

# Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels

An initiative of the EPFL Energy Center



ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE  
FÉDÉRALE DE LAUSANNE

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Environment- 7<sup>th</sup> September 2007 Synthesis of the Decisions

### *1. List of participants to the Virtual Meeting:*

Annie Sugrue	Erik Meidell	Lars Laestadius	Philipp Schukat
Barbara Bramble	Flo DiBona	Laszlo Mathe	Rachel Asante
Carlo Pereira	Jay Woosaree	Lera Miles	Richard Donovan
Carmen Virasoro	Jayant Sarnaik	Linda N Thompson	Richard Ottinger
Charlotte Opal	Jennifer Taylor	Liz Marshall	Ruaraidh Petre
Chris Dragsic	Justus von Geibler	Lynette Warren	Sachin Kapila
David McArthur	Kevin Fingerman	Martina Otto	Sebastien Haye
Debbie Hammel	Kirk Leonard	Naomi Pena	Tatiana Botelho
Dominic Blay	Kyle White	Neil Bird	

### *2. News and announcement*

- The conference is being recorded (full record available at: <http://cgse.epfl.ch/webdav/site/cgse/shared/Biofuels/ENV%20WG/Minutes/3rd%20conference%20call/confcall3rdmeeting.mp3>).
- **25-28 September 2007, Basel, Switzerland: ILMAC 2007- Energy and Raw Materials: The Contributions of Chemistry and Biochemistry in the Future.** Charlotte Opal from the RSB secretariat and Teddy Püttgen, Director of the Energy Center at EPFL, are both speaking at the conference.
- **RSB and UNEP are organizing 2 joint events.** (1)Brazil - October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in Belo Horizonte, as part of the EcoLatina conference. Shanghai - Michelin Bibendum Challenge, November 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Annie Sugrue, our new Social Impacts WG Coordinator, and Rauraidh Petre from Solidaridad will also participate in the GreenPower conference (Nov 5 and 6<sup>th</sup>) in Cape Town. Any participants from the WG are most welcome to attend any of these events.
- **Steering Board** conference call on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September. The Steering Board will also meet in person early November.
- The first expert panel is about starting to work on the conservation aspects.

## ***2. Principle on Conservation/Biodiversity***

Although it seems that the discussion still needs time and work, the following points found a temporary consensus:

- The first expert panel will very shortly start working on the conservation aspect (criteria and indicators). Hence, we shall keep the principle open until the criteria are established and in the end it will be easier to set a principle and find the good wording to include everything, once we have all the aspects identified.
- Since the Steering Board needs to know about the orientation our working group is to give to this principle, the current wording is temporarily kept with a clear specification that this principle will be subject to in-depth work by the expert panel and the Working Group, which will hopefully come to consensus on the wording by the end of this year.
- All the remarks are compiled and will be used in the further work on this principle.

## ***3. Principles on soil, water and air***

The Working Group agrees to keep the current wording but the option to positively reword the principles will be submitted to the steering board (maybe a combination of negative/positive wording, as there is no consensus), as well as a request to take a position on the aspirational/idealistic vs. positive/realistic debate for the principle wording.

## ***4. Principle on Biotechnologies***

There is a consensus on keeping the current wording, working out the related risks at the criteria level and keep the possibility of removing the principle on biotechnologies if all the aspects of concern are covered at the criteria level under other principles.

## ***5. Synthesis and next steps***

**Although there is still much work to be done on the wording of the principles, the working group has consensually agreed to suggest the following to the Steering Board as a general orientation, but with the clarification that all the principles will need the subsequent criteria and indicators to be fully developed before finalizing them. This is particularly important for the principle on conservation. Hence, the outputs from the expert panels and the Working Group will be needed in order to agree on a final version. Therefore, the temporary suggestion to the Steering Board is:**

- 3) Biofuel production should not directly or indirectly endanger wildlife species or areas of high conservation value.
- 4) Biofuel production should not directly or indirectly degrade or damage soils.
- 5) Biofuel production should not directly or indirectly contaminate or deplete water resources.
- 6) Biofuel production should not directly or indirectly lead to air pollution.

7) The use of biotechnologies for biofuels production should improve their social and/or environmental performance, and always be consistent with national or international biosafety protocols.

**The Steering Board's feedback will be forwarded to the Working Group members for discussion after their meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.**

**WG members are asked to keep posting comments on the Wiki and writing to [sebastien.haye@epfl.ch](mailto:sebastien.haye@epfl.ch) for any suggestions or remarks.**