures in the areas of energy, climate, environment and agriculture.

In your view, how effective are current EU policies in addressing the following risks of negative environmental impacts associated with solid and gaseous biomass used for heat and power? (one answer per line)

	effective	partly effective	neutral	counter-productive	No opinion
Change in carbon stock due to deforestation, forest degradation and other direct land-use change in the EU	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Change in carbon stock due to deforestation, forest degradation and other direct land-use change in non-EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indirect land-use change impacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GHG emissions from supply chain, e.g. cultivation, processing and transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GHG emissions from combustion of biomass ('biogenic emissions')	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air quality	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water and soil quality	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Biodiversity impacts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Varying degrees of efficiency of biomass conversion to energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competition between different uses of biomass (energy, food, industrial uses) due to limited availability of land and feedstocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

There is no sense in trying to apply new sustainability standards for specific paths of biomass use. EU Forestry and agriculture are producing sustainable renewable feedstocks.

6.2. Any additional views on the effectiveness of existing EU policies on solid and gaseous biomass?
Please explain

2500 character(s) maximum

The discussion about creation of additional sustainability criteria for biomass production and use for energetic purposes is an extreme obstacle in order to speed up investments in bioenergy production.

The sustainable management of forests concerns all European forest products and has already been implemented and put into practice by forest owners for generations. The sustainability of biomass is an issue which cannot be addressed according to the specific use of the biomass. Establishing new or additional sustainability criteria for specific qualities of trees or parts of trees depending on their use makes absolutely no sense. Biomass is plentiful in most EU regions. EU action has to be focused on measures which aim to mobilize forest biomass rather than legislating its use through the cascade principle in favor of selected market actors. Cascade use should be now and in future optimized by market conditions and not by planned economy.

The EU should support the pan-European MCPFE process, as it is a vital reference for the sustainable use of forest resources and the production of renewable energy sources. The principle of carbon neutrality of forest biomass must be maintained in line with existing international rules.

Additional administrative burdens for certification and auditing schemes are costly, especially for the farmer and forest owner and will increase feedstock prices or decrease economic benefits of biomass production. Hence there is no need for the creation of additional sustainability criteria for biomass production and expensive certification schemes. This will only create costly additional monitoring with no added value for the sustainability of biomass production in the EU.

The EU bioenergy policy is not a legislation that can resolve the environmental problems in third countries. The EU has to encourage the introduction of effective environmental legislation in third countries in order to prevent land use change through international agreements, as is suggested by the EP Resolution of 15th March 2012 under point 44 of the Roadmap for moving to a low-carbon economy in 2050.

7. Policy objectives for a post-2020 bioenergy sustainability policy

7.1. In your view, what should be the key objectives of an improved EU bioenergy sustainability policy post-2020? Please rank the following objectives in order of importance: most important first; least important 9th/10th (you can rank fewer than 9/10 objectives):

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Contribute to climate change objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Avoid environmental impacts (biodiversity, air and water quality)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mitigate the impacts of indirect land-use change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Promote efficient use of the biomass resource, including efficient energy conversion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote free trade and competition in										

the EU among all end-users of the biomass resource										
Ensure long-term legal certainty for operators										
Minimise administrative burden for operators										
Promote energy security										
Promote EU industrial competitiveness, growth and jobs										
Other										

Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

As one of the megatrends of the future is decentralization, In a decentralized future energy system bioenergy has a high potential of to contribute to more green jobs in rural areas.

7.2. Any other views? Please specify

2500 character(s) maximum

While there is no significant risk for unsustainable biomass production within the EU, there is a very high risk of market disturbances and additional costs by new administrative burdens created by new sustainability criteria of the European Commission (EC) without added value.

The real challenges of the EU for the coming years are to reduce the risky dependency on fossil fuel imports from Middle East and Russia, to reduce ambitiously the risks of climate change by cutting the GHG emissions from fossil fuels according to the outcome of COP21 and to reduce the risks of social instability caused by high unemployment rates of young people by creating new green jobs.

The EC has to focus on the major risks of the EU energy system: How can the risks for the climate caused by burning oil, natural gas and coal be effectively reduced? How can the unwarranted externalities from production, supply and use of fossil fuels be handled with regulations? How can costs for securing the supply with fossil fuels and especially also costs for conflicts in the countries of origin as well as costs for the refugee crisis be made visible for energy consumers? How can disastrous environmental pollutions by line losses from pipelines in e.g. Nigeria or Russia be eliminated? What about compliance with human rights? What about the position of women? What about corruption in oil and gas supplying countries?

One important measure to enhance the competitiveness of renewables would be the phasing out of all subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear energy and the implementation of regulatory schemes to make the true costs of fossil fuels (GHG-emissions, war costs, corruption, etc.) and nuclear energy (risk management, dismantling, nuclear disposal sites, etc.) clearly visible on the energy market.

The EC is urgently required to bring forward serious solutions for the real risks of the European energy system with a clear focus on fossil fuels instead of creating a needless sideshow on bioenergy.

8. EU action on sustainability of bioenergy

8.1. In your view, is there a need for additional EU policy on bioenergy sustainability?

- ☒ No: the current policy framework (including the sustainability scheme for biofuels and bioliquids, and other EU and national policies covering solid and gaseous biomass) is sufficient.
- ☐ Yes: additional policy is needed for solid and gaseous biomass, but for biofuels and bioliquids the existing scheme is sufficient.
- ☐ Yes: additional policy is needed on biofuels and bioliquids, but for solid and gaseous biomass existing EU and national policies are sufficient.
- ☐ Yes: a new policy is needed covering all types of bioenergy.

8.2. In your view, and given your answers to the previous questions, what should the EU policy framework on the sustainability of bioenergy include? Please be specific

5000 character(s) maximum

Austria is a Member State which has taken – together with Sweden and Finland – a leading role in the EU, both in the field of renewable energy as well as the sustainability of forest management.

In all Member States with a high share of renewable energy we succeeded over decades to implement a very positive development of bioenergy and simultaneously expand the forest area and increase the growing stock under strict sustainability requirements with a well-functioning national framework. The mentioned States are recognized worldwide as model countries for the successful development of the bioenergy sector.

Needless additional administrative burdens for biomass production within the EU have to be avoided, as they may lead to significant obstructions for the European biomass sector, reducing the availability of European biomass, destroying very important new green jobs across the whole bio economy, unsettling businesses and investors in the biomass sector and thus jeopardizing the objectives for renewable energy and the ambitious goals of COP21.

In a situation in which risks for fossil energy supply of the EU citizens escalate due to wars in oil producing countries, the dependence of the EU on gas supplies from Russia increases and the social peace in the EU is at risk due to the lack of adequate budgets for effective employment programs leaving more than 25 million EU citizens – of which a huge share are young people – unemployed, the EC should urgently focus its resources on solving the core problems of the common economy and should refrain immediately from causing additional costs by creating useless new burdens on already well-functioning areas on national level – such as the sustainability of biomass production.

9. Additional contribution

Do you have other specific views that could not be expressed in the context of your replies to the above questions?

5000 character(s) maximum

Finally, you may upload here any relevant documents, e.g. position papers, that you would like the European Commission to be aware of.

Thank you for participation to the consultation!

Contact

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