

This is a collection of recent quotes about the dangers of agrofuels. They come from civil society statements, from scientists, and from politicians, policy advisors and political institutions. Please send other relevant quotes to [info\[at\]biofuelwatch.org.uk](mailto:info@biofuelwatch.org.uk) to help us expand and update this list! Thanks

Civil Society Statements:

Statement by **Tamil Nadu Environment Council and Equations, India**, December 2007 (<http://cedatrust.in/html/climate.pdf>)

“Apart from large scale use of pesticides and fertilisers that may cause irreversible damage to precious land resources, these plantations are bound to use up already strained freshwater resources. Demand for water is growing along with the economy. Agrofuel plantations will only increase competition for water, and ultimately impact food resources... We seek a ban on any scale of monocultures and plantations for the sake of agrofuel production.”

Statement by **Gender and climate change network – Women for climate justice**, December 2007

(http://www.genanet.de/fileadmin/downloads/themen/COP13/MADRE-gendercc_positionpaperagrofuels_final.pdf)

“We call upon governments, international agencies, and all stakeholders to... support the call of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food for a five-year moratorium on agrofuel development. The lack of scientific consensus about the net energy provided by agrofuels and the carbon emissions they generate, coupled with the lack of mechanisms to protect the nearly 900 million people who already suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition, warrants a freeze on agrofuel production.

Declaration “Fuelling Concerns” by farmers, people's movements, NGOs and concerned individuals who came together in Andhra Pradesh, 4th December 2007

(<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/biofuelwatch/message/1553>)

While such destruction of people's fields, forests and commons goes on the one hand on the other hand some realities about the "bio"fuels are hidden from the world... We reject any pseudo - "solutions" that are thrown upon us from outside that too touted as clean and green, which they are not. We neither asked for "agro"fuels as they are being propagated with such speed and at such scale, nor do we believe that they offer solutions for our real problems... The agriculture as our small farmers know and live by is life-giving. Agrofuels only add another layer of problems on to our peoples already facing be it large developmental projects, resource privatisation, mining MNCs, SEZs (special economic zones). Agro fuels only fuel more national crises and serve no national purpose as is said for energy security.”

Declaration on Agrofuels by **Friends of the Earth International**, 28th November 2008

(<http://www.foei.org/en/campaigns/climate/energy/agrofuels-declaration>)

“Friends of the Earth International is deeply concerned that the rapid development and production of agrofuels will increase already serious social and environmental problems including the risk of worsening climate change... On this basis Friends of

the Earth International is calling for a halt to the development, production and trade of agrofuels and that all targets and other incentives, including subsidies, carbon trading and public and private finance related to the development and production of agrofuels should be abolished.”

African Call for a Moratorium on Agrofuels, November 2007

(<http://www.gaiafoundation.org/documents/Africaagrofuelmoratorium.pdf>)

“We, the undersigned members of African civil society organisations, as well as organisations from other parts of the world, do urgently call for a moratorium on new agrofuel developments on our continent. We need to protect our food security, forests, water, land rights, farmers and indigenous peoples from the aggressive march of agrofuel developments, which are devouring our land and resources at an unbelievable scale and speed... the agrofuels push, rather than the seductive “carbon neutral” solution it claims to be, will exacerbate Africa’s climate and food security problems even more.”

Statement by **Madre**, 1st November 2007

(<http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/154718/1/>)

“We need a moratorium on agrofuels... Growing agro-fuels on a mass scale is already jacking up food prices, depleting soil and water supplies, destroying forests, and violating the rights of Indigenous and local people in areas newly designated as ‘biofuel plantations.’ Agrofuels are a false solution to climate change.”

Declaration of the First Patagonian Conference on Biofuels, Argentina, 25th May 2007

(<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/biofuelwatch/message/635%22>)

“We reject the development of biofuels, and view this as a mega- industry which will primarily benefit the large agro-exporting companies, seed patent companies, pesticide producers and a small number of middlemen and promoters. This will occur at the expense of small and medium-sized producers, biological diversity, and the socially based production, distribution and consumption of abundant as well as healthy food for local communities... We have joined the increasing number of organisations and individuals who are calling for a global moratorium on biofuels. Our aim is to halt the devastating expansion of bio-energy crops.”

