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In November, the International Energy Agency in Paris published the World Energy Outlook 2009. This publication forecast the rapid decline of the oil production coming from the currently producing oil fields in the next two decades. This trend makes it clear that the issue of supply security will become more important in the future.

The Copenhagen Conference focused on the rapid reduction of CO₂ emissions caused by burning fossil fuels such as coal, gas and oil. This CO₂ emissions reduction can only be achieved by changing the energy system. Thus, there is only one convincing concept to improve the energy security and reduce greenhouse gas emissions: the rapid deployment of renewable energy sources.

AEBIOM has just published new "Bioenergy Statistics" on the development of bioenergy in the last years. The data shows a rapid development of bioenergy in Europe in all market segments such as heat, electricity and bio-fuels.

In the beginning of December, AEBIOM has elected its' new board members during the AEBIOM's General Assembly meeting in Brussels. The following team was elected: H. Kopetz – president (Austria) G. Melin – vice-president (Sweden), and board members: Thomas Siegmund (Germany), Pekka-Juhani Kuitto (Finland), Remigijus Lapinskas (Lithuania), Marcos Martin (Spain), Olivier Bertrand (France) and the secretary general and treasurer of AEBIOM Jean-Marc Jossart.

On behalf of the newly elected board of AEBIOM I wish all our readers:

a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Heinz Kopetz –President

AEBIOM NEWS

▶ AEBIOM launches a new website

European Biomass Association is proud to announce the new AEBIOM website developed by Mardi communications company. The new website aims to better communicate AEBIOM activities and the developments of bioenergy sector in Europe.

Simple, clear and clean design of the new website allows visitors to learn more about AEBIOM and its members, statistics of bioenergy sector, policy updates, events and the benefits of becoming a member. Members will soon have an opportunity to access the intranet that will contain the updates on member issues, policy and thus will strengthen the networking and information exchange amongst our members.

Furthermore, AEBIOM is delighted to announce its' new logo and the updated newsletter design. These, created by the same communications company Mardi gives a fresh look to our position papers, reports and the newsletters.

[Access new AEBIOM website](#)

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▶ New AEBIOM members

A few companies have recently joined AEBIOM as associate members. AEBIOM warmly welcomes:

- PetroAlgae Inc. – a company providing algae biofuel for feed, biodiesel and heat/electricity. AEBIOM welcomes the first AEBIOM member from the US (with its' office in the UK), Melbourne, Florida; www.petroalgae.com
- Balchik Energy - a Bulgarian company, dealing with central heating, energy efficiency, electricity, waste, biogas and at the moment searching for partners for a large scale straw gasification project; www.balchikenergy.com

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▶ **AEBIOM publishes European Bioenergy Statistics 2009**

As the complexity of the bioenergy sector makes it difficult to have a clear picture of the sector, its dynamics and its future potential, AEBIOM has prepared the "European Biomass Statistics 2009" report - a comprehensive collection of data on biomass, mainly based on existing data published in various documents such as Eurostat and EurObserv'Er' publications, in order to contribute to a better understanding and further successful development of bioenergy in Europe. The detailed report will be distributed to all AEBIOM members and a large number of statistics are made publicly available on [AEBIOM website](#), in the new statistics section where the provided tables will be regularly updated with the most recent data.

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▶ **European Technology Platform on Heat- first General Assembly!**

AEBIOM and the secretariat of the Renewable Heating and Cooling Technology Platform are proud to announce that the Platform's first General Assembly will be held under the auspices of the Spanish Presidency (as of 1 January 2010) with the joint support of both the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation and the Basque Energy Board (EVE). The event that is organised in close collaboration with the Spanish Association of Renewable Energy Producers (APPA) will take place on 23 - 24 February 2010 in Bilbao, Spain.

All registered stakeholders of the platform are invited to attend this major event. The online registration will be ready within a few days and the detailed program of the General Assembly will be published in January 2010.

In case you are not a registered member of this platform yet, please download the membership form [here](#) and join today! Participation in the platform is free of charge and on a voluntary basis. For more information and updates on the ongoing work of the platform, visit the platform website below.

[Access the Platform website](#)

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EU ENERGY POLICY FOR RENEWABLES

▶ **The new faces in the European Commission**

The European Commission have recently proposed a college of commissioners for the period 2009-2014. The portfolios of the commissioners proposed by the EC president José Manuel Barroso can be found [here](#).

