

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

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

200 character(s) maximum

Southern Group of State Foresters, an association that represents the interests of state forestry agencies within State governments in the United States

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 type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biofuels from energy crops (grass, short rotation coppice, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biofuels from waste (municipal solid waste, wood waste)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biofuels from agricultural and forest residues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biofuels from algae	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biogas from manure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biogas from food crops (e.g. maize)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Biogas from waste, sewage sludge, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Heat and power from forest biomass (except forest residues)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Heat and power from forest residues (tree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

tops, branches, etc.)					
Heat and power from agricultural biomass (energy crops, short rotation coppice)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Heat and power from industrial residues (such as sawdust or black liquor)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Heat and power from waste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Large-scale electricity generation (50 MW or more) from solid biomass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Commercial heat generation from solid biomass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Large-scale combined heat and power generation from solid biomass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Small-scale combined heat and power generation from solid biomass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Heat generation from biomass in domestic (household) installations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Bioenergy based on locally					

sourced feedstocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Bioenergy based on feedstocks sourced in the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Bioenergy based on feedstocks imported from non-EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

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 type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Grid balancing including through storage of biomass (in an electricity system with a high proportion of electricity from intermittent renewables)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Reduction of GHG emissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Environmental benefits (including biodiversity)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Resource efficiency and waste management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Boosting research and innovation in bio-based industries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Competitiveness of European industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Growth and jobs, including in rural areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Sustainable development in developing countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

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

2500 character(s) maximum

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 answer per line):

	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	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Change in carbon stock due to deforestation and other direct land-use change in non-EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" 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 the supply chain (e.g. cultivation, processing and transport)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
GHG emissions from combustion of biomass ('biogenic emissions')	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Impacts on air quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impacts on water and soil	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impacts on biodiversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Varying degrees of efficiency of biomass conversion to energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Competition between different uses of biomass (energy, food, industrial uses) due to limited availability of land and feedstocks and/or subsidies for specific uses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Internal market impact of divergent national sustainability schemes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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

2500 character(s) maximum

The answers above are given relative to the potential risks to forests and other natural resources in the southern United States from the sourcing of woody biomass, as that is our area of expertise and professional engagement. The development of bioenergy production in our region is actually a benefit to many of items listed above as opposed to an elevation of risk to our forests and other natural resources.

As our Policy Brief attached to the end of this consultation highlights, the greatest threat to forests in the southern United States is conversion to other uses, such as development or agriculture. Any additional forest products markets provide an incentive for private landowners to keep their land in forests and not convert them. This incentive has in turn a beneficial impact on resources such as air quality, water quality, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity that are enhanced when there are more forests on the landscape. Bioenergy production in the United States presents no greater risk to natural resources than any other forest product production, and that risk is very low. As our attached Policy Brief highlights, The United States, and in particular the South, has a strong system of monitoring, reporting and regulating the sustainability of its forest landscapes. The Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, and many other federal and state regulations are in place to guide sustainable outcomes on private forest landscapes. Additionally, through Federal, State and Tribal investments in forest inventory monitoring, harvest tracking, public lands conservation, and State-driven efforts at Best Management Practices and State Forest Action Plans, monitoring is ongoing regarding the impacts of all harvesting activities, including bioenergy harvesting, as well as processes for addressing any sustainability challenges if they emerge.

Finally, these answers are also given with the recognition that cutting trees and growing new ones in their place is not deforestation by definition. There is no risk of deforestation in our region from forest products markets as there may be in other places in the world. Forest products markets are the incentive to ensure private landowners regrow their forests after harvest.

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 type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
GHG emissions from direct land-use change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Indirect land-use change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Impacts on biodiversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Impact on soil, air and water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Any additional comments?

2500 character(s) maximum

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

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

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

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 type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Change in carbon stock due to deforestation, forest degradation and other direct land-use change in non-EU countries	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indirect land-use change impacts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GHG emissions from supply chain, e.g. cultivation, processing and transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
GHG emissions from combustion of biomass ('biogenic emissions')	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please specify the "other" choice

200 character(s) maximum

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

2500 character(s) maximum

The answers above are given relative to the effectiveness of current EU policy on forests and other natural resources in the southern United States from the sourcing of woody biomass, as that is our area of expertise and professional engagement.

As the current EU policies do not impose additional regulatory or procedural hurdles on private landowners in the United States, from our perspective they are effective in fostering the growth of markets for forest products that support forest sustainability in our region. As described in our attached Policy Brief, the greatest threat to forests and their sustainability in the Southern United States is conversion to development or agriculture. Enabling private forest owners to access markets creates an incentive for them to regrow their forests after harvest, which is of benefit for water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, and much more.

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"/>									
Avoid environmental impacts (biodiversity, air and water quality)	<input type="radio"/>									
Mitigate the impacts of indirect land-use change	<input type="radio"/>									
Promote efficient use of the biomass resource, including efficient energy conversion	<input type="radio"/>									
Promote free trade and competition in										

the EU among all end-users of the biomass resource	<input type="radio"/>									
Ensure long-term legal certainty for operators	<input type="radio"/>									
Minimise administrative burden for operators	<input type="radio"/>									
Promote energy security	<input type="radio"/>									
Promote EU industrial competitiveness, growth and jobs	<input type="radio"/>									
Other	<input type="radio"/>									

7.2. Any other views? Please specify

2500 character(s) maximum

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

Once again, the answer above is given only relative to the need for additional EU policy for bioenergy sustainability relative to forests and other natural resources in the southern United States, as that is our area of expertise and professional engagement. As our attached Policy Brief highlights, The United States, and in particular the South, already has a strong system of monitoring, reporting and regulating the sustainability of its forest landscapes. Additional sustainability policy from the EU directed at the forests of the Southern United States would be addressing a problem that does not exist.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation. The Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF) represents the interests of the state foresters from across a 13-State area of the southern United States, an area which currently provides almost all of the woody bioenergy being imported by the European Union from the US. In each of their states, the state forester is charged by state government with monitoring and ensuring the sustainability and vitality of the state-owned and private forest resources. Private forests

make up 86% of the forest land in the Southern US, which is a marked difference from the European Union and much of the rest of the world. As an association, the SGSF mission is to provide leadership in sustaining the economic, environmental, and social benefits of the Southern US forests, and thus we are very interested in the potential impacts of a growing wood pellet industry on the forests and forest owners within this region, as well as any discussions surrounding southern forest sustainability.

As our interest is primarily in the potential impacts, both positive and negative, of bioenergy development on southern US forests, we have only answered the questions above which we feel are relevant to this interest. In sum, we believe that the emergence of additional markets for forest products in the Southern US, including bioenergy, is beneficial for maintaining healthy forests on our landscape. We have attached our most recent Policy Brief which explains the relationship between forest sustainability, private forest ownership and strong markets more in depth, but in short strong markets with minimal barriers to entry are the key to forest sustainability in the Southern US.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit these comments, and we look forward to being able to further inform the Commission's work on forest sustainability and bioenergy into the future.

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

[bdfef91f-febe-4fca-82cb-0a850989e9f9/SGSF_PelletPolicyBrief_January_2016.pdf](#)

Thank you for participation to the consultation!

Contact

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