

Brussels, Wednesday, 10 November 2016 - For immediate release

Link to PR: <http://transenv.eu/2fzWhqa>

Europe doesn't have enough sustainable wood and cow dung to meet its unrealistic bioenergy projections – new analysis

Sustainable wood waste, agricultural residues, manure and other organic residues generated in Europe will only cover around 80% of the EU's projected bioenergy use in 2030, a [new analysis](#) by green groups BirdLife Europe and Transport & Environment (T&E) reveals today. If Europe does not limit the use of bioenergy eligible to meet the EU's 2030 climate and energy targets, the shortage may well be met with unsustainable wood and food crops from home and abroad, the NGOs warn.

The study not only points to a shortage of sustainable biomass for energy, but also to a need to use different sources of bioenergy from those consumed today. Europe is mainly using wood in various forms to generate energy and bad biofuels to power transport. In 2014, bioenergy accounted for 64.1% of Europe's renewable energy sources. However, the analysis shows that sustainable biomass from agricultural and forestry residues would make up only 30% of the amount of renewables needed to meet the EU's 2030 climate targets.

Demand for wood is also increasing in other industrial sectors such as furniture, construction materials, paper and packaging. At the same time, waste availability for energy use is falling due to improvements in waste management and the circular economy.

Jori Sihvonon, bioenergy officer at T&E, said: *"Before burning it, sustainably produced wood should be used to build houses, and make furniture and paper. Thus, sustainable bioenergy that doesn't compete with existing industrial uses can only play a modest role in decarbonising our energy system. Europe should limit the use of bioenergy and instead devote its efforts to promoting sustainable renewables such as solar, wind, geothermal and tidal."*

Clear sustainability rules for biomass supplies are needed to ensure there will be significant greenhouse gas savings as well as no adverse impacts on the natural environment, the analysis also finds. Not all bioenergy is sustainable: for instance, food-based biofuels as well as burning whole trees in EU power plants are worse for the climate than their fossil counterparts.

Sini Eräjää, EU bioenergy policy officer at BirdLife Europe, said: *“The EU needs a policy on bioenergy sustainability that separates the good from the bad and ensures we stay within the limits of what is sustainably available. The policy should rule out the use of agricultural crops and trees for energy to make room for the more sustainable kinds of bioenergy.”*

Last year, the heads of the 28 Member States agreed that 27% of Europe’s energy should come from renewable sources by 2030, up from 16% in 2014. The European Commission is expected to publish the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) for 2030 at the end of this month. The RED is the main policy instrument driving the fast growth of unsustainable bioenergy in Europe. **ENDS**

Read more:

[How much sustainable biomass does Europe have in 2030?](#)

For more information, contact:

Jori Sihvonen

Bioenergy officer, Transport & Environment

jori.sihvonen@transportenvironment.org

+32 (0)2 8510 228 / +32 (0)486 531 039

Sini Eräjää

EU bioenergy policy officer, BirdLife Europe

Sini.Erajaa@birdlife.org

+32 (0)2 238 5097 / +32 (0)476 975 960