Official Declaration of Chake Nuha on the Agro-fuels and Environmental Services Traps,

Paraguay, 24th April 2007

(<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/biofuelwatch/message/493>)

“We demand a worldwide moratorium on agro-fuels monocultures and the international trade in agro-fuels, including the trade in carbon credits. We need a moratorium to evaluate the potential impact and the dangers of this market. We denounce that we are victims of the adverse impacts of industrialized monocultures and that we fear that the bio-fuel market could result in even more catastrophic consequences. We understand that the climate change phenomenon requires swift responses. But climate change mitigation strategies have to focus on decreasing the consumption of the North and must not hinge on promoting agro-export models that put the screws on our land and peoples.”

Argentinean Groups against Agrofuels and critical to Al Gore visit, April 2007,

(www.wrm.org.uy/subjects/biofuels/Gualeguaychu.html)

“We are not convinced by the deluge of national and international advertising promoting the expansion of the agricultural industry and the production of agrofuels. This will only serve to make the current environmental situation even more unbearable, and will contribute to the degeneration of the air, water and soil, to which everyone has a right... We refuse to be subjugated to the neo-colonial role assigned to us by global capitalism or any other model which makes us dependent on international markets and reduces our food sovereignty. We will resist the cellulose pulp mills, and the production of ‘food’ for North American and European cars.”

Declaration by Alert Against the Green Desert Network, Latin American Network against Monoculture Tree Plantations, Network for a GM free Latin America, Oilwatch South America, World Rainforest Movement, 4th January 2007

(http://www.wrm.org.uy/subjects/biofuels/EU_declaration.html)

“While Europeans maintain their lifestyle based on automobile culture, the population of Southern countries will have less and less land for food crops and will lose its food sovereignty. We will have to base our diet on imported food, possibly from Europe. In other cases, energy crops will be grown in Latin America, as well as in Asian and African countries, at the expense of our natural ecosystems... The problem of climate change generated by the countries of the North cannot be solved by creating new problems in our region. We are therefore appealing to the governments and people of the European Union countries to seek solutions that do not worsen the already dramatic social and environmental situation of the peoples of Latin America, Asia and Africa.”

Open letter by Sawit Watch, Indonesia, 29th January 2007

(http://www.wrm.org.uy/subjects/agrofuels/Palm_Oil_Letter_EU.html)

“Palm oil for Biodiesel increases social conflicts and undermines land reform in Indonesia... The idea of palm oil biodiesel being environmentally sustainable and climate friendly makes no sense: Emissions from deforestation, peat drainage and fires release vast amounts of greenhouse gases and fuel global warming further. Palm oil expansion directly affects millions of Indonesians and will further hamper resolution of existing conflicts and protection of the global environment... Global justice and solidarity are the only way to end starvation and to alleviate poverty. Reducing palm oil consumption will help to create more acceptable living conditions in the southern countries, including Indonesia.”

Biofuels: A Disaster in the Making, November 2006

(http://www.wrm.org.uy/actors/CCC/Nairobi/Disaster_Making.html)

“International trade in biofuels is already causing a negative impact on food sovereignty, rural livelihoods, forests and other ecosystems, and these negative impacts are expected to accumulate rapidly... Biofuels are a disaster in the making. Existing legally binding standards, regulations and enforcement mechanisms in the (potential) production countries are absolutely insufficient to prevent the above-mentioned impacts. International demand for biofuels is already surpassing supply in key countries like Malaysia and Brazil, giving an important push to the expansion of destructive crops like oil palm and sugar cane.

Scientists and Science Institutes:

European Environment Agency's Scientific Advisory Body, 10th April 2008
<http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/suspend-10-percent-biofuels-target-says-eeas-scientific-advisory-body>

“The 10 % target will require large amounts of additional imports of biofuels. The accelerated destruction of rain forests due to increasing biofuel production can already be witnessed in some developing countries. Sustainable production outside Europe is difficult to achieve and to monitor. The overambitious 10 % biofuel target is an experiment, whose unintended effects are difficult to predict and difficult to control.”

