



AEBIOM NEWSLETTER

September/October 2008

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This year the European energy policy is dominated by the negotiations and discussions about the new directive on renewable energy sources. In September the energy committee of the European Parliament voted on the Directive adding many amendments to the proposal made by the Commission. In the meantime, several working groups in the Council are working on this piece of future legislation.

Main issues are the biofuels target, sustainability issues, national action plans and the flexibility mechanism.

In this AEBIOM Newsletter we will inform you about these topics and the position of AEBIOM on key questions of this discussion. On the basis of several position papers we present the standpoint of the Biomass Community to the decision makers.

AEBIOM hopes that the main decisions in the Council on this Directive will be taken this year under the French Presidency. Then the work on the implementation of this Directive could start in 2009.

Present biomass situation shows that with the new directive the target of 220 Mtoe biomass for energy in 2020 seems attainable. According to EUROSTAT, the contribution of biomass to the energy supply developed rapidly in the last couple of years, from 72 Mtoe in 2004 to 89 Mtoe in 2006.

Heinz Kopetz –President

AEBIOM NEWS

► New AEBIOM members

Three national associations and two international companies working in biomass field have recently joined AEBIOM.

AEBIOM welcomes the new members:

- Latvian Biomass Association LATbionrg
- UK Renewable Energy Association REA
- France Biomass Energy Association - FBE
- Schiedel AG – boilers and stoves manufacturer
- Windhager Zentralheizung GmbH - boiler manufacturer
- Energies Alternatives SPRLU – retailer of boilers and stoves

AEBIOM is now proud to count 33 national bioenergy associations and 66 direct associated members (mainly companies). Our associations have many members which means that AEBIOM represents more than 4000 stakeholders in Europe.

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► Forest owners' declaration in favour of wood mobilisation in Europe

A high level seminar was organised in the Compiègne castle in France on 25-27 September. The event was organised by the French Forest Cooperatives Federation (UCFF) that hosts the French Biomass Association – a full member of AEBIOM since mid 2008.

During this event a public declaration was presented acknowledging ambitious EU renewables targets and the EU forest/biomass action plans. However, it was underlined that a possible gap between supply and demand might occur if wood supply is not further mobilised. Therefore, European Forest Producers Organisations (CEPF) stresses the need to go into undermanaged forests and insist on cooperation throughout Europe.

Forest based energy goes hand in hand with a well functioning wood market. Wood mobilisation requires high investments in forest management and infrastructure and could be much more funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). More efforts are needed to support the mobilization of wood. A good step forward would be a tax system applicable for the long term activities of private forest owners.

CEPF commit itself to develop an ambitious action plan, improve forest production and harvest in order to increase the European wood supply by 20% from today to up to 2020.

[Read the declaration](#)

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▶ New Pellets plant in Latvia

AEBIOM associate member Latgran has opened on 30 September a new pellet production facility in Jekabpils. The annual output of the plant will be 150 000tons, and will be one of the largest and most modern pellet production facilities in Europe.

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▶ AEBIOM is looking for a Bioenergy Expert

AEBIOM is looking for Bioenergy Expert to start in November/December in Brussels office. For more details or to apply please download the document below. The deadline for applications is 20 October.

[Read the document](#)

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EU ENERGY POLICY FOR RENEWABLES

▶ European Parliament's vote on RES directive

The European Parliament (Energy, Industry and Transport Committee) has voted on Renewables directive on 11 September. On the basis of this vote and the document prepared by the French presidency the European Parliament and the Council will try to reach an agreement this year. The directive will be adopted after this agreement is voted in the plenary session of the European Parliament.

The EP vote introduces quite a few changes to the Commission's proposal of renewables directive. There are only positive improvements as regards to bioenergy use for heat, electricity and cogeneration. The biofuels sector, however, is less favoured and sustainability criteria, as voted by the European Parliament, might become a real burden to biofuels production and market development.

European Parliament sticks to binding 10% renewables target in transport

The European Parliament sticks to mandatory 10% renewables target in transport by 2020 and makes the intermediate renewable energy targets including the 5% RES share for transport by 2015 binding. Financial penalties will be applied if the intermediate targets are not met. However, 5% target for 2015 is not very ambitious considering the fact that the Biofuels directive (CE 2003/30) aims at 5.75% biofuels share by 2010.

