



AEBIOM NEWSLETTER

December 2008

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Dear Readers,



In the months, since the last Newsletter was published, astonishing developments occurred:

- The European Institutions decided upon a long-term energy and climate package.
- The International Energy Agency (IEA) published its World Energy Outlook 2008 with a revised picture of the energy future. IEA writes about a rapid decline of the oil production, a possible oil supply crunch before 2015 and forecasts that oil prices will reach over 200 Dollar/barrel in the future.
- In the USA a physicist and nobel price winner Steven Chu was nominated as new secretary for energy which is a positive signal for a new energy and climate policy.

This shows the importance of a new energy policy and that rapid development of renewable energies is recognized in many parts of the world.

On the other hand the crude oil price dropped nearly 100 dollars within a few months. Economic crisis temporarily cause oil prices to go down but this will not last long. The present economic situation should be used to implement new policies in favor of renewables thus improving the future energy security and creating many new jobs.

We see a big success in the European Directive on Renewable Energy sources and we are grateful to all people in the Commission, the Parliament and the Council who made this success possible. Now the work will begin to implement this directive and to double the share of renewables in the coming decade.

In the last months AEBIOM was engaged in various activities related to the new Directive, besides this we continued our work to promote bioenergy by publishing a road map for the European pellets industry and organizing a workshop in the European Parliament on biogas as an important energy source. Next year AEBIOM intends to focus on national renewable action plans but before we start this work,

I wish all readers of our Newsletter a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Heinz Kopetz –President

AEBIOM NEWS

► New AEBIOM members

Many companies working in biomass field, have recently joined AEBIOM as associate members. AEBIOM warmly welcomes the new associate members:

- **Austrian Wood Industries Association** (Fachverband der Holzindustrie Österreichs) - represents about 1,500 players of the Austrian wood industry. This association focuses on lobbying the European and international networks, on education and training, collective bargaining, standardization and research and development.
- **Biomaxx Technology GmbH** (Austria) – focuses on establishment of biomass power plants.
- **Paul Rudolf AG** (Austria) - biodiesel producer (Arnoldstein, Carinthia).
- **4Energy Invest** is a Belgian company that aims at creating and managing a portfolio of small to middle-sized locally embedded projects that valorise biomass. 4Energy Invest identifies potential biomass projects, performs a feasibility study and then takes responsibility for developing, financing, constructing and operating the project.
- **EDORA** (Fédération de l'Energie d'Origine Renouvelable et Alternative) – represents the renewable energy sector within the political and economic institutions.
- **ENVIHORIZONT LTD** (Hungary) - environment protection, water quality protection, sewage purification, sludge treatment, research and development, bioenergetical services.
- **Hungarian Bioenergy Competence center** - electricity production, solid biomass fuels, biogas, transport biofuels and other.

- **Hawkins Wright Ltd. (UK)** - is a business consultancy based in London, UK, specialising in the provision of business information and consultancy services to the international forest products industry.

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► **AEBIOM workshop on biogas – recommendations for nBAPs**

AEBIOM, on 11 December 2008, has organised a workshop on biogas at the European Parliament hosted by MEP Eugenijus Gentvilas (ALDE). The aim of this workshop was to elaborate policy recommendations in order to enhance the biogas use. 45 biogas experts attended the workshop and the debates resulted in a list of 33 recommendations. At the end of the workshop these recommendations were voted on by the experts who selected the most important ones for the development of biogas markets in Europe. The presentations of the workshop can be downloaded on AEBIOM website www.aebiom.org. Several important recommendations are presented under this newsletter's section entitled "AEBIOM position on EU policies".

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EU ENERGY POLICY FOR RENEWABLES

► **European Parliament adopts the renewables directive**

After heated debates on the final agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on 9 December and within the European Council on 11 December, the European Parliament, on 17 December, has adopted by a large majority (685 against 25) the renewables directive. The directive will come into force 20 days after it is published in the EU's official journal. This important piece of legislation provides necessary tools to increase the use of renewables (up to 20% by 2020) within the energy system.

