

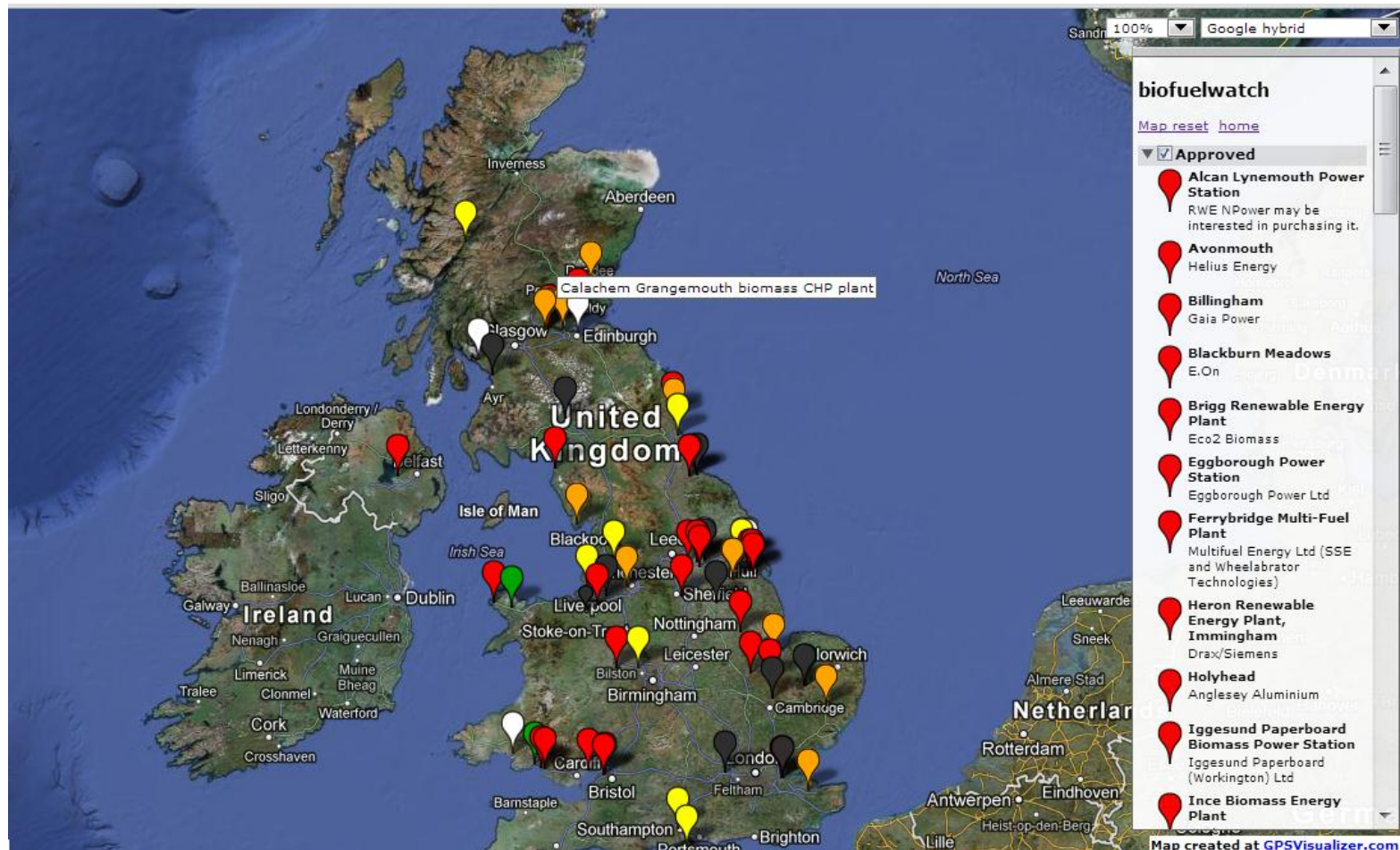
Biomass Sustainability Standards- Promise or Greenwash?

Emilia Hanna, Biofuelwatch

www.biofuelwatch.org.uk

9th October 2012

Scale of Biomass Projected Consumption



90 million tonnes

UK's annual wood harvest = 10 million tonnes

But it's ok... Because our biomass consumption here in the UK, despite being unprecedented in scale, will be...

Sustainable!!



What does 'sustainable biomass' mean?

