



Environment Committee's vote on RED II wrongly penalises conventional biofuels

Brussels, 24 October 2017 – The European Parliament Environment Committee's vote to phase-out the use of biofuels by 2030 seriously undermines the EU's climate and sustainability objectives. It diverges sharply from the latest draft proposal from the EU Council, which safeguards the role of biofuels in the renewable energy framework.

Ahead of the vote in the Environment Committee, the Green Rapporteur MEP Eickhout highlighted that the "beneficiary" of the recast of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) "should be the climate". But his proposal falls short of ambition in this sense, since it does not include a dedicated target for the use of renewable energy in the transport sector and calls for a phase out of biofuels, which are essential in agricultural sustainability and represent the most cost-effective and readily available solution to decarbonise the transport sector. Beyond that, it prevents the potential of valorisation of EU agricultural biomass.

Speaking on behalf of the eight associations representing the EU Biofuel Chain, Copa and Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen stated: *"The EU should create a policy framework which supports all sustainable forms of renewable energy and contributes to the reduction of fossil fuels' use and protein feed imports. EU biofuels have proven to do all that"*.

In particular, the development of first generation biofuels has resulted in some 35 Mt of gross avoided CO₂ emissions in 2013. The deployment of renewable energies in transport led to a 116 Mtoe drop in EU demand for fossil fuels and, more importantly for the EU's security of supply, to savings of €30 billion per year thanks to avoided imported fuel costs. Moreover, the production of biofuels from arable crops triggers the co-production of high-value protein meal and animal feed which replace 4 to 5 million hectares of imported feedstock. This increases the EU protein self-sufficiency and avoids environmental impacts elsewhere.

All these benefits, however, have been disregarded in the Environment Committee's vote to the advantage of the fossil fuel industry. As declared by FEDIOL Director General Nathalie Lecocq: *"The Environment Committee has focused all its efforts in trying to get rid of biofuels on the basis of alleged sustainability risks. In doing so, it has completely overlooked the big picture, which is the fact that 95% of EU road transport still relies on fossil fuels"*.

In this regard, while welcoming the enhanced focus on new-technology biofuels proposed in the Environment Committee's opinion, the EU Biofuel Chain regrets the adopted approach which opts to further develop an industry at the expense of the existing one. It is essential for the EU to recognise the role of the biofuels industry in the development of new technology biofuels: enabling long-term investments in them will require the involvement of the investors of crop-based biofuels.

In that sense, the EU Biofuel Chain welcomes the latest proposal by the EU Council, which sets a 15% target for renewable energy in transport and recognises the key role of first generation biofuels towards this target by maintaining the current 7% cap. Unlike the Environment Committee's approach, these elements would certainly send a positive signal to investors and respond to the EU's strategic interests in terms of climate ambition, as well as protein and fossil fuel dependency.

FEDIOL is the European Association representing the **vegetable oils and protein meal industry**. The sector covers more than 180 facilities belonging to 35 companies in 17 countries and employs directly 20,000 people. Its members process oilseeds, refine and bottle vegetable oils.

The **European Biodiesel Board (EBB)** is a non-profit organisation established in January 1997. Today, EBB gathers close to 70 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 International standards for sustainability in GHG emissions and sustainable feedstock. EBB is constantly working towards the development of improved and greener technologies.

The **European renewable ethanol association (ePURE)** represents the interests of European renewable ethanol producers to the European institutions, industry stakeholders, the media, academia and the general public. The organisation, established in 2010, promotes the beneficial uses of ethanol throughout Europe. Based in Brussels, ePURE represents 42 member companies, with 50 production plants in 16 member states, accounting for about 85% of the installed renewable ethanol capacity in Europe.

COCERAL is the **European association of trade in cereals, rice, feedstuffs oilseeds, olive oil, oils and fats and agrosupply**. It represents the interest of the European collectors, traders, importers, exporters and port silo storekeepers of the above mentioned agricultural products. COCERAL's full members are 21 national associations in 15 countries and 1 European association [Unistock]. With about 3500 companies as part of COCERAL national members, the sector trades agricultural raw materials destined to the supply of the food and feed chains, as well as for technical and energy uses. COCERAL has 1 associated member in Switzerland and 2 European Associations (EUROMALT and EUROMAISIERS). Gafta is an extraordinary member of COCERAL.

Founded in 2002, the **European Oilseed Alliance (EOA)** brings together the oilseed producing organizations from the main European countries (Germany, France, UK, Poland, Czech Republic, Finland and Belgium) and represents 90% of European oilseed production.

The **C.I.B.E.** is the international confederation of sugar beet growers. It represents the interests of beet growers vis-à-vis European Institutions and international organisations since 1927. CIBE is composed of national and regional associations from 18 European beet-producing countries. These include 140,000 growers from 16 EU countries (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, the United Kingdom) and roughly 130,000 growers from 2 non-EU countries (Turkey and Switzerland).

CEPM brings together Professional and inter-Professional organisations whose mission is to represent and defend in their respective countries the interests of all or part of the maize chain: corn, maize silage, maize seed and sweet corn. To fulfil these objectives, CEPM carries out monitoring, lobbying and communication activities, and makes concrete proposals.

Copa and Cogeca are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU. Together, they ensure that EU agriculture is sustainable, innovative and competitive, guaranteeing food security to half a billion people throughout Europe. Copa represents over 23 million farmers and their families whilst Cogeca represents the interests of 22,000 agricultural cooperatives. They have 66 member organisations from the EU member states. Together, they are one of the biggest and most active lobbying organisations in Brussels.