

Newsletter: February 2012

Bioenergy Voice in Europe

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EPC aims to introduce sustainability requirements within ENplus

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27/01/2011

EC public consultation on invasive alien species including species used for biomass production

07/02/2012

AEBIOM response to EC consultation on Renewable Energy Strategy

02/2012

EurObserv-ER publishes reports on solid biomass and RES in Europe

12/2011

AgriForEnergyII handbook shows unexploited opportunities in PVO sector

25-27/06/2012

AEBIOM is organising a third European Bioenergy Conference in Brussels

25-27/04/2012

Renewable Heating and Cooling event in Denmark



Our dear readers,

I am writing to you from the Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Center (BITEC), where a large exhibition on pellets takes place. Bioenergy International magazine has organised a conference on pellets within Victam International which is the largest exhibition on pellet production. Victam, in the past, has hosted a few AEBIOM conferences on pellets (including the conference last year in Cologne).

According to Bioenergy International, there is a huge difference in interest on pellets this year in comparison with a couple of years ago which indicates that the market has significantly moved forward. The main interest at the conference is feed pellets but there is a great interest in fuel pellets as well. It is astonishing to see that the environmental interest is growing not only in Europe but also globally. Today we met an Indonesian company that would like to have green energy supply for their feed pellets. The interest to move forward and reduce carbon emissions is increasing in Asia as well. Common raw materials are straw, rice husks and empty food bunches from palm oil trees.

Gustav Melin, president of AEBIOM

AEBIOM NEWS

► New AEBIOM members

AEBIOM warmly welcomes two new associate members and one full member:

- **Schmid AG** - is a family owned business based in Switzerland which deals with wood energy (residential heating systems from few kW to 25 MW) for 75 years and employs about 250 people. Schmid is mainly active in the European market but their heating systems are used all over the world. www.holzfeuerung.ch
- **Prodesa** - is an Engineering company located in Zaragoza (Spain). The company provides comprehensive tailor-made solutions for the production of solid bioenergy and for the protection of environment. Prodesa offers turnkey plants for thermal drying, pellets production, wood processing, biomass CHP and gas treatment. www.prodesa.net
- **ETH Agrar** – a German subsidiary of ETH Umwelttechnik GmbH is specialized in utilisation of various waste streams and by-products. The company is especially active in biogas and wood pellet production. Furthermore, it provides logistics. www.eth-agrar.de
- **Ukrainian Biomass Association** – the main purpose of the association is to create favourable conditions for the market of alternative fuels, the main part of which is to improve the existing legislation in Ukraine. The association represents the interests of Ukrainian companies in the international organizations and aims to foster the exchange of experience and know-how and provide business opportunities.

► EPC aims to include sustainability requirements within ENplus

Whilst waiting for the upcoming EC decision on sustainability criteria of solid and gaseous biomass, AEBIOM and EPC decided to take initiative to develop their own sustainability criteria within the EN-plus pellets certification scheme. The process has started on 26 January during a consultation workshop organised within PellCert project. The sustainability principles established by the Initiative Wood Pellet Buyers served as a basis for the workshop (see www.pellcert.eu).

The discussions during the workshop showed that the road to sustainability scheme is still very complex but there is an increasing agreement on the way forward with environmental NGOs. The NGOs, however, would like to go further and include the carbon neutrality issue as well as land use change impact in the CO₂ calculation. AEBIOM, however, prefers to clarify the forest dynamics in terms of carbon cycle first, as this issue is poorly understood. For more information on this issue, read the text on sustainability under AEBIOM position chapter.

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► Arnold Dale elected as chairman of EIPS

The second meeting of the European Industrial Pellet Suppliers (EIPS) took place in Brussels on 10-11 January 2012. Arnold Dale, representing the Ekman Group, was elected to chair the EPC working group. Ludger Spohr from Vis-Nova Trading was elected as vice-chair. The group agreed on a common position regarding specifications of industrial pellets and discussed sustainability and certification issues. Topics for the upcoming meetings were defined covering agro-pellets, health and safety, cooperation in logistics and insurance matters.

