

# Fourth European Bioenergy Conference



A group of conference delegates visited the GDF SUEZ biomass plant in the Port of Ghent.

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It was generally agreed by the 240 representatives of the global bioenergy sector gathered in Brussels to discuss the sustainable future of bioenergy at the 4th AEBIOM Bioenergy Conference that the event was a success, managing to address the main opportunities, as well as the challenges of biomass developments in Europe.

Michael Goodwin, Energy Attaché at the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union, confirmed that there is a strong EU political will to renewable energy developments towards 2020 and beyond. On ILUC, a possible first reading may take place under the Lithuanian Presidency and options are still being discussed, particularly regarding the 5% cap on crop-based biofuels.

Joachim Balke, Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Günther Oettinger, underlined that biomass is critical for the decarbonisation of the energy sector. According to the EU

2050 energy roadmap, biomass production would have to triple to reach a CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction of 80-95% in 2050. On possible EU sustainability criteria, he indicated that no decision has yet been taken at the Commission's level and that this question remains controversial as bioenergy developments are not limited to EU Energy Policy.

Jeremy Wall, Principal Administrator of DG Enterprise, raised questions on whether there should be different sustainability criteria for different end uses and whether the cascading principle should be part of the analysis. Markus Holzer, Head of Unit in DG Agriculture, recalled that climate change and renewables are one of the strategic priorities of rural development under the future CAP. This message was reinforced by Gustav Melin, President of AEBIOM, who added that EU biomass developments are crucial to meet EU security of supply and decarbonisation.

An extensive conference programme was held on Tuesday, 18 June, where crucial topics such as sustainability, carbon accounting and advanced biofuels were discussed. Following last year's success, matchmaking events were organised again in order to allow industry players to set up business meetings.

The positive responses to the opening session and the first day of round table debates have convinced the participants that they should attend next year's AEBIOM Bioenergy Conference, which is already a well-established brand in the area of high-level bioenergy events. Discussing the future of bioenergy is essential since more than 50% of the EU 2020 renewable energy 20% target is expected to be met by various forms of bioenergy. According to Member State projections, biomass use in heating and cooling is expected to increase by 47% and biomass use for

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electricity generation is projected to more than double between 2010 and 2020.

On Wednesday, 19 June, AEBIOM organised a visit to the Port of Ghent and its various bioenergy installations. After an introduction in the Port's offices, a group of conference delegates departed to visit a GDF SUEZ biomass plant of 180 MW capacity using 800,000 tons of pellets per year. Participants subsequently visited the Biobase Europe Pilot Plant in which several biorefinery concepts are tested. After this, the group went on board the yacht Jacob Van Artevelde for lunch before disembarking for a final visit to Stora Enso, the world's largest paper recycling mill. The mill comprises two biomass boilers supplying all the heat demanded by the process.