



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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ENV 208
AGRI 106**

NOTE

from:	Council Secretariat
to:	Delegations
No prev. doc.:	7446/06 ENER 104 ENV 188 AGRI 96
Subject :	Biomass Action Plan – Draft Council Conclusions

Delegations will find attached a first outline of draft Council Conclusions, submitted by the presidency on the basis of the synthesis report as in document 7446/06 and in the light of written and oral comments received from Member States and the Commission (Annex I).

This note also contains a timetable outlining the handling of this dossier in the run-up to the TTE Council (8 June) (Annex II).

Draft Council conclusions

on
Biomass

The Council,

EAGER TO RESPOND to the call of the European Council regarding the implementation of the Biomass Action Plan,

WELCOMING and Supporting the Commission Communication on a Biomass Action Plan (doc. 15741/05),

WELCOMING the Commission Communication on an EU Strategy for Biofuels (doc. 6153/06),

UNDERLINING that the use of biomass as an energy source should be increased,

CONVINCED that an increased use of biomass contributes to the three main objectives of energy policy by

- enhancing security of supply through the diversification of energy supply sources;
- enhancing competitiveness through the development of new technologies and providing economic development and employment opportunities in rural areas;
- promoting sustainability through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and an increase of the share of renewable energy sources;

AGREEING that action is needed for an increased use of biomass in the following three areas:

heating and cooling, electricity production and transport;

RECALLING

- the Council conclusions on renewable energy of November 2004, in particular the chapter on a biomass energy action plan (doc. 14314/04),
- the importance of Directive 2003/30/EC on the promotion of the use of biofuels or other renewable fuels for transport and of Directive 2001/77/EC on the promotion of electricity produced from renewable energy sources in the internal electricity market for the use of biomass as an energy source;

UNDERLINES the following *general principles* with respect to the definition of a biomass policy:

1. An *integrated approach* should be followed which takes account of sustainability and environmental issues, in close cooperation with the agricultural sector and addressing questions of socio-economic, fiscal, trade and industry policy nature.

2. The principle of **subsidiarity** should be respected, giving **flexibility** to Member States to
 - develop their own specific policy approach and determine individual goals,
 - choose the type(s) of biomass and energy crops and the areas in which biomass is used,
 - decide on the instruments for the promotion of bioenergy and on the instruments to achieve cost-effectiveness,
 - chose the tools for achieving the objectives of the Directive on electricity from renewable energy sources.
3. **Cost-efficiency** should be the guiding principle, at national and at EU level, for an ecologically rational promotion of bioenergy, built upon an economically sustainable, long-term financial basis.
4. **Competition** between energy and non-energy uses of biomass and **competing land use** should be avoided.
5. **A balanced approach** regarding domestic production and imports of biomass should be found, taking account of the interests of domestic producers and WTO commitments whilst avoiding to create new import dependencies.
6. **Implementation of existing legislation** should be fully completed before the adoption of new legislation.

IS OF THE VIEW THAT THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED AS PRIORITY:

7. **Research, development and demonstration** on biomass, regarding new and efficient technologies for generation and use of renewable fuels, in particular second-generation biofuels, efficient boiler technologies, and bio-refinery,
8. The creation of a **well functioning, transparent and open market for biomass**,
9. The **removal** of technical and non-technical including administrative **barriers** at EU and at national level,
10. **Information campaigns** targeted at farmers, local authorities, the energy sector and consumers,
11. **Cogeneration and district heating**,
12. Adoption of **technical standards** for transportation fuels containing **more than 5% biofuel** components.

EMPHASISES

13. The role that **public procurement** can play for the promotion of biomass and its increased use, *i.a.* through the promotion of clean and energy-efficient vehicles,
14. The role of **voluntary agreements** which are a valuable alternative for the promotion of biomass use,
15. The importance of **woody biomass** and the development of a **European spot market** in pellets and chips,
16. In line with commitments taken at the WSSD, the **benefits** that sustainable use of biomass can have for **developing countries**, and the importance of transferring energy technologies compatible with sustainable development to these countries.

WELCOMES THE COMMISSION'S INTENTION TO

17. Bring forward a **Forestry Action Plan**,
18. Assess the **Energy Crops Scheme**,
19. Examine how biofuel use can count towards the **CO₂ emission reduction targets** under a global perspective,
20. Further encourage the development of an industry-led **biofuel technology platform**,
21. Review the existing standard **EN 14214**, *i.a.* with a view to including other forms of biomass and to allowing ethanol to replace methanol,
22. Encourage the development of biofuels **quality standards** and of related equipments.

URGES MEMBER STATES TO

23. Link support to the achievement of **high energy efficiency** levels and tangible, **cost-effective benefits** for the environment and security of supply,
24. **Achieve** the already established **targets** for biofuels,
25. Create a **favourable** regulatory environment for **investments** in biomass production and the appropriate equipment and provide **medium- to long-term certainty** for investors including as regards appropriate support schemes.

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO

26. Take account of the abovementioned priorities,
27. Initiate shortly a discussion about the *sustainability* of biomass at European level and to inform about the *compatibility* of minimum sustainability standards for biofuels with the *Common Agricultural Policy*,
28. Inform about all *costs* and *benefits* of the promotion of biomass production within the EU,
29. Establish *efficiency criteria* for biomass installations, using the *Eco-Design Directive*, in particular for household biomass boilers,
30. Revise the *waste* framework legislation in order to encourage the use of biomass and clean waste as fuel and the *animal by-products* legislation with a view to encouraging the use of farming and food processing by-products as a renewable energy source,
31. Simplify administrative procedures in the context of the *CAP* and allow for the application of the current Single Area Payment Scheme to *all* Member States,
32. Address the development of a *European certification system* guaranteeing that biomass is being produced in a *sustainable* way, with the respect of environmental, social and technical standards, and applying to internal production as well as imported biomass.

INVITES

33. Member States to develop or update National Biomass Action Plans in response to the present conclusions,
34. the Commission to carry out an assessment of the actions undertaken as follow-up to these conclusions, including in the light of their contribution to the achievement of the three main objectives of European energy policy, and report to the Council by the end of 2007.

Timetable

MEETING DATE/DEADLINE		ACTION
WPENER	4 APRIL	Discussion on draft conclusions
WPENER		Discussion on draft conclusions
COREPER	24 MAY	Finalisation of TTE preparation
TTE (ENERGY)	8 JUNE	Policy debate / adoption of conclusions on biomass
EUROPEAN COUNCIL	15/16 JUNE	Review of the EU SDS