The next meeting will take place on 18 April within the conference Argus European Biomass Trading 2012. In particular, the EIPS intends to act as counterpart to the Industrial Wood Pellet Buyers group (IWPB) in defining the framework for the rapidly evolving industrial pellet market. The EIPS is open to European industrial pellet producers, traders and trade associations. For further information and the minutes of the meetings, click on read more.

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► New FP7 projects help to ensure a proper development of pellets sector

AEBIOM together with other EPC members became partners in new research projects. The objective of SafePellets (Safety and quality assurance measures along the pellets supply chain) is to develop the guidelines for quality assurance measures along with the pellets supply chain and solutions for safe handling and storage of pellets. During the project, methods for the assessment of off-gassing and self-heating will be developed. Another project called AshMeIT (development of practical and reliable ash melting test for biomass fuels, in particular for wood pellets) aims at closing an important gap in the standard testing procedures for solid biomass fuels. Bioenergy2020 from Austria is coordinating both projects.

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► New ENplus website is launched!

The new website informs about the on-going ENplus implementation across Europe and provides the references and websites to the national pellets certification systems. Furthermore, it gives all the information concerning the development of the ENplus system (PellCert project, see direct link www.pellcert.eu). One of the highlights

which can be found in the download section: Country reports for AT, BE, DE, ES, FI, FR, IT, HU and SE provides a detailed view about the markets and views on sustainability and certification in those countries.

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▶ ENplus implementation in Switzerland

ENplus is expanding to the Swiss market. proPellets Switzerland has received the ENplus license rights from EPC and has launched a national website with all the necessary information.

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EU ENERGY POLICY FOR RENEWABLES

▶ ITRE votes on energy taxation: lower tax for biogas

The ITRE committee (Industry, Research and Energy) of the European Parliament, on 7 February, was voting on the amendments to Energy Taxation Directive. This is, however, not the last vote at the European Parliament on this Directive. On 29 February, the vote will take place in the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee – a committee responsible for the EP report on the issue (rapporteur MEP Astrid Lulling) and the final vote in the plenary is planned in March.

Several amendments that will have an impact on bioenergy sector (if agreed in later stages as well) were voted for on 7 February:

- The EC proposed that MS should be allowed to exempt the general energy consumption tax on biofuels until 2023. ITRE restricts it by adding a condition that these biofuels should be exempt only until the market share of biofuels reaches 5 %.
- Regarding natural gas and biogas, ITRE voted that natural gas and biomethane used for transport should be exempt from taxation at least until the proportion of RES in transport reaches 10%. The Committee would like to see that the general energy consumption tax on natural gas is reduced as follows:
 - 1€/GJ from 2013 instead of 1.5 €/GJ;
 - 1€/GJ from 2015 instead of 5.5 €/GJ
 - 1€/GJ from 2018 instead of 9.6 €/GJ
- ITRE has also voted for an amendment to reduce the CO₂ related taxation to 12 euros per ton instead of 20 euros as proposed by the EC from 1 January 2013 for heating fuels and for industrial and commercial uses of motor fuels.

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▶ Only 12 Member States submitted reports on nREAPs

According to RES directive, the EU member states have to report to the EC on the progress made on renewable energy sources every two years. The first reports were expected by the end December 2011. The Commission, until present moment, has received only 12 progress reports on nREAPs: Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom. Currently, it is only two reports (Ireland and UK) that are available in English online.

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► **EC public consultation on legislative instrument on invasive alien species**

The EC has launched a new consultation on invasive alien species, the deadline of which is set for 12 April. While some EU instruments are dealing with the other major causes of biodiversity loss - namely habitat change, climate change, overexploitation and pollution – there is currently no comprehensive instrument at EU level to tackle invasive alien species. It is a new initiative at the EU level, therefore it is of utmost importance for biomass feedstock producers and importers. This consultation is of relevance for some crops used today including fast growing trees such as Robinia which is included in the list of 100 most dangerous invasive alien species. This list also includes some grasses and macro-algae species.