As a next step, on 11-19 January, the European Parliament will be holding hearings concerning the new Commission. After the hearings, the College of Commissioners as a whole will be subject to a vote of approval by the European Parliament. The most important portfolios for bioenergy sector will be most probably taken by Mr. Günther H. Oettinger from Germany (Energy Commissioner), Mr. Janez Potocnic from Slovenia (Environment) and Mr. Dacian Ciolos from Romania (Agriculture). It is worth to note that a new portfolio for Climate Action was created and it is Ms. Connie Hedegaards from Denmark that was proposed for it.

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▶ **The EC is working on sustainability criteria for all types of biomass**

The Directive for the promotion of energy from renewable sources [RES Directive] indicates that the European Commission, by December 2009, has to publish a report on sustainability criteria of solid and gaseous biomass. The European Commission will publish this report in the beginning of the next year.

According to AEBIOM knowledge, the European Commission does not intend to come up with binding sustainability criteria. The draft report recommends the member states to follow the sustainability criteria as indicated in the RES directive for biofuels and bioliquids and exclude the plants smaller than 1MW. Nevertheless, DG Environment would like to see more stringent sustainability criteria and, thus, the LULUCF (land use, land-use change and forestry) will most probably be introduced within the sustainability criteria. For further AEBIOM views and reflections on this issue, please read the press release of the consortium of European Bioenergy, Forestry and Biogas associations under AEBIOM position section.

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▶ **The European Institutions adopt the Buildings directive**

On 16 November, the final text of the energy performance in buildings directive was agreed between the EP, EC and the Council. This piece of legislation includes the binding requirement to have all new buildings nearly zero energy buildings by 2020 (public buildings by 2018). Nearly zero energy building means a building that

has a very high energy performance. The nearly zero or very low amount of energy required should to a very significant extent be covered by energy from renewable sources, including renewable energy produced on-site or nearby. "Renewable energy produced nearby" means that the RES district heating is also included in the definition of nearly zero energy buildings. Unfortunately, there are only vague measures in the hands of the member states (MS), to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings: MS should set minimum requirements for the energy performance of buildings and building elements. The MS should set the requirements that achieve cost-optimal balance. The cost optimal level should be oriented to the cost that is the lowest and at the same time economic during the expected lifetime of a building. With regard to technical progress, MS will have to review these minimum requirements.

[Read the draft directive](#)

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► **Recast of Energy Taxation directive introduces a CO₂ tax**

The European Commission is writing a recast of the European Taxation directive that includes the introduction of a CO₂ tax for heating and transport fuels (non ETS sectors). Biomass sector would be exempt from CO₂-related taxes. According to the draft recast, from 1 January 2013 member states would have to levy a minimum rate of €30 per ton of CO₂ on transport fuels and €10 per ton CO₂ on heating fuels, based on CO₂ emission factors that are already developed under the EU emissions trading scheme (ETS). Furthermore, taxation calculation is going to be based on energy content and not the volume.

The CO₂-related tax would not be applied to electricity or other energy uses regulated under the ETS.

Between 2010 and 2020 member states would be able to exempt businesses outside the EU ETS from CO₂-related energy taxes, if they make investments that reduce their overall emissions by at least 20%. According to the proposal, nine of the member states that joined the EU since 2004 would be allowed to delay the introduction of CO₂-related taxation before 2021.

Other emissions such as NO_x, particulates will not be taken into account as it depends on the way the fuels are used (engines, way of driving, etc.). Regarding biofuels, it is discussed to decrease the tax further than the CO₂ tax in order to ensure the possibility for biofuels to be competitive, which, however, might not be sufficient if only the CO₂ tax is reduced to zero.

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► **Energy using Products LOT 15 "Small fuel installations"**

In the framework of the Energy using Products directive, the European Commission has commissioned a study to investigate the energy savings potential of small scale solid fuel appliances. The aim of the study is to provide recommendations on how to improve the efficiency and limit the emissions of various appliances including the wood ones such as stoves, pellet boilers, etc. Started in 2007, the study is now about to be finalised, with the following recommendations: the directive should set mandatory minimum efficiency & maximum emission limits (e.g. for PM₁₀, CO, etc.) as well as to introduce a labelling scheme equivalent to the one that is now applied for the white goods (fridges, etc.). After the study is published at the end of this year, two formal stakeholder and member states committees will have to approve the proposal for implementing the measures. It is most likely that these measures will come into force by the end of 2010.

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► **EU electric cars will be high on political agenda**

The EC president Barroso has highlighted in the past the need to develop the electric cars in order to de-carbonize the European transport sector. It seems like the electric cars will be also one of the main priorities of the Spanish presidency.

