

Vienna, 2021-05-21

Dear Prof. Dr. Tarmo Soomere,

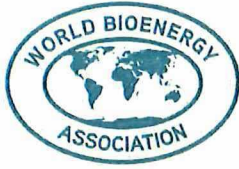
I am writing you out of concern regarding public statements of the European Academies Science Advisory Council EASAC. For a number of years, EASAC has strongly been advocating against using bioenergy as a measure to reduce the climate impact of fossil fuels. In this context, EASAC is in clear contradiction with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that gives bioenergy a prominent role in climate change mitigation.

In IPCC's report on 1.5°C from 2017, bioenergy is used as a major tool in the mitigation modeling. IPCC writes: "Bioenergy can be used in various parts of the energy sector, including for electricity, liquid fuel, biogas, and hydrogen production. It is this flexibility that makes bioenergy and bioenergy technologies valuable for the decarbonization of energy use."

In contrast EASAC has made statements regarding bioenergy that directly contradict IPCC, using wording like "burning wood is worse than using coal" or "using forest biomass for climate mitigation is like jumping from the frying pan into the fire". In fact, the way EASAC deals with the subject has more the character of a campaign than of a balanced scientific assessment.

IEA Bioenergy, a global network of scientists and other experts in the field of bioenergy, warn about the consequences of the current negative media campaign against bioenergy and has publicly criticized EASAC statements. "While it is certainly important to identify what is needed to ensure that biomass is produced and used in a responsible way, the misrepresentations within recent soundbites run the risk of discrediting biomass as a sustainable material and energy source altogether – a feat that could have dire consequences for global carbon neutrality ambitions."

The European Joint Research Centre writes in a recent report on woody bioenergy that the debate on bioenergy needs to be "de-toxified" and directly contradicts EASAC statements regarding carbon accounting.



At this point in time European policy makers are taking decisions regarding the long-term future energy policies of the Union. The uncertainty that is created by contradicting messages from science is concerning as it may lead to wrong decisions regarding the most urgent issue of our time - climate change.

The Academies of Science given their high reputation and competence also have a great responsibility to make sure that all statements made in their name live up to the highest scientific standards. For this reason we would kindly ask you, to address this issue and to establish an independent group of experts that evaluate the scientific base of the contradictions between EASAC statements and statements of IPCC and many other experts in order to establish clarity in the fundamental question of the role of bioenergy for climate change mitigation.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Christian Rakos  
*President*  
*World Bioenergy Association*