The European Commission is actively seeking for the information on Robinia and alien invasive species used in forestry. Please contact us at info@aebiom.org for more information.

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AEBIOM POSITION ON EU POLICY

► **AEBIOM response to EC consultation on Renewable Energy Strategy**

AEBIOM, on 7 February, has submitted its' response to the EC consultation on Renewable Energy Strategy stating that a mandatory RES target of 45 % is necessary and appropriate measures to support the heat sector.

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► [Read AEBIOM response](#)

► **AEBIOM working group on sustainability – still a complex issue**

AEBIOM, on 25 January, has organized a working group on Sustainability. The main topics discussed were the EC upcoming report on sustainability of solid and gaseous biomass and the carbon neutrality related issue.

The European Commission was supposed to publish a report on sustainability by the end of 2011. However, this process was delayed as several EU member states notably Finland, Sweden, Austria and Baltic States are against the introduction of sustainability criteria at European level (countries with high biomass share). In this context, the European Commission organized a meeting with Member States on 23 January 2012 where AEBIOM presented its' (favourable) position on the introduction of sustainability criteria.

On the other hand, countries such as Netherlands, Belgium, United-Kingdom, Germany, and France are in favour of mandatory sustainability scheme. This member states disapproval delays the EC decision on introduction of mandatory sustainability criteria.

The workshop participants discussed whether a threshold of 20 MW is appropriate for such criteria as it is important to ensure that small stakeholders are not forced to leave bioenergy market. However, in this case, leakage would occur. One option could be to apply sustainability criteria to 20 MW applications first and gradually decrease the threshold until it becomes functional. It was also said that probably the most appropriate way to apply sustainability criteria is to apply it at a producer level.

Another topic was a carbon neutrality issue. AEBIOM thinks that there should be different cases distinguished when discussing the carbon cycle: un-used forests, sustainably-managed forests and over-exploited forest (exploitation of more than the annual forest growth). Carbon stock is indeed questionable in unused forests (due to fires, disease, saturation) and in over-exploited forests. The current studies, unfortunately, do not take this into account. However, sustainably managed forest stocks significant amounts of carbon whilst providing renewable source for energy and substituting large amounts of fossil fuels.

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► EREC response to EC consultation on Renewable Energy Strategy

EREC has also submitted its' response to the EC consultation on Renewable Energy Strategy. This response represents the position of all RES associations under the umbrella of EREC, including AEBIOM.

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► [Read EREC response](#)

PUBLICATIONS

► EurObserv-ER publishes a report on solid biomass

EurObserv'ER has published a new Barometer on Solid Biomass. The barometer shows that primary production of solid biomass amounted for 79,3 Mtoe in 2010, whilst heat reached the consumption of 66 Mtoe and electricity produced from solid biomass - 67,0 TWh. According to the report, top three countries per capita primary energy production are Finland, Sweden and Latvia. The report is available under read more.

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► EurObserv-ER report on the state of RES in Europe

EurObserv'ER has published a new Barometer entitled 'The State of Renewable Energies in Europe'. This Barometer features all renewable energy technologies in the 27 European Union Member States, the European Union renewable energy shares in 2010, including employment, turnover and highlights of seven EU regions successfully attracting investments in renewable energy. The bi-lingual report is available for free download under read more. The reports shows that RES share in gross final energy consumption reached 12.4% in 2010 and employed 1.11 million people the same year.

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PROJECTS

► IEE call for proposal until 8 May 2012

The IEE has launched a call for project proposals to be submitted by 8 May 2012. The main bioenergy related priorities this year are: efficient use of solid biomass in particular from sustainably managed forests, residues and wastes, biogas and strategic bioenergy initiatives (land use change, sustainability, achievement of the RES targets, interaction between supply chains etc). Biofuels supply chains, bioenergy from dedicated energy crops and electricity production, however, are out of scope this year. Sustainability and resource efficiency is the key to all proposals this year.