→ It means biomass which has been **certified** by a private certification/verification company which certifies on behalf of voluntary schemes (e.g. FSC)

→ It means what companies embarking on biomass ventures have written into their planning applications: i.e. '**sustainability policies**'

→ It means a set of criteria '**sustainability standards**' which the UK Government has introduced for biomass, which are to become mandatory from 2013 and which it is currently consulting on

Read all about it at
www.biofuelwatch.org.uk



How does the certification/verification process work (1): the 'model'

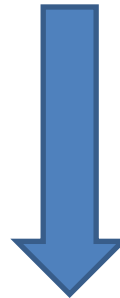
Company harvesting the
biomass (e.g. Veracel)



Company granting the
certificate (e.g. SGS)



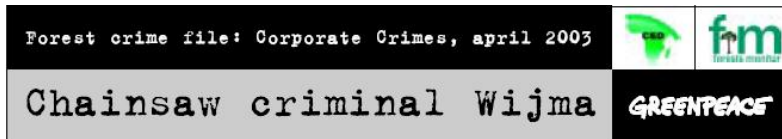
Certification scheme
(e.g. FSC)



Under pressure to keep
the customer satisfied??

How does the certification/verification process work (2): in 'practice'

Bureau Veritas **repeatedly** grants FSC certificate to Wijma



Wijma logs on their way to the sawmill. ©GPOosterveld

In 2006, Bureau Veritas were asked by the FSC Secretariat to review a certificate which they had awarded to logging company Wijma in Cameroon. The company had been found guilty of and fined for illegal logging by a Cameroonian court. Greenpeace and other NGOs had found them illegally logging at least 2,000 hectares of rainforest.

Despite detailed NGO evidence and the court findings, Bureau Veritas saw nothing wrong With Wijma's certificate. They were suspended from certifying in Cameroon as a result – Though this was later lifted and they have just granted Wijma three more FSC certificates.

SGS certifies this Pulp and paper company APP in Sumatra as sustainable for the PEFC



One of “Indonesia’s most destructive corporations, [APP’s pulp and paper] comes from clear cutting rainforests and replacing them with monoculture acacia pulp wood plantations grown on these cleared rainforest and peatlands.”
[*Rainforest Action Network*]

VERACEL CELULOSE – Another SGS certificate for the FSC



FSC Certificate awarded by SGS to New Forest Company in Uganda



Oxfam report, 2011:
22,500 people were
evicted by New Forest
Company to make way for
eucalyptus plantations

*(Photo and quote by
Oxfam)*

i.e. Deforestation, illegal logging, conversion
of natural forests, displacement of
thousands =
sustainable?!?!?



Are all these instances of foul play isolated cases, or are they
symptomatic of something wrong with a certification model
where profit is at the heart of the business?

Are British Biomass companies doing a better job at ensuring their biomass will be 'sustainable'?

Forth Energy
Renewable energy - contributing to Scotland's low carbon future

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Sustainability Studies

We are committed to sustainable development. This is illustrated in the following documents and studies:

- Commitment to Sustainability
- Each Renewable Energy Plant application Section 36 of the Electricity Act (1989), is Statement which describes Forth Energy's wider sustainability issues. The Sustainability of Dundee, Grangemouth and the Ports of Dundee.
- Sustainability of Wood Fuel
- There has been much discussion surrounding sustainability and carbon policy as evidenced by this we commissioned Sista Technology to evaluate the assertion for download [here](#).
- Sourcing of Wood Fuel
- We have commissioned Sista Technology to evaluate the assertion for download [here](#).

RWE
The energy to lead

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INVESTOR RELATIONS

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Frequently asked questions

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- CURRENT SHARE PRICES
- RWE SHARE KEY INDICATORS
- DIVIDEND
- SHAREHOLDER STRUCTURE
- ANALYST RECOMMENDATIONS
- ANALYST REPORTS
- ANALYST CONSENSUS ESTIMATES
- SHARE BUYBACK

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Approach

Fields of Action

- Work Program 2012-2015
- Climate Protection
- Technology Development
- Responsible Procurement**
- Environmental Protection
- Community Involvement
- Customer Satisfaction
- Health and Safety
- Workforce Challenge

Regional Activities

Key Figures 2011

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Better Coal Initiative

[www.bettercoal.org](#)

Downloads

- E.ON Responsible Procurement Policy (PDF, 36 KB)
- Biomass Purchasing Amendment (PDF, 51 KB)
- Human Rights Policy Statement (PDF, 76 KB)

