

To the members of the press – for immediate release

Brussels – 7 February 2017

THE BURNING ISSUE - When bioenergy goes bad

Join the premiere of our documentary **THE BURNING ISSUE - When bioenergy goes bad** and see with your own eyes the abuses, malpractice and paradoxes in the production of bioenergy. The premiere will take place on Wednesday 8 February at 18:30 at Nova Cinema (rue d'Arenberg 3, 1000 Brussels).

It was supposed to be the best of all worlds: renewable, clean energy from organic matter, residues mostly. But it unfortunately also became land grabbing, nonsensical forest destruction and a festival of national subsidies that have caused more devastating distortions than you can think of. In this documentary co-produced by [BirdLife Europe & Central Asia](#) and [Transport & Environment](#) we expose some of the outcomes that have perverted solutions... into problems.

In Vyborg, Russia we show the world's largest wood pellet mill that exports to the EU markets - are these wood pellets really coming from "garbage wood" as the Russian authorities claim? We also look at Sardinian wood pellets; what are they really made out of?

Thanks to lucrative subsidies from national governments due to EU policies, farmers have turned into energy producers in Romania and Cremona in Italy. We take a closer look at Cremona, the city with the highest concentration of biogas plants in Europe. In Germany we show how fields devoted to biogas are taking over the space for nature and food.

Sini Eräjää, EU bioenergy policy officer at BirdLife Europe, said: *"With THE BURNING ISSUE documentary, we are once again presenting concrete evidence that the EU's renewable energy policies have failed on bioenergy. We need to limit the use of bioenergy. The EU can't continue to incentivize the use of whole trees or food crops for energy. Bioenergy will be a burning issue in the upcoming negotiations on the EU's Clean Energy package and our decision makers need to take this opportunity to stop supporting unsustainable bioenergy".*

Agenda for the evening:

18:30 - Doors open

19:00 - Screening of **THE BURNING ISSUE - When bioenergy goes bad**

20:00 - Impressions and reactions,

Facilitated by Luca Bonaccorsi, Head of Communications, BirdLife International with Ben Larson, Senior Manager, National Wildlife Federation US

Mihai Stoica, Executive Director of Romanian NGO 2Celsius

Alessandro De Pascale, Investigative journalist and writer of The Burning Issue

20:45 - Drinks in the bar
TO REGISTER PLEASE SIGN UP [HERE](#)

For further information, including distribution queries please contact:

Sini Eräjää, EU bioenergy policy officer
BirdLife Europe & Central Asia
Sini.Erajaa@birdlife.org
+32 (0)476 975 960

Zeynep Karasin, Media officer
BirdLife Europe & Central Asia
zeynep.karasin@birdlife.org
+32 2280 0886

Notes:

THE BURNING ISSUE - When bioenergy goes bad <http://www.birdlife.org/europe-and-central-asia/burning-issue>

The Black Book of Bioenergy <http://www.birdlife.org/campaign/black-book-bioenergy>

To read more about our work and to get the latest news on bioenergy visit our blog EU Bioenergy: <https://eubioenergy.com> and follow [#EUbioenergy](https://twitter.com/EUbioenergy)

*BirdLife Europe and Central Asia is a **partnership of 48 national conservation organisations** and a **leader in bird conservation**. Our **unique local to global approach** enables us to deliver high impact and long term conservation for the benefit of **nature and people**.*

*BirdLife Europe and Central Asia is one of the six regional secretariats that compose BirdLife International. Based in Brussels, it supports the European and Central Asian Partnership and is present in **47 countries** including **all EU Member States**.*

*With more than **4100 staff** in Europe, **two million members** and tens of thousands of skilled volunteers, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, together with its national partners, owns or manages more than **6000 nature sites** totalling 320,000 hectares.*