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► AgriForEnergyII handbook: PVO as fuel – a forgotten opportunity?

The partners of AgriForEnergy II (supported by IEE programme), under coordination of 3N Kompetenzzentrum e.V., Germany, have published a handbook entitled "Pure Plant Oil as Fuel". The handbook covers all PVO related topics such as current situation in EU member states, legislative framework, sustainability, PVO production technology, quality standards, adaptation of engines to the use of PVO and financial analysis on needed investments for PVO use in CHP and tractors etc.

The use of PVO (mainly from rapeseed and sunflower) provides an excellent opportunity for the farmers to be energy independent and to produce both: fuel for their tractors (and not only) and the press cake for animal feed. In fact, PVO is a by-product of protein production for animal feed (about 30% oil production is a by-product and the rest is protein). It helps to build up a domestic protein production industry and thus reduce the protein feed imports from Brasil and Argentina. In comparison to biodiesel or bioethanol, pure plant oil can be produced in small installations without expensive production technology and using a completely autonomous process.

Despite numerous advantages of PVO, current legal framework for the use of pure plant oil is not satisfactory as it is administered differently in different states. The handbook shows that it is mainly the lack of legislative support, the lack of tax exemptions and obligation that handicaps the sector. On top of it, common European standards covering the use, taxation and quality assurance of these fuels are urgently required.

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[▶ Read the handbook](#)

▶ **Greenpellets project deliverables – brochures on biomass combustion**

The main objective of Green Pellets project (supported by Life+) was to demonstrate that new dedicated energy herbaceous crops for solid biomass provide an effective, sustainable and eco-friendly bioenergy source for heating and significantly reduce the greenhouse gases emissions. Crops dedicated to solid biomass have environmental advantages such as purification capacities or soil erosion prevention. Energy crops development must be carefully managed in order to reach an acceptable balance between food and non-food supply while avoiding any risks for the environment.

As a part of this project, three publications were published and placed online (click on the name to download it):

- [The combustion of herbaceous biomass in low power boilers \(10 to 500 kW\) – test results and recommendations for use.](#)
- [Coopedom – a brochure showing a good practice of biomass use by Coopedom cooperative](#)
- [The development of agrofuel networks – opportunities and limits](#)

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EVENTS

▶ **Biomass Supply: how to meet biomass demand by 2020? Netherlands, 15 March 2012**

This half-day workshop is a free of charge event jointly organized by the European Renewable Heating and Cooling Technology Platform and the European Biofuels Technology Platform, in co-operation with World Biofuels Markets 2012. Demand for sustainable biomass is forecast to increase greatly over the next decade in all sectors - heat, electricity, and transport biofuels. This workshop brings together speakers from various sectors across Europe to discuss the challenge of providing reliable volumes of biomass at competitive cost, while meeting sustainability criteria.

The Biomass Supply Challenges Joint Workshop is a side event to World Biofuels Markets 2012 - the largest and most successful Congress and Exhibition in the biofuels industry, which brings together the entire value chain of the biofuels industry to do business.

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► Teaming up for Renewable heating and cooling, Denmark, 26-27 April 2012

RHC-Platform together with Euroheat & Power are organising a joint annual conference under the auspices of the Danish Presidency of the EU. On this occasion, experts from all over Europe will gather to explore the possibilities for smart cities to use renewable energy and district heating and cooling to provide comfort to their citizens and foster the local economy.

Sessions and roundtable discussions will not only show-case best practices, but will also allow participants to learn about the latest developments in financing, market and technology developments, as well as the legal framework conditions.

