

 biofuelwatch

This is the December edition of our monthly Biofuelwatch UK newsletter, with details of recent news from bioenergy campaigns. Please let us know if you would like more information about particular campaign issues/news or if you'd like to find out about getting involved in any relevant campaigns. If you are looking for news about biomass campaigning in the US, then please see <http://energyjustice.net/biomass/monitor>

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Watch **Dogwood Alliance's** new video about the **impacts of the pellet industry** in SE USA:

http://dia.dogwoodalliance.org/p/salsa/web/questionnaire/public/?questionnaire_KEY=1656



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Protect Sumatran Rainforests!

Please support a petition to protect rainforests and the four million people depending on them in Aceh, Sumatra: <http://www.change.org/petitions/protect-the-leuser-ecosystem-declare-it-a-world-heritage>

The Leuser ecosystem in Aceh, Sumatra is one of the



Want to get in touch, or get involved in one of our campaigns? Please email biofuelwatch@ymail.com

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livelihoods, for agriculture and food production and for clean water. Those forests also provide one of the last remaining habitats for Sumatran orangutans, tigers, elephants and rhinos. Most of Aceh's remaining forests could soon be destroyed if the Acehese government approves a proposed Spatial Plan and regulations to permit large-scale logging, mining and land conversion to oil palm plantations. Large areas have already been destroyed in recent years, primarily for palm oil.

Please sign a petition launched by Friends of the Earth Indonesia and supported by conservation organisation such as the Sumatran Orangutan Society and other NGOs to call for the long-term protection of Aceh's remaining forests:



No Guarantees for deforestation and air pollution: Campaigners demand 'pre-qualified' biomass and incineration projects be rejected from UK Guarantee Scheme

Download the joint letter [here](#)

Read the press release [here](#)

On Wednesday 18 December we joined forces with Friends of the Earth, UKWIN (UK Without Incineration

that biomass to electricity and incineration projects be rejected from the 'pre-qualified' shortlist for loan guarantees under the UK Guarantee Scheme.

We also demanded that the Treasury only support genuinely sustainable and low carbon renewables projects. Many thanks to everyone who has participated in our online alert to the Treasury.

As well as the existing Â£75 million guarantee already agreed with Drax, the Treasury are considering:

- The proposed partial or full conversion of Eggborough Power Station to biomass requiring pellets made from up to 15.8 million green tonnes of wood to be burned every year;
- A 100 MW electricity-only biomass power station in Avonmouth, proposed by Helios Energy. An average dedicated biomass power station of this size requires around 1 million green tonnes of wood a year to be burnt.
- A 60 MW biomass and waste power station at Tilbury burning up to 300,000 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste, Commercial & Industrial Waste and Solid Recovered Fuel and up to 350,000 tonnes of virgin and waste wood a year
- An unspecified number of Municipal and Commercial waste gasification-type incinerators by Chinook Energy



DECC Announces new support for biomass electricity, meaning more forest destruction and land-grabbing

Download the press release here:

<http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2013/decc-strike-price-response/>

High levels of long-term subsidies have just been guaranteed for the conversion of two more of Drax's six power station units to biomass, enabling Drax to avoid having to shut down. Subsidies have also been guaranteed for the biomass conversion of the currently closed Lynemouth Power station and for a large new biomass plant proposed by MGT Power at Teesside Port. Since our joint Press Release was sent, the proposed conversion of Eggborough Power station (otherwise scheduled for closure) has been dropped from the list of projects to be guaranteed such subsidies, however DECC will reconsider Eggborough next year. Coal to biomass conversion strike price is Â£105 p MWh. Dedicated biomass will get Â£125 p MWh guaranteed.

MGT Power's plans have already been implicated in land-grabbing in Brazil for eucalyptus plantations, whilst Drax has been shown to have burnt pellets sourced from the clear-cutting of ancient wetland forests in the southern US. Overall, further support was announced for more than 4GW of biomass capacity, which will see operators burning almost 30 million tonnes of green wood a year and receiving approximately Â£ 1 billion in subsidies for this annually. Drax has already been guaranteed around Â£198 million in subsidies for biomass conversion under an existing subsidy scheme. 30 million tonnes of wood is equivalent to three times the UK's total annual wood production.

Download the joint press release here:

<http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2013/coal-and-biomass-campaigners-hit-out-at-decc-greenwash-over-drax-conversion/>

Following outrageous claims by DECC and Drax that the power station is now Europe's largest renewable energy generator and that Drax will in the future burn "truly clean coal" we joined forces with London Mining Network, Friends of the Earth, Colombia Solidarity Campaign and the Coal Action Network to jointly respond, calling on DECC to end subsidies and industry support for Drax Power Station

The impacts of large-scale biomass for electricity are being felt in North and South America where most wood imports to the UK originate. In the southern US for example, ancient wetland forests are being destroyed by Drax pellet supplier Enviva. Similarly, most coal burned in the UK is imported from abroad. In Colombia, the British-owned Cerrejón mine has caused long-lasting conflicts with local communities and resulted in unprecedented environmental destruction.



Defra rethinking changes to air quality measuring after big public response

Defra have now reported on the outcome of the consultation on their proposals to significantly weaken air quality reporting and control in England:

They acknowledge that there is little support for abolishing the requirement for local authorities to declare Air Quality Management Areas in locations with particularly high pollution levels and they will now reassess their proposal and issue a new consultation in mid-2014. A big thanks to everybody who took part in our email alert in response to this consultation “ because of the big response from the public via a number of organisations it looks like Defra's unacceptable proposals are being taken off the table.

Over 100 organisations call for an end to biodiversity offsetting plans

Download the press release here:

http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PR_No-BO-Statement_Final_Embargoed.pdf

On the first day of the ominously-named World Forum on Natural Capital in Edinburgh last month 140 organisations from all over the world released a statement to say “No to biodiversity offsetting”. The Statement was launched in a counter forum on Natural Commons which took place in Edinburgh at the same time. For more information see:

<http://naturenotforsale.org/>

Corporate lobby group Back Biomass publishes misleading claims about impacts of big biomass

Download the press release here:

<http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Back-Biomass-PR1.pdf>

Corporate lobby group Back Biomass, backed by large energy companies including Drax, Eggborough,

response to new evidence highlighting the global impacts of the UK's biomass for electricity industry, documented in our new report. "Biomass: The Chain of Destruction" provides evidence of the impacts that UK investment in large-scale biomass electricity is having on forests and communities in the southern US, Brazil and elsewhere around the world. It also puts forward evidence to show that there are serious impacts on communities affected by power station emissions, from burning wood in the UK. We responded comprehensively, in particular to debunk misinformation about sustainability standards. We haven't had a response to our response though!

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<http://biofuelwatch.org.uk/>