Responsibility for a Sustainable Value Chain

Since 2007, E.ON has followed Group-wide binding principles for responsible procurement. These are based on the principles of the [United Nations Global Compact](#) and are part of our company's Standard Terms and Conditions of Purchase. They require our suppliers to fulfill sustainability criteria and to ensure, amongst other requirements, appropriate working conditions, ethical business practices, environmental protection and respect for human rights. To ensure that sustainability criteria are factored into procurement decisions and respond to the increasing expectations from our [stakeholders](#), we are working to achieve the following goals:

- Strengthen the Better Coal Initiative to improve sustainability in the coal supply chain and expand audits of coal mines [until 2015](#)
- Until 2015, virtually 100 percent of our critical suppliers (that makes up ~80% from total non-fuel spending volume) will have been evaluated by [E.ON's Supplier Pre-](#)

RWE's biomass sourcing policy

- + RWE has its own biomass procurement policy with 7 general and 6 additional sustainability principles and they promise that all of their wood pellets are “independently assured under accredited schemes”;
- + Working towards 100% wood pellet accreditation by Green Gold Label;
- + Green Gold Label's executive board consists of two RWE representatives... And no one else...



RWE Npower: Pellets from Georgia and British Columbia for Tilbury B



Tilbury B converted from coal to wood Pellets, largest biomass power stations worldwide (750MW); now has applied for extension of the permit for 15 years
Photo: Wikipedia

Logging in Georgia, US, where RWE own the world's largest pellet plant – certified as 'sustainable' based solely on web search results which claim all wood from SE US is sustainable.

Photo: www.examiner.com

Forth Energy's Sustainability Promises

- 2010: Forth Energy promises to develop a comprehensive biomass sourcing policy which would address minimum greenhouse gas savings, including direct and indirect land use change, address wider environmental and social impacts, and be independently audited and verified.
- 2012: No such policy published, no information where wood is to be sourced from, carbon assessment presented at Grangemouth Inquiry ignores indirect land use change.

So can we rely on the UK Government to ensure that biomass be used 'sustainably'??

- First national mandatory biomass standards, to be introduced October 2013;
- Only 2 aspects:
 - Greenhouse gas standards, based largely on EU biofuels standards
 - Sustainable Forestry Management Standards.
- Current consultation out on the standards.

Do greenhouse gas standards and reliance on Sustainable Forestry Management Standards cover the issues??

Greenhouse gas standards:

→ Overlook the carbon debt.

- It takes minutes to burn a tree and commonly decades for a new tree to grow reabsorb the CO₂ emitted again;
- Forests, once destroyed, may never be able or allowed to grow back;
- Nobody can predict what will happen to any forests in decades to come, i.e. if the CO₂ will ever be re-absorbed;
- Climate scientists warn that CO₂ emissions must be reduced urgently to make irreversible climate feedbacks less likely.

Sustainable Forestry Management Standards:

→ Biomass will be accepted as meeting the standards if 70% of wood comes from a forest or plantation certified by PEFC or FSC

→ i.e....

- If a certification company/auditor – paid for by the energy firm - confirms it is sustainable
- No regulatory oversight or fraud checks.

Why are we going around in circles? Is it because the government is controlled by a respect for environmental norms and human rights, or by corporations?

What else is *not* included....

- All indirect land use change and other indirect impacts ignored;
 - All impacts on people, including human rights violation and hunger ignored;
 - Biodiversity destruction ignored in many, possibly most cases;
 - Impacts on water and soil ignored;
 - No credible verification of claims.
-
- → the new consultation does *not* propose to introduce any of these elements

i.e., if you worry about biofuels sustainability standards, these are just as bad...

*...except they are even worse than
biofuels standards because...*



Palm oil from any forests cut down since 1/1/08 classed as **not sustainable under biofuel standards.**

Photo: www.birdlife.org



Wood from forest cut down to be converted to tree plantations **can qualify as sustainable under proposed Biomass standards**

Photo: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com>

There will be no land use standards

Abuse of rules and standards is easy – if nobody enforces them



“Breast implant scandal: PIP owner arrested” (Telegraph, 26/1/12)