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► 3rd AEBIOM European Bioenergy Conference, Brussels, 25-27 June 2012

The **AEBIOM European Bioenergy Conference** organized under the patronage of the **Danish Presidency** is one of the leading bioenergy conferences in Europe. The annual conference has grown ever since its first edition in 2010 and has quickly become Europe's major occasion for exchange and interaction between industry and policy. *Focus 2012: EU legislation, sustainable feedstock supply and market opportunities.*

AEBIOM is happy to announce the patronage of the Danish Presidency and its first 5 sponsors, **Bronze Sponsors** **CPM Europe**, **PUSCH AG** and **Sistemas de Transferencia de Calor**, **EP Dinner Sponsor** **Vattenfall** and large-scale visits sponsor, **VIGAN**.

The programme will be available soon. It will certainly be attractive and promising to all biomass stakeholders especially since the two Commission heads of unit have confirmed their presence.

The event is supported by **26 associations** ([Finbio](#), [Cewep](#), [Irbea](#), [EBA](#), [Cogen Europe](#), [EREC](#), [AEBIG](#), [LITBOMA](#), [Abstraction](#), [AVEBIOM](#), [SVEBIO](#), [Bio-energieplatform](#), [Euroheat&Power](#), [Eustafor](#), [ProPellets](#), [AIEL Associazione](#), [BioPlat](#), [European Pellet Council](#), [Wood Pellet Association of Canada](#), [U.S. Industrial Pellet Association](#), [RHC-Platform](#), [NGVA Europe](#), [EEN](#), [IEE](#), [Sintef](#) and [BTEC](#)).

The conference will also benefit of the support of **20 media partners** ([Argus Media](#), [Bioenergy International](#), [E-Energy Market](#), [Forest Bioenergy Review](#), [EnAgri](#), [EcoSeed](#), [Biomass-Events](#), [Pipeline Clean Energy](#), [RELP](#) [Renewable Energy](#), [Law and Policy Review](#), [Pellets News](#), [Pellets Magazine](#), [TimberWeb](#), [Environmental Expert](#), [Environmental Finance Magazine](#), [PelletsHome](#), [Bioenergy Insight](#), [European Energy Innovation](#), [Renewable Energy Database](#), [Canadian Biomass Magazine](#), [FOEX](#)).

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► Other events

3rd Biomass Trade & Power, Belgium, 22-24 February 2012

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Progetto Fuoco 2012, Italy, 22-26 February 2012

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World Sustainable Energy Days 2012 on 29 February - 2 March in Austria

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4th International Energy Farming Congress, Germany, 13-15 March 2012

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World Biofuels Markets, The Netherlands, 13-15 March 2012

► [Read more](#)

6th International Conference on Biomass Gasification, Germany, 30 March 2012

► [Read more](#)

Bioenergy South-East European Forum, Bulgaria, 28-30 March 2012

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International Congress on Energy Security, Switzerland, 4-5 April 2012	▶ Read more
European Biomass to Power, UK, 11-12 April, 2012	▶ Read more
International Biomass Conference & Expo, Colorado, 16-19 April, 2012	▶ Read more
European Energy Conference 2012, UK, 17-20 April 2012	▶ Read more
Argus European Biomass Trading, UK, 19-20 April 2012	▶ Read more
IBC Leipzig International Biomass Conference 2012, Germany, 24-25 April 2012	▶ Read more
3rd International Conference on Biomass and Waste Combustion, UK, 24-25 April	▶ Read more
World Bioenergy 2012, Sweden, 29-31 May 2012	▶ Read more
EU Sustainable Energy Week, Belgium, 18-22 June, 2012	▶ Read more
NGV Bologna 2012, Italy, 19-21 June, 2012	▶ Read more
CEWEP Congress on Energy and Resource Efficiency, 6-7 September, 2012	▶ Read more
Expobioenergia 2012, 22-25 October 2012	▶ Read more
4th Nordic Wood Biorefinery Conference, 23-25 October 2012	▶ Read more
4th Venice Symposium on Energy from Biomass and Waste, Italy, 12-15 November	▶ Read more