The European Parliament also sets sub-targets, which is: 20% of the intermediate target and 40% of 2020 RES target for transport should come from renewable electricity or hydrogen, energy from waste, residues and lignocellulosic biomass or algae or feedstocks from degraded land ("degraded land" means land that is not, and has not since 1990 been, forest or wetland, that is not of High Conservation Value or in direct proximity of such land, or inside valuable nature or government protected areas, and that has not been used for agricultural purposes for at least 10 years).

The Parliament voted that the greenhouse gas savings from the use of transport fuels from biomass should be 45% until 2015 and 60% from 2015. However, Council has reached a compromise to set lower CO₂ savings: 35% until 2017 and 50% from 2017 (see the article bellow).

The support mechanism for biofuels, according to the EP vote, shall be proportional to the amount of CO₂ reduction.

Also an important decision was made to include other types of transport within the RES for transport target - "all fuels used in all forms of transport" including maritime transport and aviation.

It is also interesting to note that the contribution from electricity produced by renewable sources and consumed in electric vehicles shall be considered to be two times the energy content of the renewable electricity input.

Too strict biomass sustainability criteria

The European Parliament would like sustainability criteria to be applicable to whole biomass for energy and not only biofuels. These criteria will be imposed not only for the material cultivated in the EU but also outside the EU. Additional sustainability criteria were added to initial Commission's proposal such as: restrictions to use certain peatlands, grassland, wetlands, areas with forest covering of a size of minimum half a hectare with trees of 5m height as well as restrictions to prevent water, air pollution, deterioration of soil quality etc.

Flexibility mechanism will not endanger national support schemes

The Parliament adopted a flexibility mechanism for Member States by letting them to have a joint target (which would incite the investments) or providing a possibility for statistical transfers rather than establishing a virtual trade system as proposed by the Commission. Such flexibility system would not put in danger the existing national support schemes – the national governments will be able to keep the control over their targets and policies to achieve them. In addition, there are provisions in the Parliament's report that do not allow the Member States to cheat on statistics.

Guarantees of origin (without initial virtual trade proposed by the Commission) will be applicable not only for electricity but also for heating and cooling.

Renewable Energy Action Plans

The member states will have to ensure that they reach the binding renewables targets (including interim targets). They will have to explain in detail what measures will be taken to achieve it – the Commission will have the right to reject such a national plan and then a member state has to submit an amended national renewable energy action plan. The Commission will impose penalties (fines) to those Member States that didn't reach the mandatory interim and 2020 targets. Such penalty will be calculated on the basis of shortfall of MWh of renewable energy.

The European Parliament's vote on Renewables directive is available here:

http://www.aebiom.org/newsletter/September2008/EP_vote.pdf

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► European Council has a divergent to the European Parliament position

French presidency is also working on Renewables directive. As compared to the EP vote, the main decisions of the Council are the following:

Rendez-vous clause

The French presidency proposes the introduction of "rendez-vous clauses" in 2014 on the cooperation/flexibility mechanisms and on biofuels. This means that biofuels targets and flexibility mechanism will be reviewed/changed in 2014. The European Parliament proposed only a review clause for biofuels target, however, the Council intends to go further with this idea. The renewable energy sector is worried by this decision as it calls into question the security of investments. The investments might be put on hold until the decision is taken in 2014.

Biofuels

Council thinks to set lower than European Parliament CO₂ savings from biofuels production: 35% until 2017 and 50% from 2017. Furthermore, member states (Council) broadly agree that the 10% renewable energy targets in transport should not be coupled with intermediate targets and should not be divided into sub-targets corresponding to various technologies (see the article above).

Sustainability criteria

The sustainability criteria are similar to the ones proposed by the European Commission (and less severe than the criteria proposed by the European Parliament). The sustainability criteria are set only for biofuels and bioliquids and will have to be aligned with Fuels Quality directive 98/70/EC which is under revision at the moment. The sustainability criteria shall be further established in this Fuels Quality Directive.

