Workshop on policies for sustainable bioenergy

Wednesday, 30 November 2022 (10:00-15:00)

Location: hybrid meeting – Energy Community Secretariat (Am Hof 4/6, Vienna, Austria) and WebEx (online)

Introduction

In November 2021, together with other elements from the Clean Energy Package, the Ministerial Council of the Energy Community adopted the Directive (EU) 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (so-called REDII). Sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria for biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels are among key new aspects of the Directive. This is in particular relevant as increased use of solid biomass in the residential sector is largely responsible for most of the Energy Community Contracting Parties being close to or having exceeded their indicative target for heating and cooling in 2020[1]. However, replacing fossil fuels with biomass for heating has a negative impact on forestry when the use of biomass for energy production is not conducted in a sustainable manner.

According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), in the Southeast Europe region, bioenergy contributes a significant proportion of the primary energy supply, ranging from over 6% to around 20% in different countries in 2017. And around 80% of bioenergy was consumed for residential heating in this region in 2017. Bioenergy has also been used for district heating, transport fuels, as well as industrial heat for paper and pulp sectors in some countries[2].

Globally, bioenergy contributes the largest share of renewable energy demand, accounting for 12% of the world's total final energy consumption in 2019[3]. However, more than half of its consumption is the traditional use for cooking and heating, causing air pollution and adverse impacts on public health. Modern bioenergy uses are also seen in power generation and all end uses, for example, solid biomass and biogas/biomethane for building and industrial heat and liquid biofuels for road transport.

Ensuring the sustainability of bioenergy deployment is the most fundamental element of bioenergy policymaking. If the supply chain is not managed properly, bioenergy can have sustainability risks linked to greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on environmental and socio-economic aspects, such as indirect land use change, competition with food supply, air pollution, reduced water and soil quality, biodiversity loss etc. Sustainability-based target setting and planning, cross-sectoral coordination, sustainability governance based on regulations and certification schemes, as well as linkages with SDGs can help minimise potential risks and maximise the benefits.

Policy measures are also needed to address barriers to the development and deployment of bioenergy. Major barriers include lack of policy certainty, low level of technology readiness (for example, advanced biofuels for aviation or biomass for the chemical industry), higher cost compared to fossil fuels, as well as weak supply chains. Policy options and best practices widely exist but need to be tailored to local contexts. Meanwhile, bioenergy policymaking needs to closely interact with other sectoral policies such as agriculture, forest and waste management to achieve a coordinated development of the overall bioeconomy framework.

Against this background, back-to-back with the 14th Renewable Energy Coordination Group meeting, Energy Community Secretariat and IRENA are collaborating to organise a workshop on policies for sustainable bioenergy.

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[1] Energy Transition Tracker, Energy Community Secretariat, July 2022, https://www.energy-community.org/dam/jcr:a09255dc-ac8a-47b1-b664-3463705906de/EnC_Tracker_07_2022.pdf

[2] Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Southeast Europe, IRENA, December 2019, https://www.irena.org/publications/2019/Dec/RE-Market-Analysis-Southeast-Europe

[3] Bioenergy for the energy transition, IRENA, April 2022, https://www.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2022/Aug/IRENA_Bioenergy_for_the_transition_2022.pdf

Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
10:00-10:15	*Welcome addresses*	*Adam Cwetsch, Energy Community Secretariat* *Binu Parthan, IRENA*
10:15-10:30	***Presentation**: Bioenergy for the energy transition: ensuring sustainability and overcoming barriers*	*Jinlei Feng, IRENA*
10:30-11:30	***Panel session I**: Bioenergy's role in the energy transition*	*Moderator:* *Naida Taso, Energy Community Secretariat* *Panellists:* - *Ricardo Gorini, IRENA* - *Christian Rakos, World Bioenergy Association* - *Uwe R. Fritsche, IINAS* - *Adam Brown, Energy Insights*
11:30-12:00	*Q&A*	*All participants*
12:00-13:00	*Lunch & coffee break*	
13:00 – 13:30	***Presentation**: Implementation regulation on establishment operational guidance on the evidence for demonstrating compliance with the sustainability criteria for forest biomass*	*Zinovia Tsitrouli, European Commission*
13:30 – 13:45	***Presentation:** Sustainability of bioenergy*	*Maria Michela Morese, FAO/GBEP*
13:45-14:30	***Panel session II**: Sustainability criteria & best practices*	*Moderator:* *Jinlei Feng, IRENA* *Panellists:* - *Maria Michela Morese, FAO/GBEP* - *Daniel Reinemann, Bioenergy Europe* - *Dean Cooper, WWF International*
14:30-15:00	*Q&A*	*All participants*
15:00	*Concluding remarks, end of the meeting*	*All participants*