

EBB Press Release

New study reveals ILUC values up to 95% lower than previous estimates



A new US study by, Air Improvement Resource, (S&T) squared and the University of Illinois Chicago concludes in much lower ILUC values for biodiesel and biofuels.

Economic modelling applied to bioenergy has been heavily questioned in the last months. With successive reports proposing improvements in assumptions, the Indirect Land Use Change (ILUC) estimates on biofuels have decreased sharply.

In June 2013, the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) concluded in a 80% reduction of indirect emissions, with a value for biodiesel of 10gCO₂eq/MJ. The French research centres concludes that current ILUC models use lower values for increasing yields than actual observed data trends.

The new US study *Land Use Change Greenhouse Gas emissions of European Biofuel Policies Utilizing the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP)* evaluates land use changes for several biofuels pathways and policies. *"This work has found that ILUC calculated using the latest version of GTAP are much less than those calculated by IFPRI in 2011"* says Dr Steffen Mueller from University of Illinois.

It concludes that biodiesel could account for as little as 2,33gCO₂eq/MJ, compared to current 55gCO₂eq/MJ allocated in a Commission proposal amending biofuels policy. This represent a 95% difference mainly due to improved understanding as regards land use, crop yields and forest use in the EU, Canada and the US (where the forest continuously increases in the last decades). Suggestions for further improvements are also provided like regionalisation of the analysis and crop specificity of yield.

The divergence of results due to a slight change in assumptions, once again, opens the floor to question the validity of ILUC science for policy making. *"Policy makers can no longer deny the immaturity of science to serve for policy making"*, explains Raffaello Garofalo – EBB Secretary General.

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GTAP (Global Trade Analysis Project) model is an International project focusing on quantitative analysis of international economic policy measures. It consists of a network of researchers developing a consistent database for analysing trade policy, production, consumption, and use of commodities. Inputs rely on actual satellites for such things as greenhouse gas emissions and land use. GTAP uses a global computable general equilibrium model such as the MIRAGE model used by IFPRI, which allows consistent comparison between them two.

European Biodiesel Board (EBB) is a non-profit organisation established in January 1997. Today, EBB gathers nearly 80 members across 21 Member-States, which represents 75% of the European output. Biodiesel is the main European solution to reduce emissions from transport and dependence on imported oil. EBB aims to promote the use of biodiesel in the European Union and is committed to fulfil the International standards for sustainability in GHG emissions and sustainable feedstock. EBB is constantly working towards the development of improved and greener technologies.

To view the report, please contact us.

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