Renewables target

The directive sticks to the binding 20% renewables target and 10% biofuels target. The review clause in 2014 will not endanger the 20% target but might only correct the support mechanisms.

Intermediate renewables targets

Commission proposed the indicative intermediate targets for 2014, 2016 and 2018 and despite the European Parliament's will to introduce the mandatory aspect of these targets and the penalties for non-compliance to them, the final agreement goes back to initial Commission's proposal (indicative intermediate targets). The mandatory targets and penalties mechanism would have motivated member states to actively start reaching the target from the very beginning of the period (target reaching period).

National action plans

According to the Commission's proposal for the directive, member states will have to adopt national action plans with national binding targets for heating and cooling, electricity and biofuels from renewables. The Parliament and the Council further agreed that the Commission will have to provide a template for the national action plans by 30 June 2009. Member States will have to comply with this template in the presentation of their national action plans (by 31st March 2010 at the latest).

Flexibility mechanisms

The Council and the Parliament agreed to reject the introduction of guarantees of origin and rely on statistical transfers and joint projects between member states as well as on joint support mechanisms. Such decision will not endanger national support schemes but will give member states flexibility.

Biomass definition

The directive wipes out the "separated biodegradable fraction of waste" from the biomass definition. The European Parliament wanted to introduce such a change which would have excluded a big quantity of biodegradable fraction of waste from biomass definition.

The Council position also disagreed with the Parliament on peat and, therefore, the peat is not excluded from renewable energy definition, however, not entirely included either. According to the directive, biofuels made from crops grown in an area that was peatland in January 2008 should not count towards the transport target unless the cultivation and harvesting of the raw material does not involve drainage of previously undrained soil.

Biofuels and renewable energy for transport

The agreement keeps the binding target of 10% renewable energy in transport. However, electricity use in transport will receive some additional support - for the calculation of the renewable electricity consumed by electric road vehicles, this consumption shall be considered to be 2,5 times the energy content of the renewable electricity input.

Furthermore, the contribution made by biofuels produced from wastes, residues, non-food cellulosic material, and ligno-cellulosic material might be considered to be twice that made by other biofuels.

The agreement with Council did not take up the European Parliament's proposal to set an interim target of 5% by 2015 for renewables in transport fuel.

Sustainability criteria

The sustainability criteria remain applicable only to transport biofuels and bioliquids as proposed by the Commission rather than whole biomass as voted by the European Parliament. The directive indicates that it should be applicable for both European and imported biofuels.

The directive indicates that to count towards the transport fuel target, the use of biofuels must save at least 35% of GHG emissions compared to fossil fuels until 2017 and from 2017 – 50% (or 60% for installations built after 2017).

The sustainability criteria of the directive is similar to the one proposed by the Commission (the biofuels should not be made from raw material obtained from land with high biodiversity value such as primary forest and other wooded land, wetlands, undrained peatlands, forest land with trees higher than 5 metres, areas designated for nature protection purposes etc.). The European Parliament aimed at more severe sustainability criteria. Sustainability criteria is necessary though not if it becomes an unnecessary burden to biomass mobilisation.

[Read the directive](#)

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► European Parliament adopted a resolution on Fuels Quality Directive

The European Parliament, on 17 December, adopted a legislative resolution of fuels quality directive with 670 votes in favour, 20 against and 25 abstentions. The revised fuel quality directive requires fuel suppliers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions produced throughout the life cycle of transport fuels including cultivation (or extraction), land-use changes, transport and distribution, processing and combustion of transport fuels (i.e. fossil fuels like petrol, diesel and gas-oil and also biofuels, blends, electricity and hydrogen) of up to 10% by 2020. The directive also sets out technical specifications for protecting the environment and human health.

[Read the directive](#)

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► Buildings directive – what is coming up?

On November 13, the European Commission has communicated the proposal for recast of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (2008/0223). The European Parliament is now working on this directive. The report will be drafted by a rapporteur Ticaú and published in mid January. Renewable industry hopes that besides the requirements on energy efficiency this directive will include the minimum levels of renewable energy to be used in new or refurbished buildings (that were not included in the renewables directive).

