IEA Bioenergy TASK 40
Sustainable International Bioenergy Trade - Securing Supply and Demand

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ABOUT US

Task 40 is an international working group under the IEA Bioenergy Implementing agreement. We conduct studies and organize events on various topics related to sustainable international bioenergy trade. Follow us on:

http://www.bioenergytrade.org

The Task is jointly led and coordinated by Martin Junginger (Copernicus Institute, Utrecht University) and Peter-Paul Schouwenberg (RWE Essent). Kees Kwant (NL Agency) is Operating Agent for the Task.

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Upcoming events

International workshop: Towards sustainable international biomass trade strategies, Brussels - 24 October 2014

Today in the European Union, the cost-effective achievement of existing and future bioenergy targets set in the legislation implies that in addition to using domestic sustainable and cost-competitive biomass potentials, European markets will also (partly) rely on sustainable and cheap(er) imports of biomass. Some well-positioned regions of the world are already playing a role in supplying biomass to the European markets and could become increasingly relevant in the near future. One of the objectives of the BioTrade2020+ project is to propose appropriate long-term strategies and support frameworks which can form a basis for a balanced approach between promoting the use of domestic biomass, while also keeping markets open for sustainable imports of biomass. This workshop aims to bring people together to initiate discussions on how these trade strategies can be framed. The central points of discussion will be (1) how to define sustainable export potentials, (2) which opportunities and risks are connected with biomass trade and how these can be addressed, and (3) which are the key principles that sustainable biomass trade should fulfil - one important point is the interaction between local use and exports in the sourcing regions. For more information click here.

Publications

Impact of promotion mechanisms for advanced and low-iLUC biofuels on markets

With current discussions on indirect effects of biofuels, and the aim to broaden feedstocks to non-food biomass, policies are trying to put focus on biofuels from waste, residues and lignocellulose materials, so called 'advanced' biofuels. Next to the general biofuel incentives, these biofuels are getting extra support through specific promotion mechanisms. Examples are the double-counting mechanism for advanced biofuels in the EU, and the specific targets for advanced biofuels in the US. In this study, some typical cases are presented where promotion mechanisms for advanced biofuels have had an impact on markets and trade (used cooking oils and animal fats, sugarcane ethanol), or may be anticipated to impact

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markets and trade in the future (straw, wood pellets). General conclusions and summaries of the four case studies can be found in a summary report. The selected cases are:

1. Used cooking oils and animal fats for biodiesel: impact of the double-counting mechanism for advanced biofuels in the European Renewable Energy Directive on market prices and trade flows, analysed for the Netherlands and Italy.

2. Sugarcane ethanol: impact of the subtargets for specific advanced biofuels in the US Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS2), where sugar cane ethanol is classified as 'advanced biofuel'. This has had a clear impact on prices and trade patterns between Brazil and the US.

3. Crop residues (straw) for bioenergy: straw may play an important role for advanced biofuels in the future. In countries such as Germany, Denmark or Poland, this is an emerging feedstock for energy and biofuels. There are already some experiences we can take into account from the promotion of straw for stationary energy, e.g. in Denmark.

4. International trade of US wood pellets for bioenergy in the EU: Renewable Energy promotion in certain EU Member States is causing considerable trade flows from the US to the EU. There is clear that there are interactions with existing wood markets and forestry practises. In the future there may be additional effects when demand for cellulose-based biofuels enters these markets.

Download reports

Biomethane - status and factors affecting market development and trade

A new report was prepared jointly by Task 40 and Task 37 to address the status and emerging challenges of dealing with the rapid growth of production of biomethane, by either anaerobic digestion or thermal gasification, the developing biomethane market and trade of the gaseous biofuel. The aim of this study is to provide an up-to-date overview of the status of biomethane (including upgraded biogas and bio-SNG) production, grid injection and use in different countries, and to illustrate the options and needs for the development of larger biomethane supply strategies. The focus is on technical, economic and management- related hurdles to inject biomethane into the natural gas grid and to trade it transnationally. The study provides insights into the current status of technologies, technical requirements and sustainability indicators as well as cost of biomethane production and use in general and especially in selected countries. It also assesses implementation strategies, market situations and market expectations in selected countries, and proposes actions to be taken to reduce barriers and to develop the market step-by-step. The publication (ISBN 978-1-910154-10-6) is available electronically on the Task 40 (here) and Task 37 (here) websites.

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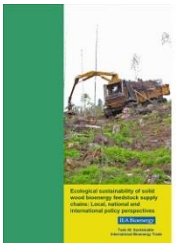
Ecological sustainability of wood bioenergy feedstock supply chains: Local, national and international policy perspectives



The report first provides a brief overview of development of policy and criteria related to sustainability of bioenergy in the EU and in key biomass importer Member States (United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Belgium). The following sections then provide an thorough review of policy, regulations and practices of Canada and the United States, with a special focus of key biomass producing provinces/states (British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec in Canada, Georgia, New York and Massachusetts and California in the US); this in-depth analysis of the Canadian and American contexts was made possible due to the abundance of information available for those countries, but was also found necessary due to the scarcity of syntheses on this information. The next section then provides an overview of the policy and practices for land and forest management in Russia, with a focus on the region of Northwest Russia, based on the information that was possible to gather from this area. The report concludes with a discussion and main conclusions stemming from the analysis of the case studies. Download report.

Statement: Workshop on "Forests, bioenergy and climate change mitigation", Copenhagen, 19-20 May 2014

This statement is an outcome of the workshop on "Forests, bioenergy and climate change mitigation", held May 19-20, 2014 in Copenhagen , which had the following objectives:

- to facilitate dialogue between scientists on the topic of climate effects of forest -based bioenergy, in order to advance scientific understanding of the topic and to clarify divergent views on the role of forest-based bioenergy in climate change mitigation, and

- to identify knowledge gaps and priorities for future research and data collection, in order to improve scientific understanding and support policy development for forest-based bioenergy.

The statement is available at the Task 38 website and also in PDF version.

Summary and presentations: Workshop Biomass trade & supply system opportunities in a world-wide bio-based economy, Jonkoping, Sweden - 4 Jun 2014

On June 4th, IEA Bioenergy Task 40 organized a workshop on biomass trade and supply system opportunities in a world-wide bio-based economy, as a side event during the

World Bioenergy Conference in Jönköping, Sweden. With the growing worldwide interest to transition from fossil energy resources to renewable energy including bioenergy, regional biomass resource availability, logistics, and distribution infrastructures become increasingly important. In order for biorefineries to achieve economies of scale, a consistent supply of densified, on-spec feedstock is a prerequisite. Achieving volume and price targets and a respective fungibility of the biomass, i.e., to create a global commodity, will be vital for the bio-based economy. During the workshop (chaired by Dr. Patrick Lamers from the Idaho National Laboratory) four speakers from industry and academia provided their vision on the pros and cons of trading different types of preprocessed biomass (wood chips, wood pellets, torrefied pellets and pyrolysis oil) amongst others in relation to end-user requirements and existing logistic infrastructure, and how these may be utilized more effectively, e.g., by combining roundwood and wood chip transport or by combining coal and (torrefied) biomass transport in large sea vessels. Download presentations and summary.

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