It should not be forgotten however, that the use of electric cars does not necessarily mean de-carbonising the transport sector and, in fact, might result in a higher carbon footprint than conventional cars. This would certainly happen if the electricity for cars is produced from coal and not from renewable energy. Therefore, only those cars that use the RES electricity should count as "zero emissions" and receive appropriate incentives, which is not the case in the EU regulation at the moment.

European Federation for Transport and Environment has published a study where it gives a good overview on EU legislation related to electric cars and provides realistic advice for policy makers on how to make the transport sector sustainable by using efficient RES based electric cars.

[Read the report](#)

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► **EU consultation on biodiverse grasslands**

The European Commission is calling for stakeholders comments on biodiverse grassland, biofuels and bioliquids via its' public consultation procedure. The deadline for the comments is set for 2 February 2010.

The sustainability requirements of the Renewables Directive 2009/28/EC establish that raw materials used for the production of biofuels and bioliquids may not be produced on land that had the status of highly biodiverse grassland in or after January 2008. The objective of the consultation is to gather views on the definition of such grasslands as well as the ranges of highly biodiverse grasslands. This will feed into the drafting of a Commission Decision on the establishment of criteria and ranges of highly biodiverse grasslands for the RES directive (2009/28/EC).

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AEBIOM POSITION ON EU ENERGY POLICY

► European Biomass, Forestry and Biogas associations support non-binding sustainability measures for solid and gaseous biomass

The Consortium of European Biomass Associations (AEBIOM and EUBIA), European Forestry associations (EUSTAFOR, CEPF and NSF) and European Biogas Association (EBA) have published a press release supporting the European Commission in its intentions to go for non-binding sustainability criteria for solid and gaseous biomass for heat and electricity. The report on sustainability of biomass other than biofuels and bioliquids should be published by the end of this year by the European Commission and, according to the knowledge of consortium; the European Commission intends to propose the recommendations (this means non-binding criteria) to the Member States to apply the same sustainability criteria for biomass as it is established for biofuels sector in the RES directive. According to the Consortium, this is the right way forward as there are very low risks for biomass for heat and power to be unsustainable. Forestry related sustainability framework and cross compliance rules ensure the sustainability of biomass in Europe and due to the growing forests area, there are even fewer risks for such biomass to be unsustainable. The consortium also expresses its support to the European Commission for the exclusion of small scale biomass producers. This, if proposed in the final report, would ensure that the small scale biomass producers/users do not switch from biomass to fossil fuels due to the administrative barriers.

[Read the press release](#)

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► EREC welcomes the Energy Performance in Buildings directive

EREC has issued a press release on Energy Performance of Buildings directive on 18 November. The press release supports the agreement between the European Parliament, Council and the Commissions on this directive saying that "this is a first step in the right direction especially regarding the binding requirement to have all new constructions by 2020 as "nearly zero energy buildings" - the definition that includes a significant amount of RES. However, EREC regrets that the recast of this directive does not entail specific targets for refurbished buildings that represent 99% of all buildings and is the main cause of CO₂ emissions in the buildings sector. The Energy Efficiency Action Plan should, therefore, propose appropriate measures to foster the integration of renewables in such buildings in combination with energy efficiency measures.

[Read the EREC press release](#)

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► EREC criticizes Eurelectric study

EREC responded to the the Eurelectric study "Power Choices: Pathways to carbon-neutral European electricity by 2050" that was presented to the European Parliament on 10 November. According to EREC, Eurelectric lacks the ambition to tackle the climate change. It is unambitious because renewable energy can and will produce far more energy than Eurelectric forecasts. It is difficult for the RES industry to understand why Eurelectric assumes it will take 40 years (until 2050) to reach about one third of renewable energy electricity given that the European Commission itself believes that we will reach a share of 33 per cent already thirty years earlier – in 2020. Further to that, EREC questions the calculation methodology of the targets within the Eurelectric study.

[Read the EREC press release](#)

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PUBLICATIONS

► A handbook on energy crops for heat and power for energy producers

Within the ENCROP project (Promoting the production and utilisation of energy crops) funded by Intelligent Energy for Europe programme, the project partners have recently published a handbook on energy crops for heat and power production. The book covers the reed canary grass, willow, hemp and poplar as well as the a chapter on biogas production from energy crops.