As for sustainability for the whole biomass, the Council thinks that the Commission should review in 2010 whether other biomass applications should be included.

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► CEN meeting on sustainability criteria

A new Technical Committee TC383 on sustainability criteria for biomass to energy applications was created within CEN (European Center for Normalisation). The second meeting was held on 16 September 2008. The application of AEBIOM as a member of the technical liaison group has been approved.

The CEN work procedure is still under discussion but we can expect 3 types of activities :

1. Standards: particularly on the criteria defined in the renewables Directive.
2. Technical specifications: for social aspects for example.
3. Technical reports: for indirect land use effect for example.

The work of this Committee will focus on biomass for energy routes, even if these criteria might apply to other end uses of the produced biomass. It covers biofuels and solid biomass. Six working groups have been defined :

- WG 1 Terminology and cross-cutting issues;
- WG 2 GHG emission balance, calculations and fossil fuel balance, using a life-cycle approach;
- WG 3 Biodiversity and environmental issues;
- WG 4 Economic and social aspects;
- WG 5 Verification and auditing;
- WG6 Indirect effect

The minutes can be downloaded here:

http://www.aebiom.org/newsletter/September2008/CEN_minutes_September2008.pdf

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AEBIOM POSITION ON EU ENERGY POLICY

▶ Pellets roadmap for Europe

AEBIOM is finalising a draft paper on pellets roadmap which was elaborated on 26 June 2008, during AEBIOM workshop on "Pellets Roadmap for Europe".

The pellets roadmap will be published soon and will contain clear policy guidelines on how this promising market sector can be further developed in the coming years. So far, pellets sector represents 3% of the final bioenergy use (3,3Mtons used for electricity and 3Mtons for heat), however, according to AEBIOM, this bioenergy sector could represent 14% of bioenergy use in 2020 (75Mtons). This development will occur due to the fossil fuels price increase and because pellets are one of the best renewable alternatives to replace fossil fuels in the heat sector and especially in domestic households. The heat demand in Europe represents about 50% of total energy demand and house heating represents 46% of the final heat demand in Europe. Nevertheless, such development will require some efforts at European and national levels. First of all, the pellets should be part of the National Renewable Action Plans that will be required by the upcoming renewables directive. Pellets quality standards, pellet equipment standards/label and related services have to be defined at European level. Even though pellets (for heat) are cheaper than fossil energy (for heat), national incentives such as subsidies are needed for this sector to develop because relatively high investments are required to switch from fossil fuels to pellets use.

In the past, a boom in Europe's pellet market has resulted in a shortage of pellet supply and consequent increases in price. This period is over as the supply is now sufficient. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure a proper market growth for the future. Therefore, this roadmap will also provide recommendations on how to ensure the pellet supply as well as proper distribution.

A press conference was also organised by AEBIOM on 30 June on this topic.

Presentations of the workshop are available on AEBIOM website under Events section www.aebiom.org.

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▶ AEBIOM position on EP vote on RES directive

AEBIOM has prepared a position paper on European Parliament vote on RES directive.

New biomass definition is less favourable for municipal waste

Within the biomass definition "the *separated collected* biodegradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste" was added to the directive by the Parliament. This implies that a significant amount of biodegradable waste will not be recognised as renewable biomass if it was not separated from other waste at the waste collection stage. In the remaining municipal waste, even after efficient source separation, the biodegradable part is still significant (can be as high as ~60%) but, if this definition remains as it is, this part of bioenergy will not be counted towards renewable energy contribution.

Biofuels

AEBIOM supports the European Parliament on its decision to keep the mandatory biofuels target though thinks that 5% target for 2015 is not very ambitious considering the fact that the Biofuels directive (CE 2003/30) aims at 5.75% biofuels share by 2010. AEBIOM believes that there is no need for sub-targets of the biofuels targets but supports the mandatory aspect of intermediate targets. Also, these targets will be reviewed in 2014 and might be modified which does not ensure investment security and does not provide a clear signal for oil companies to start using biofuels.

