

Jeroen & Marloes Spaander

Our contribution for the EU 2030 Climate Target Plan Roadmap Consultation.



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We are Jeroen & Marloes Spaander and work for a research and project agency which creates an environment to support organizations worldwide that are responsible for actions to protect the planet, end poverty or increase well-being. We provide support in the form of building and managing websites, conducting extensive research, setting up and offering digital campaigns, connecting stakeholders, giving public speeches and interviews and developing and deploying environmentally friendly solutions. In addition, we actively focus on politicians and companies that contribute to pollution and climate change. We have made this contribution as EU citizens.

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Introduction

The EU wrongly foresees an indispensable role for biomass in the energy transition for making our economy more sustainable and realizing the climate task. There is a lot of debate and concern whether the billions of euros that are now being subsidized for burning trees would be better spent on truly sustainable solutions. In addition, a large part of the EU population is seriously concerned about the harmful consequences of deforestation and the burning of woody biomass for health, nature, the climate and thus our future.

Science is human work and many things can go wrong in the production and application of science. Partly in response to parliamentary questions, in 2005 the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science asked the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW) to advise her on [safeguarding the scientific independence of research](#) which is carried out by researchers in the public sector on behalf of third parties.

The KNAW found that clients often live in worlds with objectives and values and norms (business, politics, interest groups, etc.) that are very different from those that researchers and science should use. The pressure to let their own objectives predominate can be high with clients, which in unfavorable cases can translate into pressure on the researchers. Publications and informal conversations suggested that derailments occurred. However, the KNAW's recommendations to prevent the design, implementation, interpretation and publication of the research from being improperly influenced by the interests of the client during independent research have not been followed, with disastrous consequences. Follow The Money (FTM) has published [23 articles on this matter in the last 5 years](#).

Research methods for our contribution

During our extensive research into the paid pro-biomass lobby in the Netherlands and the harmful effects of burning woody biomass on our health, nature, the climate and thus our future, and the 47 climate solutions for reducing co2 emissions and sustainable energy generation, we have analyzed [more than 1200 documents](#) and research reports and have started to collect the most important aspects (summaries, quotes, findings, etc.) per subject.

In addition to the hundreds of documents, we have also collected over 1700 news reports and 25 videos that were published over the past 20 years containing the disastrous consequences of burning biomass:

[1200-documents-used-in-the-research-on-the-damages-to-our-health-nature-the-environment-and-our-future-caused-by-burning-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[1700-news-items-used-in-the-research-on-the-damages-to-our-health-nature-the-environment-and-our-future-caused-by-burning-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[25-videos-used-in-the-research-on-the-damages-to-our-health-nature-the-environment-and-our-future-caused-by-burning-biomass-english.pdf](#)

Research into the harmful consequences of burning woody biomass

we have analyzed, elaborated and made available 50 summary documents and research reports from 2019 for each topic:

[climate-solutions-for-reducing-co2-emissions-and-sustainable-energy-generation-without-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-claims-whole-trees-are-used-to-produce-woody-biomass-for-energy-production-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-sustainability-criteria-for-the-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-subsidies-for-the-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-lulucf-criteria-for-the-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-paid-lobbyfacts-for-the-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-laws-and-regulations-for-the-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-health-risks-caused-by-the-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-ecotoxicity-of-burning-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-certifications-required-for-sustainable-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-impact-of-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-on-carbon-dioxide-emission-levels-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-impact-of-logging-and-burning-of-woody-biomass-on-biodiversity-english.pdf](#)

[2019-research-on-the-availability-of-woody-biomass-english.pdf](#)

we have also created a research page for each subject. The following web links refer to the research pages per subject: [Availability](#), [Biodiversity](#), [Carbon dioxide](#), [Certification](#), [Ecotoxicity](#), [Health Risks](#), [Legal](#), [Lobby Facts](#), [LULUCF](#), [Solutions](#), [Subsidies](#), [Sustainability](#), [Whole trees](#)

Research into the paid pro-biomass lobby

This research is part of our extensive study into the paid pro-biomass lobby activities in the Netherlands. The full study consists of the following 6 parts which will be published on the following website: www.biomassmurder.org/research/lobby-facts

Part 1: [Energy companies](#)

Part 2: [Politics and civil servants](#)

Part 3: [Scientists](#)

Part 4: [Consultants en lobbyists](#)

Part 5: [Certification en subsidies](#)

Part 6: [Banka and investors](#)

On this subject we have provided two documents as our contribution for the EU 2030 Climate Target Plan Roadmap Consultation. This concerns the research report part 1 (the energy companies) and 3 (the scientists) involved in the paid pro-biomass lobby (parts 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are upcoming):

[biomass-lobbyfacts-research-part-1-the-energy-companies-english.pdf](#)

[lobbyfacts-research-part-3-rwe-essent-and-the-scientists-of-the-copernicus-institute-english.pdf](#)

Conclusions

Based on our extensive research into the harmful consequences of burning woody biomass for energy generation, we have found that the vast majority of (independent) scientists have shown in many studies in the past twenty years that when burning wood in comparison with burning gas and coal:

- Significantly more harmful substances are released into the atmosphere.
- Nature and biodiversity are considerably more damaged.
- Sustainably extracted woody biomass also emits more CO₂ (including the entire chain).
- Significantly more damage to the climate will be done over the next 50 years.