[Read the handbook](#)

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► **EurObserv'ER releases Solid Biomass Barometer**

Primary energy production from solid biomass in the EU increased by 2.3% in 2008 which represents 1.5 million tonnes of oil equivalent more than in 2007. This growth was particularly seen in electricity production from solid biomass that increased by 10.8% as compared to 2007, with an additional 5.6 TWh. All leading producer countries have remained the same as in 2007 (Germany, France, Sweden, Germany, Finland and Poland) representing 57% of primary energy production coming from solid biomass. Ranked on a per capita basis, Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia and Austria are the top-5 countries relying to a large extent on solid biomass (ranging from 1.3 to 0.5 toe/inhabitant).

Beside the statistics, the EurObserv'Er analyses the renewable energy policies, selected country reviews, industry overview and provides a projection for the year 2010.

[Read the barometer](#)

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► **EurObserv'ER barometer on Biofuels**

Biofuels barometer informs that biofuels growth represented 28,5% within the consumption of biofuels for transport in the EU between 2007 and 2008.

With almost 10 million tons of oil equivalent (Mtoe), biofuel consumption in 2008 represented a share of 3.3% in the total consumption of fuels used in the EU transport sector. The increase of 28.5% between 2007 and 2008 is comparatively low compared to the increase of the biofuels between 2006 and 2007 that equals 45.7%. It is certain that EU countries will have to double their efforts in the next two years to come into line with the European biofuels directive which aims for an incorporation rate of 5.75% by 2010.

[Read the barometer](#)

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► **A study on Future Bioenergy and Sustainable land Use**

The German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) has published a study on "Future Bioenergy and Sustainable Land Use". The aim of the study is to provide policy makers clear guidance on the use of bioenergy. The main message of this study is that biomass use should be made of the global sustainable potential of bioenergy, provided that risks to sustainability can be excluded. In particular, the use of bioenergy must not endanger food security or the goals of nature conservation and climate protection. Since wastes and residues raise far fewer problems than energy crops, the priority should therefore be given to the use of wastes and residues. The study highlights that bioenergy should contribute to mitigating climate change by replacing fossil fuels. The fact that bioenergy carriers can be stored and used to provide control energy in power grids can make a strategically important contribution to stabilizing electricity supplies when there is a high proportion of wind and solar energy in the energy systems. Furthermore, the use of bioenergy can help to overcome energy poverty. In the first place this involves substituting the traditional forms of bioenergy use in developing countries that are harmful to people's health. Modern yet simple and cost-effective forms of bioenergy can play an important part in significantly reducing energy poverty in developing and newly industrializing countries.

The WBGU has also published a short summary of this publication that can be found [here](#).

[Read the study](#)

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EU PROJECTS

► **BAPdriver conference on nREAPs within the Sustainable Energy Week**

Within the Sustainable Energy Week, the partners of the BAPdriver project (under IEE programme) will organise a conference on National Action Plans. The event will take place on 25 March in Brussels and aims at helping the member states to establish their national renewable energy action plans (the biomass part). The event on 25 March will be public and there will be soon an opportunity to register on Sustainable Energy Week

website at www.eusew.eu.

The RES action plans have to be submitted by the member states in June 2010. The Member States are required to set the policies through which they aim to achieve the renewables target. Ideally, Member States should evaluate their policies and make the use of the public spending more efficient.

Further information on these topics is available on the project website.

[Project website](#)

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► EUBIONET project results

EUBIONET III is an Intelligent Energy Europe project focused on important to biomass sector issues such as biomass trade, biomass fuels prices, sustainability criteria, standards etc. EUBIONET III is a continuation of the EUBIONET II project.

The country reports on biomass fuel trade are already available on Eubionet website. The reports analyze the biomass potentials, trade opportunities and barriers. On the current solid biomass in Europe, preliminary results indicate that roughly about 50% (1.5 TJ) of the total potential (3 TJ) is utilized. According to traders in various European countries, the main two barriers included raw material availability (mentioned in Austria, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, but not in the Baltic countries) and logistics (mentioned by traders from Latvia, Portugal, Sweden), including high prices for truck transport, lacking intermediate storage capacity, and environmental concerns regarding long-distance transport by truck.

As regards to sustainability issues, certification for solid biomass is seen as a clear opportunity, but the possible costs and a variety of systems might cause additional barriers for trade. Furthermore, use of a uniform EU-wide standard for industrial & non-industrial wood pellets seems highly recommendable.

[Project website](#)

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► Qualicert project – qualification of small scale biomass installers

This Qualicert project is an IEE project focused on certification schemes for installers of small scale renewable energy installations. QualiCert will conduct a concerted action among different Member States on this topic. The QualiCert project will be useful for both the EU and national agendas as the certification schemes will have to be addressed in the National Renewable Energy Action Plans that Members States will have to submit to the European Commission by June 2010.

