

Position paper and policy recommendations of the two networks WECF and Unser Land (Our land):

“Biofuels - a sustainable choice is possible”

Biofuel is probably the most debated form of renewable energy. It has to be used wisely to be sustainable.

Our guidelines:

The two networks WECF and Unser Land strongly recommend three general guidelines as satisfactory conditions for the sustainable use of biofuels. These guidelines must be integrated into any new policies governing the use and production of biofuels:

- reducing energy consumption step by step
- using the most innovative sustainable technologies available at the time
- sustainable use of all home resources

Consequently, we save our natural resources and regional economic resources, with the ultimate goal of improving our quality of life.

Our positions:

- Above all we must use all possible local renewable energy sources, as well as improving energy efficiency and conservation.
- The import and export of renewable energy should be limited to a secondary option, being used only to compensate for regional deficits and should follow the motto:
 - o Fair Trade – Fair Price.
 - o We should learn to export new sustainable technologies to developing countries rather than propagating the use of old technologies. This is especially vital for those parts of the developing world where oil consumption is rapidly growing.
- A certificate identifying sustainably produced renewable energy for international trade is essential.
- Further development and use of „renewable energy“ has to be sustainable in any case and even now must be adequately examined to ensure sustainable implementation. Otherwise we run the risk of supporting the same monopolistic, undemocratic structures, with the same harmful social, ecological AND economic effects that result from using fossil fuels.
- The use of biomass fuels can only be climate neutral if it is ensured that their production and transport, especially over large distances, do not require a greater use of fossil fuels and agrochemicals that negate the benefits of using alternative fuels. That’s why ecological cultivation and regional use must be supported. A life cycle assessment is needed.
- Energy production for biomass shall not be in competition with food production.
- In terms of agricultural conditions, the following must be considered
 - Small scale agriculture and middle-class structures should be supported and saved.
 - We must consider the entire cycle of the plants; e.g. creating quality standards on all levels: Production – Processing – Use!
 - Mixed crop cultivation has to be supported in any case.

- Ecological cultivation should be supported by adequate research, aimed to solve different problems like:
 - the current economic inefficiency of several species (such as sunflowers)
 - lack of ecological seed
 - and the technical problems in use (e.g. problems with the motor because of different ignition point for linseed oil)
- The use of GMOs for the production of biomass, should not be an option, because this technology is again connected with a centralised control of only a few concerns and a few species of plants. The consequences and the effects of GMOs are not known yet.
- Incorporation of a broad active civil society to advocate for the energy change. We will rely on the creativity and various talents of people, above all from the agriculture, handcraft, trade, industry, and service sectors, as well as communities and churches. We need the support of all the responsible citizens in the community.
- The broad involvement of local people has to be guaranteed, e.g. by spreading the use of successful initiatives.

These guidelines and positions were developed by 50 partners and experts from altogether 7 nations, participated in an international and intercultural exchange of experiences 1. Energy-Conference for Munich and environs, 6th March 2004., to which the networks WECF – Women in Europe for a Common Future - and UNSER LAND had invited, into the house of agriculture in Fürstenfeldbruck/Munich.

The networks:



UNSER LAND is working regionally in the environs of Munich, with the aim to make people responsible for their basis of life. For more than 10 years men and women have proven successfully that ideas and business and regionalism in times of globalisation, must not be invincible contrasts. Quite to the contrary, they offer a great opportunity to energise people, mobilise power, and realise visions (www.unserland.info).

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WECF represents an international working organisation of women, whose approach is to jointly implement practical projects and policy influencing activities, always keeping in mind the gender perspective. More than 80 citizen's organisations mainly from Eastern and Western Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia work together on several levels and bring various issues like health, environment and poverty reduction into international forums. Since the 1992 Earth-summit in Rio, there is hardly any internationally relevant conference concerning the abovenamed issues, where WECF didn't demonstrate why women are decisive for sustainable development.

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Both Networks common goal is to save the basis of life for the next generations.