

The Environment committee in the European Parliament gives a strong mandate on biofuels reform and limits land eating biofuels

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Today the Environment Committee of the European Parliament voted in favour of a strict 6% limit on land eating biofuels and a more comprehensive accounting of their emissions. MEPs gave a strong mandate to its rapporteur, Mr. Torvalds, to go and negotiate with the European Council. For the final agreement that now needs to be found between council and parliament, this means that over time land will not be turned into biofuels any more at the speed it did before.

According to **Trees Robijns, Senior EU Agriculture and Bioenergy Policy Officer at BirdLife Europe**: *"Today the Environment committee stood up only for those renewables that are good for the climate and the environment, and showed that fuel should not be put before food. The Environment committee – continues BirdLife's Robijns - did not just give a strong mandate to Mr. Torvalds to negotiate with the Council, but at the same time they stood strong on some important principles: accounting of all emissions, a cap on all land based biofuels and the prescription that only more sustainable biofuels should be pursued in the future. Now Mr. Torvalds must bring back a good final outcome from his negotiations"*.

The main results of today's vote are:

- 1) a cap on all land based biofuels of 6% both on food and energy crops, and a limit to the subsidies;
- 2) the inclusion of all emissions (also indirect emissions) in at least one of the two directives (Fuel Quality Directive) and a correct reporting in the other (Renewable Energy Directive);
- 3) a sustainable start for next generation of biofuels which signals to the Commission and Council that, from now on, only renewables that deliver for climate and environment and people can be subsidized in the EU.

The additional demand for biofuels is causing an increased demand for land in the world, driving agricultural intensification and the further encroachment of agriculture in natural areas world-wide. Increased demand for land for energy results also in less land available for food with very problematic results for food prices and the many people vulnerable to rapidly changing prices. This is also especially problematic in times of food scarcity.

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BirdLife Europe is a Partnership of nature conservation organisations in 49 countries, including all EU Member States, and a leader in bird conservation. Through its unique local to global approach BirdLife Europe delivers high impact and long term conservation for the benefit of nature and people.

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