

Biofuels policy threatens wildlife habitats

Title

Meeting a European target to use biofuel in Britain's 30 million cars will result in the destruction of an area of wildlife habitat the size of the UK's West Country, a study has found. Imports of biofuels from crops are due to treble over the next decade to reach the legally binding target for 10 per cent of all transport fuel to come from renewable sources by 2020. At present, just over 3 per cent of petrol and diesel sold in Britain comes from crops such as soya, palm oil and sugar cane. Tim Stowe, the RSPB's (BirdLife Partner in the UK) director of international operations, said: "We are seeing the impact of European renewable fuel targets first hand with our work in Kenya. The Tana River Delta and the Dakatcha Woodlands are both hugely important areas for wildlife and they are currently at risk from irresponsible and unsustainable biofuel plantations. "Trees will be cleared, wetlands will be under threat and a range of species will be pushed to the brink if these proposals go ahead. The threatened Clarke's weaver bird will be driven to extinction first, but who knows how many more species will follow. Our message is clear: biofuels targets must be scrapped or wildlife will suffer." Speaking from Kenya, Paul Matiku ? Executive Director of Nature Kenya (BirdLife Partner) said: "our biofuel message needs to sink among the decision makers in Europe. It is critical to ensure no net loss of biodiversity globally as a result of these biofuel targets". Source: Times Online