The Parliament voted that the greenhouse gas savings from the use of transport fuels from biomass should be 45% until 2015 and 60% from 2015. These levels are too high for European biofuels and might favour imported biofuels. AEBIOM supports biofuels produced in Europe because they: provide valuable by-products for the feed industry, increase energy security supply, and give socio-economic advantages for Europe.

Therefore, AEBIOM supports the Council's compromise to set lower CO₂ savings: 35% until 2017 and 50% from 2017.

Biomass sustainability criteria

AEBIOM thinks that biomass should certainly be produced in a sustainable way, nevertheless, the sustainability criteria as amended by the European Parliament might create unnecessary barriers for biomass use and result in favourable conditions for the use of fossil fuels.

It is especially the restrictions related to grassland, peat areas and wetlands that hardly leave any space for biomass production without even solving environmental problems. So far, in 2006 bioenergy represented 65% of all renewables in Europe and will significantly contribute to the 2020 target. However, such severe regulations might significantly reduce environmentally compatible biomass potential. AEBIOM estimates that we need 220 Mtoe available in 2020 to reach the target.

The position will be soon available on the AEBIOM website (www.aebiom.org) under Position Papers section.

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▶ AEBIOM position on sustainability of biomass

AEBIOM has submitted on 30 September its position on biomass sustainability criteria to the European Commission in the framework of a public consultation.

In this position AEBIOM explains what should be considered when defining the sustainability criteria for biomass, proposes the methodology on how to count CO₂ savings, explains how severe rules of sustainability criteria can be counterproductive and deals with the efficiency issues as regards the biomass use.

AEBIOM considers that sustainable forest management defined in the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the derived voluntary schemes for forest (FSC, PEFC, etc.) as well as environmental regulations under the cross compliance scheme for agriculture (mandatory system) are sufficient. Greenhouse gas savings, however, are not considered (yet) as criteria in any certification and, therefore, might be included.

However, as far as certification is concerned, one should take into account :

- the wide variety of biomass coming from forest and wood based industries, wastes streams, agriculture and its by-products. In fact, most of bioenergy comes from by-products;
- the wide variety of stakeholders, including small players. Bioenergy is produced in Europe by tens of millions of small producers and it is impossible to develop a scheme at a reasonable cost for these users;
- the fact that competing fossil fuels have no equivalent financial burdens;
- the risk of environmental damage is larger for imported (large quantities) of biomass.

Generally speaking it makes sense to work for a sustainable forest and agriculture globally, whatever their end use, rather than trying to implement criteria for biomass to energy only. AEBIOM considers that there is no hurry to develop any new certification scheme in Europe for biomass other than transport fuels and bioliquids. We should first gather the experience gained within transport fuels and then evaluate a possible scheme for biomass.

If a European comprehensive scheme is to be proposed by the Commission it should be used on a voluntary basis by the market players for a few years. Such scheme would be a way to test it and after improvement it could be legally binding.

[Read the position](#)

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PUBLICATIONS

▶ Biogas and Renewable Municipal Solid Waste Barometers 2008

EuroObserver has recently published two publications: "Biogas Barometer 2008" and "Renewable Municipal Solid Waste Barometer 2008".

According to the Biogas barometer, European production of primary energy from biogas has reached 5.9 million toe (Mtoe), i.e., 1 Mtoe more than in 2006. These statistics only take into account biogas that is to be exploited, and not biogas that is burned in flares. In 2007, landfill biogas was still the main source (49.2% of biogas energy). Biogas from waste treatment plants (15.0%) was again overtaken by all "other sources" (35.7%), which are mainly agricultural biogas units. The increase in biogas production has been mainly to the benefit of electricity produced by cogeneration (76.1% of the increase in electricity production between 2006 and 2007). Electricity produced by cogeneration now represents 58.4% of electricity production from biogas, compared with 55.3% in 2006. According to this survey, heat production increased by 2.5% to 356.9 ktoe in

the European Union. Half of this production comes from cogeneration units. Heat recovery, whether or not by cogeneration, is aided by the presence of local outlets (heating of buildings, industrial processes, etc.) supplied by district heating systems.