[Read the EC proposal of this directive](#)

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► Common Agricultural policy is being changed

The EU agriculture ministers decided upon changes on the Health Check of the Common Agricultural Policy. The Health Check will modernise, simplify and streamline the CAP and remove restrictions on farmers, thus helping them to respond better to signals from the market and to face new challenges. Among a range of measures, the agreement abolishes arable set-aside and increases milk quotas gradually leading up to their abolition in 2015. Ministers also agreed to increase modulation, whereby direct payments to farmers are reduced and the money transferred to the Rural Development Fund. This will allow a better response to the new challenges and opportunities faced by European agriculture, including climate change, the production of green energy, the need for better water management and the protection of biodiversity.

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AEBIOM POSITION ON EU ENERGY POLICY

► AEBIOM press release on RES directive

AEBIOM has prepared a press release on the recently adopted RES directive by the European Parliament where it congratulates the European Institutions for an excellent work and shows how most decisions will positively affect the biomass sector whilst also explaining a few decisions that are less favourable for bioenergy sector.

[Read the press release](#)

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► AEBIOM open letter to the Commissioner Piebalgs on Biomass Energy

AEBIOM president, Mr Heinz Kopetz, wrote a letter on behalf of AEBIOM members on the key points of biomass use. The letter focuses on the following topics: security of supply, European biomass production, efficiency, rural development, land use change and sustainability.

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► AEBIOM recommendations on biogas

AEBIOM has prepared a set of policy recommendations for the development of biogas sector during AEBIOM workshop on 11 December in the European Parliament. Biogas has been underestimated in the past, however, it has a big potential due to its ability to use a wide range of input including waste products for heat, electricity or renewable energy for transport production. According to biogas expert Jens Bo Holms-Nielsen, 1/3 of bioenergy share can come from biogas by 2020. According to his forecast the biogas use can increase from actual 7 Mtoe to 60 Mtoe in 2020. The biggest part of the input would come from manure, food waste, organic by-products and agricultural crops.

Several most important policy recommendations that received the most support of the biogas experts:

- Regulate/ensure an easy access to the electricity and gas grids (priority for biogas, guarantee, non discrimination, free access).
- Make biogas for transport competitive as compared to natural gas (CO₂ tax and lower excise duties).
- EU should urge MS to ensure the long lasting investment security in nRAP. The regulation should guarantee the long term price.
- Review specific directives such as waste framework directive, water framework directive and nitrates directive in order to take the specific needs of biogas sector into account.
- Fully consider biogas in the European Biofuels Technology Platform (EBTP).
- Accept digestate as a replacement of artificial fertilizer to meet crop needs.
- Introduce incentives for eco-cars (e.g. tax advantages, lower parking fees, allow circulation during high immission period).
- Finalise the biowaste regulations in order to reduce the barriers for biogas use
- Eliminate the barriers to get permissions for building biogas plants.
- Support R&D for energy crops, biogas technology, fermentation biology, efficiency of energy use.
- Allow higher financial support for small scale farm plants using manure.

The presentations of the workshop can be found on AEBIOM website www.aebiom.org The list of recommendations (with explanation) will be available on the website on 23 December.

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PUBLICATIONS

► Eur'observer barometer on solid fuels 2008

In the year 2007 the primary energy production from solid biomass has remained relatively stable in the 27 Member States of the European Union. EurObserv'ER has released its first estimates which point to a total annual energy production of approximately 66.4 Mtoe* in EU-27.

In the year 2006 the primary energy production from solid biomass was 65.7 Mtoe, resulting in a growth in production over the year 2007 of 1%. The winter of 2007 has been relatively warm in Europe, thus lowering the heating requirements. Solid biomass, among others used in district heating systems and domestic wood heating appliances, thus has grown less in 2007 than during the years before.