On the basis of studying hundreds of documents and research reports, we come to the following conclusions:

- The sustainability requirements for woody biomass are not mandatory and not sufficient.
- The sustainability requirements are not complied with or checked.
- Every part of the biomass chain, from scientific research, certification, harvesting, production, trade, transport, to incineration and the receipt of grants, is full of conflicts of interest and paid pro-biomass lobbying initiatives.
- The energy companies, consultancy and research bureaus and the universities involved have omitted research results over the past twenty years to maintain the current lucrative trade in biomass due to significant financial earnings.
- The EU and EU governments have been extensively informed for years and / or themselves involved in the conflicts of interest in this file.
- The EU and EU governments (at municipal, provincial and national level) has been informed for more than a decade by means of both public and confidential reports of the harmful effects of burning woody biomass on our health, nature, climate and thus our future, of the shortage of available biomass in the EU and of the lack of sustainability requirements for imported woody biomass. Nevertheless, permits and subsidies have been issued at every administrative level for thousands of biomass plants in the EU.
- Granting subsidies for the burning of woody biomass in the upcoming crucial decades is counterproductive and accelerates global warming.
- The provision of subsidies for the burning of woody biomass is at the expense of the subsidies that are available for truly sustainable solutions.

Based on our extensive research into the paid pro-biomass lobby, we come to the following conclusions:

- The top of RWE NL / Essent is responsible for devising and setting up the worldwide trade in woody biomass and has ensured that the other energy suppliers have joined the biomass cartel.
- Around 120 companies worldwide are responsible for the pro-biomass lobby aimed at the European Union and they spend up to 40 million per year on this according to the LobbyFacts Database.
- According to the LobbyFacts database, the following energy companies are among those involved in the paid pro-biomass lobby: Uniper (E-ON), Vattenfall (Nuon), RWE (Essent), Veolia (Ennatuurlijk), ENGIE (GDF Suez, Electrabel).
- Several Dutch organizations such as consultancy and research agencies (including CE-Delft, EcoFys, Probos, ECN and TNO) and Dutch universities (including Utrecht, Wageningen and Delft) that publicly profile themselves as independent parties, provide paid pro-biomass reports (and services) while these organizations themselves have major interests in the conclusions included in the reports.

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- A handful of Dutch scientists who are openly paid for their research by the pro-biomass lobby in the EU (by several companies, energy suppliers and consultancy firms) have been setting policies for burning woody biomass for energy generation in the EU for almost twenty years.
 - Scientific research and advice from hundreds of (independent) scientists worldwide have not been included in current biomass policy for twenty years.
 - Research results showing that a production forest or a managed forest absorbs and retains much less CO₂ than a natural forest with a lot of variation are systematically not included in the research reports of the organizations involved in the paid pro-biomass lobby.
 - Factors such as the high degree of loss of biodiversity, damage to health, extra emissions of harmful substances and accelerated warming of the climate in connection with the increased CO₂ emissions and the discrepancy of the crucial timeframe within how much time we have to reduce the emissions and within how much time the remaining forests can absorb the extra CO₂ emissions are systematically not included as consequences of the current biomass policy in the research results of the organizations involved in the paid pro-biomass lobby.
 - For the people involved in the paid pro-biomass lobby in the European Union it is of great financial importance to maintain the current biomass policy and they have been working together extensively for almost 20 years to maintain those interests.
 - The paid pro-biomass lobby has infiltrated EU politics and authorities in crucial places and thereby determines the current biomass policy in the EU.

Advice

Based on reading and analyzing the hundreds of documents and research reports and extensive discussions with dozens of scientists and NGOs worldwide, we have prepared the following advice;

- Immediately end subsidies on the burning of woody biomass.
- Only stimulate truly sustainable solutions and the development of energy generation.
- Make every effort to prevent deforestation.
- Increase the planting of new varied forests as soon as possible.
- Make every effort to reduce the emission of harmful substances.
- Limit the influence of the paid pro-biomass lobby on the EU, our governments, the boards and the organizations of which we depend on advice for determining policy.

We do not receive any subsidies or financial contributions from any government or companies and we finance all our actions, investigations, lawsuits and multimedia campaigns ourselves. In 2020, we will file further lawsuits against governments and industries to ensure that subsidies for burning woody biomass and deforestation are ended. Would you like to help us hold politicians and companies legally responsible and end this destructive policy once and for all? Contact us at: <https://www.biomassazaak.nl/en>

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