For the first time, EurObserv'ER has published a survey of renewable energy recovery from incineration of municipal waste. This sector of activity, which is entirely linked to the issue of municipal waste treatment, represents a considerable portion of renewable energy production. According to the first available estimations, 6.1 Mtoe of energy was recovered in 2007 in the European Union, i.e., a growth of 6.3% in relation to 2006. The barometers can be accessed on the following website:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/sectors/bioenergy_eurobarometers_en.htm

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► Publication on Biomass "Smart choices in difficult times"

In the last couple of years there was a hot international debate on biomass issues such as food/energy competition. Important questions were debated, however, not always based on real facts and reliable analysis of current situation. As a result, the Biobased Raw Materials Platform made a clear analysis within the biomass sector. It analyses the potential of biobased raw materials for the world food provision; the demand for industrial raw materials and energy, current bioenergy production and the potential, development of agricultural crops, yields, prices etc.

[Read the publication](#)

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► IEA study on policies supporting renewable energy

International Energy Agency made a comparative analysis of policies to promote renewable energy in 35 countries representing all OECD members and emerging economies such as China, India, Russia, Brazil and South Africa. It analyses the support policies in electricity, heating and transport sectors from 2000 to 2005. It speaks about an "energy revolution" and sends a strong signal that RES are no longer a niche market. Next year, the IEA will publish a more detailed report on RES.

[Read the press release](#)

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EU PROJECTS

► BAPdriver – workshop on nBAPS

The Renewables Directive contains provisions for mandatory national renewables action plans. Bioenergy, representing 2/3 of renewables will play a key role in these plans. The process of developing country-specific biomass action plans is the starting point of the European project BAPdriver.

Energy agencies and institutions from eight European countries together with the biomass industry association AEBIOM and a consultancy firm named Eclareon form a European biomass policy group in order to exchange ideas, transfer knowledge and build capacities on biomass strategies and policy options. The participating countries are Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Romania and Greece.

Some example of activities :

- Expert meetings: a meeting of experts in the field of cost-effective support of bioenergy, sustainability criteria and energy from waste was organized on 9 April. Report and presentations available on the project website. The next meeting is scheduled on 10 December in Berlin.
- National meetings are organized within the eight countries mentioned above. The national partners are available for various requests.
- A European Best Practice Guidelines document is under preparation to help national coordinators of the biomass action plans. It contains a benchmarking of existing bioenergy plans and initiatives in 12 member states.
- AEBIOM together with the European Commission is also organising an event on National Biomass Action Plans on 9 February 2009 within the Sustainable Energy Week. The event can be viewed at www.eusew.eu.

Project deliverables can be downloaded from the project website, managed by AEBIOM: www.bapdriver.org

[Read the Commission's presentation on nBAPS](#)

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► CHEUBIO project – report on cofiring technology introduction to China

Project CHEUBIO is a specific support action within the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme.

It is a two year duration project that started November 2006 and concerns the 'development of co-firing power generation market opportunities to enhance the EU biomass sector through international cooperation with China'. The overall objective is to determine and establish the basis by which the EU industrial companies might enter the co-firing power generation market in China, which offers very significant potential.

Recently, project partners produced a topical report presenting an overview of the entire project, setting out the rationale for the work, approach adopted and results obtained, with some emphasis on the policy related barriers to technology introduction together with possible solutions that should ensure a strong take-up of co-firing technology in China (http://www.aebiom.org/newsletter/July2008/Cheubio_deliverable.pdf).

Key project deliverables are made available on the AEBIOM website www.aebiom.org/CHEUBIO. Those organizations that either require further information and/or wish to engage with the Chinese stakeholders should contact Edita Vagonyte at AEBIOM.

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► Bioenergy in Motion project – a movie on innovative heating and cooling technologies is available

In order to promote the deployment of biomass heating and cooling technologies, a movie was made available in June 2008 showcasing successful applications and flagship projects. This movie is now available in two separate DVD versions: both are in the following languages: EN/CZ/EE/BG audio; on top of that one will have EN/FR/DE/ES subtitles, and the other EN/LT/LV/RU/PL/HU/SK/SLO/HR/RO/EL/PT/IT subtitles.

