



BIOMASS BUSTERS



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Clean energy doesn't come out of a smokestack...

December 2010

From the Editors

Meg Sheehan & Josh Schlossberg

Representatives from the U.S. anti-biomass movement are joining international activists in Cancun, Mexico from November 29-December 10 at the UN's Climate Change Conference. We will also be participating in a Global Day of Action with anti-incinerator advocates on December 1.

At home, anti-biomass burning coalitions are growing in Vermont, Washington, and Georgia as more citizens learn about the public health and environmental threats from greenwashing schemes funded with taxpayer money.

As we act locally and think globally, we empower both local communities and the global movement for climate solutions that honor the interdependence between humanity and nature, and that reject techno-fixes and schemes that further threaten to undo the delicate balance.

For submissions, feedback, to sign up for e-newsletter or to become a distributor, contact us at biomassbusters@gmail.com or find us on Facebook.

BIOMASS BUSTERS is a project of the Biomass Accountability Project, Energy Justice Network, Biofuelwatch, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, and Save America's Forests.

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State Lines

Biomass Industry Fights New Hampshire Biomass Incinerator

October 7, 2010 Eight existing biomass facilities filed petitions for intervention in the power purchase agreement for Laidlaw Berlin BioPower LLC's proposed 70-megawatt biomass incinerator for Berlin, New Hampshire. The intervening facilities, located in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, claim that the new incinerator's requirement for 750,000 tons of wood chips per year would compete with an already limited regional supply of forest products.

"It's definitely going to increase the price of fuel for everyone," said Peter Bloomfield, president of Concord Steam Corp. Petitions of intervention have also come from the New England Power Generators Association Inc. and the City of Berlin.



Indiana Anti-Biomass Group Receives Award

November 6, 2010 The *Concerned Citizens of Crawford County* has been named the Hoosier Environmental Council's "Frontline Advocate of the Year" for their work opposing biomass incineration in Indiana. Liberty Green LLC has proposed the construction of up to three electricity-generating biomass incinerators in Milltown, Scottsburg and another undisclosed location in Indiana.

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From the Forest

Report: The New Biomassers

November 2, 2010 The *ETC Group* released the report *The New Biomassers—Synthetic Biology and the Next Assault on Biodiversity and Livelihoods*, critiquing the global shift from fossil fuels extraction to the exploitation of living “biomass” for energy production.

An *ETC Group* press release states:

Sold as an ecological switch from a “black carbon” (i.e. fossil) economy to a “green carbon” (plant-based) economy, this emerging bio-economy is in fact a red-hot resource grab of the lands, livelihoods, knowledge and resources of peoples in the global South, where most of that biomass is located.

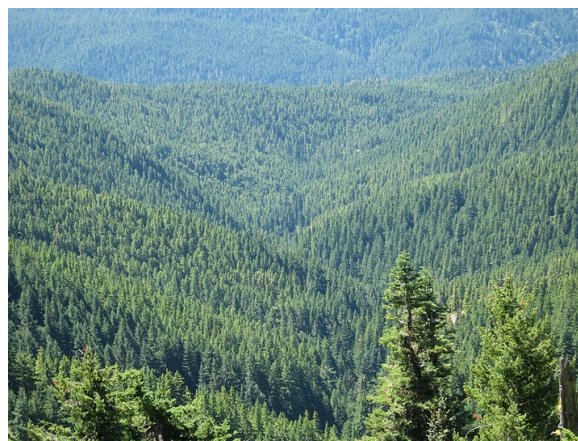
The New Biomassers “challenges common myths of industrial biomass use, including the claims that switching to biomass is carbon-neutral, renewable and green,” and explains why “we cannot afford any increase in the amount of biomass taken from already overstressed ecosystems.”

The report can be downloaded at www.etcgroup.org/en/node/5232

Study: Trees Filter More Pollutants Than Thought

October 22, 2010 A new study demonstrates that deciduous trees filter up to four times more oxygenated Volatile Organic Compounds (oVOCs), a pollutant which has negative impacts on human health and the environment, than realized. Dense forests and the tops of forest canopies make up 97% of oVOC uptake.

“This complex metabolic process within plants has the side effect of cleansing our atmosphere,” said co-author Chhandak Basu of the University of Northern Colorado. The study, published in *Science Express*, was conducted with co-authors from the University of Northern Colorado and the University of Arizona, with research by scientists at the National Center for Atmospheric Research.



Native forests in Olympic National Park, Washington

Biomass Threatens Mulch Industry

Nursery producers testified in front of Congress in August urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to deny federal tax subsidies for “bark, bark-based materials, landscape mulching materials, softwood chips and forest thinnings” from the *Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)* [see *Legislation Watch*, p. 4] on the grounds that increased competition will drive up the cost of bark dust, a key component in soil mixes.

