

EU MUST STOP INCENTIVISING BURNING TREES FOR ENERGY

Climate scientists say to have any hope of fighting climate change, we must dramatically increase the amount of CO₂ taken up and stored in forests. **So why is the EU burning forests for fuel?**

The EU pays billions in subsidies for burning trees in power plants under the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) and calls it renewable, like solar and wind.

But burning wood for energy is dirty and destructive and harms our climate and our forests.

MEPs should end € billions in renewable energy subsidies for burning forest biomass.

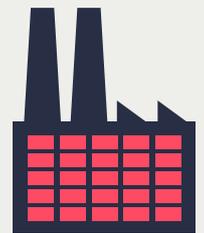
BIOMASS ENERGY IS EXPENSIVE:¹

Wasting at least

€40 BN 

of public money

BURNING FOREST BIOMASS PRODUCES **MORE CO₂** THAN BURNING FOSSIL FUELS²



BURNING FOREST BIOMASS INCREASES CO₂ EMISSIONS

ENERGY FROM FOREST BIOMASS IS NOT RENEWABLE

CO₂ from burning forest biomass for energy is released quickly and trees re-grow too slowly to meet climate goals³

BURNING FORESTS DOESN'T IMPROVE EU ENERGY SECURITY

Incentives to burn forest biomass under the RED have

INCREASED LOGGING

across Europe leading to more degradation of forests and nature.⁴



To replace

10%

of Russian fossil fuel imports

...would require burning

60%

more EU wood⁵



EU CITIZENS WANT TO PROTECT FORESTS AND THEIR HEALTH:



of citizens interviewed agreed we should protect nature⁶



of EU particle pollution is from burning wood and other biomass⁷

WHAT IS PRIMARY WOODY BIOMASS?



Primary woody biomass ("forest" biomass), is unprocessed wood, from trees that have just been cut.



About half of the harvested wood burned in the EU comes directly from forests, contributing to forest destruction.⁸

The Industry Committee's report on the RED proposes to stop subsidies and incentives for using most primary woody biomass.



LET'S SAVE OUR FORESTS FOR OUR FUTURE



STOP paying billions to burn our forests for energy;



STOP calling this 'renewable'



STOP incentives for burning primary woody biomass.



The EU can achieve its net zero targets without subsidising this dirty energy

WE NEED TO GROW MORE FORESTS, NOT BURN THEM FOR ENERGY. MEPS MUST TAKE FOREST BIOMASS OUT OF THE RENEWABLE ENERGY DIRECTIVE.

REFERENCES:

- 1.** Cost to society of forest biomass to the EU are at least €40 billion
16 billion direct Member State subsidies between 2015 and 2020 (source: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/be5268ba-3609-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>)
+12 billion indirect ETS subsidies (source: <https://www.birdlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Briefing-Ignored-ETS-biomass-emissions-worth-12-billion-euros.pdf>)
+12 billion for health costs (source: <https://epha.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/epha-heating-report-pr.pdf>)
- 2.** IPCC: Emission Factors for Greenhouse Gas Inventories (heat input basis)
(source: https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/documents/emission-factors_apr2021.pdf)
Due to the low efficiency of wood burning power plants, emissions per megawatt hour of electricity generated are up to 400% of those of a comparably sized plant burning fossil fuels.
<https://forestdefenders.eu/biomass-plant-co2-emissions-an-explanation/>
- 3.** Time left to meet net-zero by 2050: 28 years: But burning biomass can increase net cumulative emissions for decades to centuries.
The use of woody biomass for energy production in the EU. Camia, A., Giuntoli, J., Jonsson, K., Robert, N., Cazzaniga, N., Jasinevičius, G., Avitabile, V., Grassi, G., Barredo Cano, J.I. and Mubareka, S., The use of woody biomass for energy production in the EU, EUR 30548 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-92-76-27866-5, doi:10.2760/428400, JRC122719.
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- 4.** JRC: Abrupt increase in harvested forest area over Europe after 2015.
(source: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-020-2438-y>)
- 5.** https://forestdefenders.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FDA-Future-on-Fire-April-5-2022_final.pdf
- 6.** https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2360
- 7.** <https://forestdefenders.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FDA-air-pollution-factsheet.pdf>
- 8.** EU Joint Research Centre; The use of woody biomass for energy production in the EU
(source: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC122719>)
European Commission; Biomass flows in the European Union;
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