This movie addresses practical potential and possibilities, investment opportunities, and the policy context of biomass heating and cooling. The movie covers applications in individual households and large buildings, block heating and district heating systems, and industries.

The core of the movie consists of implemented projects, interviews with key stakeholders, and information on national and EU policy targets and instruments. Three country-tailored versions of the movie are made, covering Bulgaria, Estonia and the Czech Republic respectively. Each of these movies is made in the national language and in English, plus subtitles in various other languages (mentioned above).

The project is co-ordinated by BTG (The Netherlands) and financed under the Sixth Framework Programme. Further information is available on the project website www.bioenergy-in-motion.com.

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EVENTS

► Bioenergy Contractors meeting on 15-16 October, Brussels

The European Commission Units (Units DG RTD-K3 and DG TREN/D2) are co-organising a contractors meeting for the bioenergy projects funded by the European Commission under FP6 and FP7. The first day of the meeting will focus on international cooperation and on the second day there will be six sessions addressing main technology routes: gasification, biogas, biofuels, combustion, cofiring, CHP, biorefinery. The event is public and beside the exchanges of information it will also serve as a biomass stakeholders meeting place.

[Read the programme](#)

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► 3rd International Bioenergy Conference in Valladolid on 16-18 October

The third international bioenergy conference and fair will be held in Valladolid on 16-18 October 2008. This conference is one of the most important bioenergy events at international level. The success of the first and second editions has made Expobioenergía a unique meeting place for bioenergy industry and a point of reference at international level.

Expobioenergía'08 offers a wide range of activities that will take place in parallel with the exhibition:

- 3rd International Bioenergy Congress
- 2nd edition of the 'Activa Bioenergy' business workshop: companies from Europe and Latin America will be showing professional demonstrations in the exhibition
- Forestry demonstrations and visits to facilities for the production and use of biofuels
- Series of specific work sessions: BIOPAC, BIOMUN etc.
- 3rd Technological Innovation Awards

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▶ RENEXPO® South East Europe 2008 in Bucharest on 19-21 November

For the 1st time, international and Romanian experts meet at RENEXPO® South-East Europe conference in order to exchange the know-how, present practical experiences and provide advices gained through research and development whilst ensuring this knowledge gets quickly transferred into action. The innovation conference takes place over three days and is parallel to the trade fair.

Conference will focus on wood energy, biogas, waste to energy, cogeneration and other types of renewable energy such as wind, solar and geothermal energy. Furthermore, energy efficiency issues will be addressed such as low energy houses and passive houses.

This conference is an international meeting place for decision makers and experts to discuss various topics such as investments, innovation, technology, legislation, EU funds etc. More information is available here: <http://www.renexpo-bucharest.com/conference.html>

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▶ Fuels of the Future 2008 in Berlin on 1-2 December

AEBIOM member BBE together with UFOP is organizing an international conference on biofuels to be held on 1-2 December in Berlin, Germany. The conference will debate the present European and German targets and policies for biofuels as well as the problems to reach these targets and possible solutions to ensure the sustainable and smooth biofuels market development. It is especially issues regarding the sustainability criteria for biofuels, imported biofuels versus biofuels produced in Europe, the methodology for CO₂ calculation, impacts of existing policies to market development, food security, agricultural market development and other issues will be debated. Specific sessions are planned focusing on bioethanol, biodiesel, vegetable oil, biogas and second generation biofuels.

The conference is an annual event and gathers about 800 stakeholders from all over Europe.

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▶ AEBIOM events – workshops on biogas and national biomass action plans

AEBIOM is organising two conferences in the near future in Brussels. First one will be a workshop on biogas where the biogas related problems and solutions will be discussed at European level in the beginning of December. For more information on this workshop, please contact us at info@aebiom.org.

The second AEBIOM workshop will be co-organised with the European Commission and will take place on 9 February within the Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels. The aim of this workshop is to help the national authorities to establish renewable action plans (biomass part) that are required by the upcoming Renewables directive. Registration to this and other events organised within the Sustainable Energy Week is possible online: www.eusew.eu.

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