“We’ve seen prices tick up and availability become an issue in the past several years,” said Corey Connors, legislative relations director for the *American Nursery and Landscape Association*. Competition for an already limited forest product “affects the whole supply chain, from growers to retailers to landscape supply companies.”

“BCAP could well be a job killer,” said Connors, explaining how the nursery industry is already hurting from the collapse of the housing market.

RISI, the self-proclaimed “leading information provider for the global forest products industry,” stated in their October 2008 *Wood Biomass Market Report* that “the perceived overabundance of ‘waste wood’ in the nation’s forests is simply not there.” ❖

Our Health

Study: Cancer is Manmade

October 2010 A study conducted at the University of Manchester's KNH Centre for Biomedical Egyptology in England has determined that cancer was "a striking rarity" over the millennia, with research only uncovering substantial instances of cancer following the Industrial Revolution of the 17th century. The research included mummified remains and literary evidence from ancient Egypt and Greece, including medical studies of human and animal remains dating back to Prehistoric times.

The study, *Cancer: an old disease, a new disease or something in between?*, conducted by A. Rosalie David & Michael R. Zimmerman and published in *Nature*, states that "carcinogenic environmental factors" such as "pollution resulting from industrialization" and smoking are likely responsible for up to 75% of cancer cases.



Professor Rosalie David, at the Faculty of Life Sciences, said:

In industrialized societies, cancer is second only to cardiovascular disease as a cause of death. But in ancient times, it was extremely rare. There is nothing in the natural environment that can cause cancer. So it has to be a man-made disease, down to pollution and changes to our diet and lifestyle.

David states that the "data from across the millennia has given modern society a clear message – cancer is man-made and something that we can and should address."

State Lines (continued)

Ohio Faces Biomass Onslaught

Eight electricity-generating co-firing (with coal) biomass incinerators totaling 2,210-megawatts have received permits and Renewable Energy Credits from the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), according to Cheryl Johncox of *Buckeye Forest Council*. Facilities range in size from 34 to 1,125-megawatts and would require 25.6 million tons of green wood per year, "more than five times the growth of all forest in Ohio, private and public."

PUCO claims that "the use of forest resources as biomass energy is conditioned upon sustainable forest management operations," however Johncox insists that "there are no requirements or regulatory oversight for the commission or other entities to gauge practices."

PUCO does not mandate that incinerator developers disclose fuel sources or forest practices that are to be used to log trees, such as clearcutting.



(De)forestry in Oregon

Rural Oregon vs. Biomass

October 2010 *Save Our Rural Oregon (SORO)* is opposing the construction of the Klamath BioEnergy Facility, a 38-megawatt biomass incinerator proposed by Northwest Energy Systems Company. The incinerator is to be sited on the banks of the Klamath River in a 100-year flood plain, according to *SORO* member Ken Watkins. ❖

Trashing the Climate

“Trashification” in North Carolina

Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network

Forsite Development is planning a trash gasification facility called ReVenture just outside of Charlotte, North Carolina. Local activists are organizing opposition to this incinerator, with the help of *Energy Justice Network*, *Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League* and others.



In August, the governor signed into law a bill that gives ReVenture triple credits under the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard. The only silver lining in this is that the energy utilities that were close to signing a power purchase agreement with Fibrowatt for their two remaining poultry waste incinerator proposals in North Carolina are rethinking it, throwing the fate of these other incinerator proposals into economic uncertainty.

Legislation Watch

Biomass Crop Assistance Program

In October 2010, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued the final rule provisions of the *Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)*, which “provides incentives to interested farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for the establishment and cultivation of biomass crops for heat, power, bio-based products and biofuels.”

Provisions include up to 15 years of annual payments for forest biomass and “assistance for the collection, harvest, storage and transportation of biomass to biomass conversion facilities” for two years for up to \$45 per ton of the delivery cost. Total BCAP expenditures over 15 years are

Solutions

Wave Power

<http://www.smartplanet.com/>



Wave power is renewable energy derived from ocean waves. Currently, there are three basic technological paradigms for wave energy:

Oscillating body: The device, either submerged or on the surface, is moved up and down or back and forth by waves. Its motion is used to drive an electric generator.

Oscillating water column: Air enters a chamber through a hole and is compressed and decompressed by wave movement. A high-powered turbine catches the air as it's decompressed.

“Over topping device”: A large structure, shore-based or in the ocean, that channels waves into a basin. When the basin's water level becomes higher than the ocean's, the basin is drained. ❖

estimated at \$461 million.

"We have informed USDA that the final Environmental Impact Statement does not pass legal muster, and is fatally flawed for several reasons, including failure to account for impacts to forests and associated carbon emissions," said attorney Meg Sheehan of *Biomass Accountability Project*. "With the BCAP program, the USDA is squandering taxpayer money, promoting forest destruction, and causing climate change."

TAKE ACTION!

Tell *Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson* (jackson.lisap@epa.gov) that biomass should not be considered "best available control technology" for greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act.