In order to guarantee the best possible support to the future accreditation and certification scheme, QualiCert is relying on an interdisciplinary multi-stakeholder approach involving builders and installers. Within this project, it is planned to establish a High Level Steering Group (HLSG) in order to have a wide consultation and guidance process. This group will be closely associated to the project implementation and will have a strategic role on the overall planned activities. By being a member of QualiCert HLSG, you would have the opportunity to *contribute/anticipate the Directive on the promotion of RE implementation*.

Those that decide to become an active member of the Qualicert HMSG, will be requested to:

- review project's deliverables and provide feedbacks
- participate in HLSG meetings in Brussels (June 2010, December 2010, June 2011 and December 2011).

The HLSG will have a special visibility on project deliverables and a dedicated area will be reserved for exchanges on QualiCert website.

Therefore, AEBIOM invites its members and other relevant stakeholders to contact AEBIOM in case they have an interest in this topic.

Furthermore, the QualiCert website has been already launched and visitors can access not only the project deliverables and project events but also the project newsletters issued once every three months.

[Project website](#)

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► FP7 call for proposals

The FP7 work programme has been adopted by the European Commission on 30 July and a large number of calls for proposals have been published on the website,

An overview of all open energy-related topics - topics related to energy but also all other relevant FP7 programmes and themes are available on the CORDIS website: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/energy/open-topics_en.html.

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EVENTS

► **RENEXPO® Bioenergy EUROPE & AEBIOM European Bioenergy Conference, Brussels, 30 June – 1 July, 2010**

With the growing importance of bioenergy in Europe, the European Biomass Association AEBIOM and the REECO Group have gathered together to organize an international trade fair and conference for bioenergy – RENEXPO® Bioenergy EUROPE & AEBIOM European Bioenergy Conference. The event will take place on 30 June – 1 July, 2010 at Albert Hall in Brussels, Belgium.

AEBIOM European Bioenergy Conference will focus on current EU legislation and recent developments of bioenergy market in Europe as well as the state of the National Renewable Energy Action Plans. The event will serve as a platform for bioenergy market actors to exchange ideas and information as well as a discussion forum with policy makers. The main topics will cover the following issues: biomass supply, certification, biogas, biofuels, heating, electricity, financing bioenergy projects.

The premiere of RENEXPO® Bioenergy EUROPE will take place at the same time. Around 60 international exhibitors representing bioenergy/bioenergy technology producers and suppliers as well as experts from research and development, associations, media, governmental agencies and administrations are expected to participate in the trade fair. They will present their products, services and latest innovations to an estimated number of 1,200 visitors and 300 conference participants.

“The renewable energy directive has set ambitious objectives for 2020 for each member state of the European Union. Bioenergy, which represents 2/3 of renewables is expected to play a key role and its use should treble in the coming 10 years. All markets for heating/cooling, electricity and biofuels for transport are expected to rise significantly. Improved framework conditions and support schemes will create new bioenergy market opportunities, both for small and large companies.” – Heinz Kopetz, President of AEBIOM.

Further information can be found at : www.renexpo-bioenergy.eu

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► **World Bioenergy 2010 Conference and Exhibition on 25- 27 May, Jonkoping, Sweden**

The World Bioenergy 2010 conference in Jonkoping, Sweden is a major global bioenergy get-together based on the unique "Taking you from Know-How to Show-How" concept that combines all: the conference sessions, field excursions and tradeshow into one extraordinary event.

The overall focus will be on applied and currently available technology, as well as efficient, sustainable and cost efficient solutions, in short, on bioenergy solutions that work. The conference will focus on the following topics:

- Combined heat and power, combustion, heating and co-firing
- Forest residues – slash, stumps, small tree harvest
- Pellets – the new large energy commodity
- Waste to Energy – works in every society
- Energy crops, agricultural residues and by-products
- Biofuels for transport
- Policy – how to make it all happen

Each of these topics will be complemented by exhibitors in the trade fair as well as daily study tours.

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► **AEBIOM conference on nREAPs within the Sustainable Energy Week on 25 March, Brussels**

Within the Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels, on 25 March 2010, AEBIOM is organising a conference on National Renewable Energy Action Plans. The event aims at helping the member states to establish their national renewable energy action plans (the biomass part). The registration to the event will be soon possible on Sustainable Energy Week website at www.eusew.eu.

The RES action plans have to be submitted by the member states in June 2010. The Member States are required to set the policies through which they aim to achieve the renewables target. This conference provides Member States an excellent opportunity to better prepare/evaluate their policies beforehand. These policies, if selected carefully, could make the use of the public spending more efficient.

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