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A STUDY FOR THE EC COORDINATED BY CENER GATHERS INFORMATION ON ILUC GHG EMISSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH BIOFUELS PRODUCTION

- ***The European Commission, by its Directorate-General for Energy commissioned CENER the coordination of this study, which has been elaborated in collaboration with researchers of Wageningen Economic Research, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency and Wageningen Environmental Research.***

Sarriguren (Navarra, Spain) 27th November 2017.- Research experts of the Biomass Department of CENER (National Renewable Energy Centre of Spain) have coordinated the project commissioned by the European Commission to gather comprehensive information on, and to provide systematic analysis of the latest available scientific research and the latest available scientific evidence on indirect land use change (ILUC) greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) associated with production of biofuels and bioliquids.

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The study describes the selection and review of ILUC related literature, especially highlighting the development and progress in understanding and quantifying ILUC in the recent years. The main methods used to quantify ILUC are described, and the most relevant ILUC related studies, which provide detailed qualitative and quantitative results, are outlined. Besides, ILUC factors found in the literature are presented and related to the quantification methodology applied. The report also provides an in-depth analysis of key assumptions in ILUC research and related uncertainties. Finally, it also analyses the main mitigation options for ILUC, including low ILUC-risk biofuels.

Among the main conclusions of the study coordinated by CENER, it is underlined that ILUC factors identified in the literature vary significantly across biofuel pathways, studies, or even within studies depending on the hypothesis used. Besides, studies that have investigated parametric uncertainty conclude that this fact has a significant effect on the outcomes. As a consequence of all the uncertainties in the components of ILUC emissions, it is very difficult to narrow them down.



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EC policies requiring the study

The EU mandatory sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids do not allow the raw material for biofuel production to be obtained from land with high carbon stock or high biodiversity value. However, this does not guarantee that as a consequence of the demand of raw material for biofuels production, such land is not used for production of raw materials for other purposes. Therefore, if land for biofuels is taken from cropland formerly used for other purposes, or by conversion of grassland in arable land for biofuel production, the former agricultural production on this land has to be grown somewhere else. In such cases, if there is no regulation that this must happen sustainably, conversion of land may happen, which is not allowed to be used under the EU sustainability criteria for biofuels. This conversion may take place in other countries than where the biofuel is produced. This is called indirect land use change (ILUC).

According to Article 3 of the European Union's **Directive (EU) 2015/1513** of 9 September 2015, the European Commission has to **provide information on, and analysis of the available and the best available scientific research results**, scientific evidence regarding ILUC emissions associated to the production of biofuels, and in relation to all production pathways.

Besides, according to Article 23 of the **revised European Union's Directive 2009/28/EC** (RES Directive), the Commission also has to provide the latest available information with regard to **key assumptions influencing the results from modelling ILUC GHG emissions**, as well as an assessment of whether the **range of uncertainty** identified in the analysis underlying the estimations of ILUC emissions can be narrowed down, and if the possible **impact of the EU policies**, such as environment, climate and agricultural policies, can be factored in. An assessment of a possibility of setting out criteria for the identification and certification of **low ILUC-risk biofuels** that are produced in accordance with the EU sustainability criteria is also required.

More information and access to the study

The full study is **available in English**. For further information click [here](#), and for a short summary presentation of the study click [here](#).



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About CENER

The **National Renewable Energy Centre of Spain (CENER)** develops applied research in renewable energies and provides technological support to companies and energy institutions at international level, in six areas of work: wind, solar thermal, biomass, solar photovoltaic, energy in buildings and energy grid integration. More information: ww.cener.com

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