All countries of the European Union (except Malta) make use of solid biomass for energy purposes. The five leading producer countries (France, Sweden, Germany, Finland and Poland) represent 58% of primary energy production coming from solid biomass. However, ranked at a per capita base, it appears that Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia and Austria are the top-5 countries relying to a large extent on solid biomass (ranging from 1.4 to 0.4 toe/inhabitant).

[Read the barometer](#)

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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 formed 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 are available on the project website. The second meeting was held 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. Please visit the following website www.eusew.eu to view the programme and to register for the Sustainable Energy Week events.

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

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► CHEUBIO project deliverables

Project CHEUBIO was a specific support action within the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme. Two year duration project that started in November 2006 concerns the 'development of co-firing power generation market opportunities to enhance the EU biomass sector through international cooperation with China'. The overall objective was 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.

This project has ended in November this year and key project deliverables (on biomass potential in China, possibilities for EU companies to introduce their technology in China, Chinese legislative framework etc) 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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► EUBIONET project – expert meeting on 12 March

AEBIOM is organising an expert meeting on biomass trade within the EUBIONET III project. The aim of this

event is to identify the most important current market barriers and to develop strategies and solutions to overcome those barriers. Industry players actively involved in biomass trade, representatives from academia studying biomass trade developments as well as NGOs monitoring the increasing biomass trade (and its consequences) will be invited to provide an active input on the identified biomass market barriers and strategies. 'New' industrial sectors like metal and construction industry will be also invited to provide their views on current situation and future prospects (especially in light of CO₂ emissions reduction requirements that these industries have to comply with).

EUBIONET III is a 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.

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► **RESTMAC project deliverables**

RESTMAC project has come to an end and all project deliverables can be found on AEBIOM website including three AEBIOM brochures on pellets, energy crops and forest residues. AEBIOM was one of 11 partners for the RESTMAC project, which was coordinated by EREC (European Renewable Energy Council). The project, developed by a consortium of European renewable energy industry research associations, aimed at developing and implementing a concise, well targeted and thematic approach to ensure the dissemination and uptake of selected RES technologies by the market.

[Read the deliverables](#)

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EVENTS

► **Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels on 9-13 February 2009**

AEBIOM is organizing a workshop in co-operation with the European Commission that 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 Renewables directive. Registration to this and other events organised within the Sustainable Energy Week is possible online: www.eusew.eu.

The EUSEW (EU Sustainable Energy Week) is the key reference for sustainable energy issues in Europe. The events organised during EUSEW cover key topics that highlight the multi-sectoral nature of sustainable energy development and stress the need for everyone to work together towards a common goal: from renewable energy sources to energy efficiency, from EU policy to local action, from distributed energy to planning, from technologies to markets, from legislation to behaviour to education, from buildings to transport.

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► **AEBIOM Conference on energy crops in September 2009 in Poland**

AEBIOM will co-organise together with its Polish member association Polbiom a conference on energy crops for heat electricity and biogas in September 2009 in Poland. The conference is a part of ENCROP project, the aim of which is to promote the production and use of energy crops in Europe. Further information about the event can be found on the project website www.encrop.net

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► **RENEXPO® South East Europe on 16-18 April 2009**

For the 3rd time, national and international experts meet in order to exchange know-how, present experiences from the practice and offer advice gained through research and development and ensuring this knowledge is quickly transferred into action.

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 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.

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► **Nordic Bioenergy 2009 in Denmark on 26-28 May 2009**

Nordic Bioenergy is one of the largest bioenergy events in Europe. Nordic Bioenergy 2009 is a conference that

is organised by the Nordic bioenergy associations Danbio, Svebio, Nobio and Finbio. Danbio is the next year's host of the event which will be held in Aalborg, Denmark, on 26-28 May 2009. This international conference takes place every second year and aims at spreading information and awareness about the most recent developments in bioenergy sector. The conference is held in the Nordic countries as these are known for their cutting-edge technology in the biomass industry. The conference will gather speakers and participants from all over the world. The topics include: CHP, biogas, liquid biofuels, bioenergy markets, security of biomass demand, waste energy and combustion, pellets and woodchips, biomass versus food, peat etc.

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