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Press Release

Biofuels : Copa and Cogeca call for long term stable EU renewable energy policy post-2020

Amidst farmers' protests in Paris, Copa and Cogeca held a press event today urging the EU to have a long term stable EU renewable energy policy which keeps the share for crop-based biofuels at 7% to decarbonize the transport sector.

Speaking at the event, Copa and Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen underlined the multiple benefits of biofuels in terms of cutting greenhouse gas emissions in Europe, improving energy security, creating jobs, reducing the EU's protein deficit in animal feed and as well as its role in balancing agricultural commodity markets, which can help stabilize prices and provide greater security for farmers and consumers. He outlined key elements of future policy post 2020.

He dispelled the idea of biofuels competing with food production, saying that record grain production has been seen for over 3 years and a 40% price drop recorded. "EU crop- based biofuels help to stabilize agricultural commodity markets and provide an incentive for farmers to stay in business and encourage on-farm investments by providing an additional source of income. This benefits the production of food, feed and biofuels", he stressed. "The EU Commission itself forecasts that the EU will need to continue to rely heavily on vehicles with an internal combustion engine. The EU will therefore continue to rely on liquid fuels including EU crop-based biofuels", added Pesonen.

To maximise the potential, Copa and Cogeca believe that the EU should have a binding blending obligation on fuel suppliers of at least 14%, without technological restrictions. The EU also needs to maintain at 7 % until 2030 the maximum accountable share for crop-based biofuels used in transport.

Finally, real targets for renewables in the future EU renewable energy Directive which is currently being negotiated are crucial, not a policy that uses artificial multipliers to give a wrong impression of the true environmental impact of tools. This will only be to the advantage of fossil fuels. The contribution of palm oil and its derivatives to the EU's climate and environmental objectives should also not be accounted in the EU targets as long as there is no solution to the sustainability problems such as deforestation and peatland conversion in the country of origin. Priority must be given to biofuels produced from EU feedstocks which generate co-products rich in plant protein and animal feed.

"EU Crop-based biofuels post 2020 are crucial in order to meet the EU's ambitious climate and energy targets and to ensure an environmental-friendly transport sector and vibrant rural areas." he stressed. The issue was also debated today by EU Energy Ministers at their informal meeting in Sofia, amidst French farmers demonstrations in Paris over increasing palm oil imports.

For further information, please contact:

Dominique Dejonckheere

Amanda Cheesley
Press Officer

Senior Policy Advisor
Tel.: +32 2 287 27 30
Dominique.Dejonckheere@copa-cogeca.eu

Mobile: + 32 474 840 836
amanda.cheesley@copa-cogeca.eu

CDP(18)4616:1
