



New scientific landscape on biofuels reshapes debate in Brussels

A recent wave of independent scientific data draws a new line between propaganda and reality.cap-driven policy by 2020.

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Brussels, Today - A plethora of scientific studies issued by international organisations, well-known universities and independent consultancies show the contribution that biofuels make to food security, debunking multiple NGOs allegations against the industry.

A new American [study conducted by the University of Illinois](#) concludes in much lower ILUC values for biofuels than suggested by the European Commission. The researchers observed that current ILUC models use lower values for increasing yields than actual observed data trends, based on the EU IFPRI model. The authors confirmed that there is a 95% difference in the values that European Commission has calculated, mainly due to improved understanding as regards land use, crop yields and forest use in the EU, Canada and the US.

On prices, the [World Bank](#) recently concluded that oil is responsible for 2/3 of food price increases and that the role of biofuels in food commodity prices has been exaggerated. Ecofys, the independent consultancy used by industry and NGOs, also highlighted the interrelation between the oil and food prices and confirmed that biofuels contributes to food security and price stability.

“This [Ecofys study](#) represents a major step in understanding the interrelation of biofuel production and food prices. It reveals the limited impact that biofuels production has had on food prices and recognises the importance that co-products have on managing land use pressure,” commented Carlo Hamelinck, the author of the new report.

Land grabbing is also a focus of this debate. The [Land Matrix Global Observatory](#) recently stated that the global levels of land grabs has been massively exaggerated and known land grabs have not been driven by biofuels. This is corroborated by the [United Kingdom's Overseas Development Institute](#) who found that claims of land grabbing for biofuels in developing countries are not supported by evidence.

The pressure to correct data and propose a more accurate input to policy makers was evident with the IISD study when the authors publicly admitted that their findings on subsidies to biofuels were incorrect and overinflated. This *gaffe* was confirmed by a [separate Ecofys report](#) which finds the figures were exaggerated by at least 50-60%.

“When you have a look at all the recent scientific and independent evidence, it is clear that we have a sustainable and competitive ethanol industry here at home in Europe. The upcoming vote in the European Parliament should be about how to promote growth and investments or even how to create more than the existing 70,000 jobs in the next decade and beyond. These are the important facts. The alternative is to take the stick and punish consumers, workers and industry for the sake of ideology, contradiction and uncertainty. The two road exits are clearly defined. We call on MEPs to make the best choice for Europe and to endorse the position of the ITRE Committee”, commented Rob Vierhout, Secretary General at ePURE.

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ePURE represents the interests of European renewable ethanol producers to the European Institutions, industry stakeholders, the media, academia and the general public. Based in Brussels, ePURE represents 55 member companies throughout 18 member states, accounting for 90% of the installed renewable ethanol production capacity in Europe. The organization, established in 2010, promotes the beneficial uses of ethanol throughout Europe.

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