Scandals are often caused by inadequate regulatory oversight

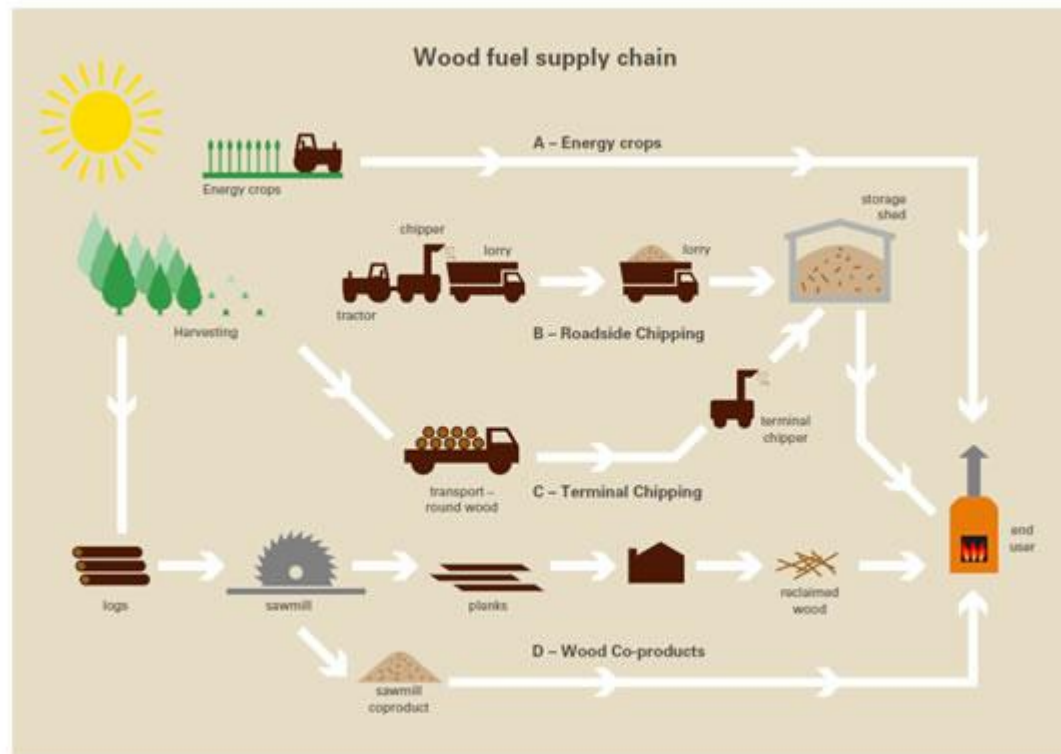
For biofuel and biomass sustainability standards, regulatory oversight will not be inadequate...

There will be none.

Energy companies will need to pay any consultancy company that provides verification services to confirm that standards are met.





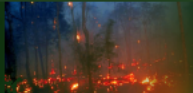

Ofgem has neither a budget nor remit for checking the accuracy of claims.

...and the potential for fraud and misinformation exists along the whole of the supply chain:



Want to feed into DECC's consultation on sustainability standards? Take note...

<http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2012/sustcons/>



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DECC Consultation on Biomass Sustainability Standards NOW OPEN til 30 Nov

The UK Government in July announced that it would carry on heavily subsidising biomass as 'renewable energy'. The artificial market created through the subsidies will lead to a staggering increase in wood being burned in the UK, to up to potentially 90 million tonnes of wood per year. The Government promises that all wood coming into the UK will be 'sustainable' and that we have the chance to feed into 'sustainability criteria' for biomass through a [new consultation](#) which closes on 30 November.

We've put together this briefing to help guide you through what the consultation's proposals mean for the environment... Read it [here](#)

POSTED BY EMILIA, ON OCTOBER 8TH, 2012 [PERMALINK](#) [NEWS](#) [RIGHT](#) | [EDIT](#)

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HIGHLIGHTS

- + Sustainable on Paper: Documentary about Veracel's eucalyptus plantations, certified by the FSC, in Brazil, now online
- + UK: Please tell W4B

No longer convinced that biomass can be sustainable on an industrial scale?

- Get involved in opposing individual power stations esp TILBURY B CONVERSION
- RWE has just applied for an extension for the life of Tilbury B
- Will be 750MW capacity i.e. Enormous.
- Will be able to store 20 000 tonnes of wood on site
- (But it's ok... It will be burning 'sustainable biomass' only, according to RWE's robust policy and the UK's robust sustainability criteria... ;))

We must stand together with the people and the environment on other sides of the planet...



And we must remember that this issue is about protecting a precious resource



Trees are important

trees are like bees
come out in summer
go back in winter
when bees get honey
we get apples or pears
or lemons or oranges
and you get joy
from when you laugh
or smile
you get trees for homes
for squirrels, owls, birds
and much more
tho we are taking away their habitat
when we destroy someone's habitat
or home
we destroy part of ourselves

*Written by Sam (8), written to celebrate the official planting of a special tree in Windsor.
He thinks a member of the Royal Family did the honours, but he can't recall who*