Robert Watson, Scientific Advisor to Defra, former Chair of the IPCC, UK, 24th March 2008

(http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/mar/25/biofuels.energy_)

"It would obviously be insane if we had a policy to try and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the use of biofuels that's actually leading to an increase in the greenhouse gases from biofuels."

Bill Sutherland, Chair in Conservation Biology, Cambridge University, 20th March 2008

(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/mar/20/climatechange.endangeredhabitats>)

"We need to have the science ready before policies are made and products are on the market ... the necessary science was not done before the introduction of biofuels. In terms of the environmental consequences and societal concerns, we should have thought of all these things before."

Sir David King, former Chief Scientific Officer, UK, March 2008

(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/mar/25/biofuels.energy>)

"There is enough evidence now that the White House having introduced to favour biofuels in the US has created quite a massive diversion of food crop products into biofuel production and hence pushed up prices of food, particularly in developing countries,"

John Beddington, Chief Scientific Officer, UK, 6th March 2008

“It is very hard to imagine how we can see a world growing enough crops to produce renewable energy and at the same time meet the enormous increase in the demand for food which is quite properly going to happen as we alleviate poverty...”

Joseph Fargione regarding a joint study with Jason Hill, David Tilman, Stephen Polasky, and Peter Hawthorne, 7th February 2008 (Interview with J Fargione:

<http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/features/art23819.html?src=new-study>:

<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/1152747v1>)

“All the biofuels we use now cause clearing of natural ecosystems for agriculture. Adding energy production to our current and growing demand for food production inevitably requires more land to be converted to agriculture, whether or not the biofuel is grown directly on that land. So biofuels either directly or indirectly cause land clearing, which releases carbon to the atmosphere and contributes to global warming. This is the biofuel carbon debt...From a climate change perspective, current biofuels are worse than fossil fuels.”

Quote from study: “Our results demonstrate that the net effect of biofuel production via clearing of carbon-rich habitats is to increase CO₂ emissions for decades or centuries relative to fossil fuel use.”

Timothy Searchinger regarding a joint study with Ralph Heimlich, R. A. Houghton, Fengxia Dong, Amani Elobeid, Jacinto Fabiosa, Simla Tokgoz, Dermot Hayes, Tun-Hsiang Yu, 7th February 2008, (Press report: <http://www.rsc.org/chemistryworld/News/2008/February/07020802.asp>: Study: http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/1151861_ 'Simply put, most of the biofuels people think will save greenhouse gases, won't.' Regarding EU proposals on biofuel certifications: “The current policy will have virtually no effect and needs to be dramatically revised”.

Quote from study: “By excluding emissions from land use change, most previous accountings were one-sided because they counted the carbon benefits of using land for biofuels but not the carbon costs – the carbon storage and sequestration sacrificed by diverting land from its existing uses. Using good cropland to expand biofuels will probably exacerbate global warming.”

Hartmut Michel, 1998 Nobel Prize winner for Chemistry, January 2008 (<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/inquirerheadlines/nation/view/20080114-112152/Rethink-biofuel-says-Nobel-laureate>)

“When you calculate how much of the sun’s energy is stored in the plants, it’s below one percent. When you convert into biofuel, you add fertilizer, and then harvest the plants. There’s not real energy gained in biofuel... When you burn the forest, you produce too much carbon dioxide, which you can’t save in the next several hundred years... We should not put money in biofuel development. It’s counterproductive... “It’s important to realize that in Europe, like Taiwan, biofuel may not make sense. If we use land to develop biofuel, it’s not the right solution.”

Study by Joern PW Scharlemann and William F Laurence, 4th January 2008 (www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/short/319/5859/43)

“Nearly half (12 out of 26) of the biofuels—including the economically most important ones, namely U.S. corn ethanol, Brazilian sugarcane ethanol and soy diesel, and Malaysian palm-oil diesel—have greater aggregate environmental costs than do fossil fuels”.

Josette Sheeran, Executive Director, World Food Programme, 6th March 2008 (<http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/03/06/business/FOOD.php>)

“Sheeran said food prices were rising because of a combination of soaring oil and energy prices, the effects of climate change, growing demand from countries like India and China and ‘This is leading to a new face of hunger in the world, what we call the newly hungry,’ she said. ‘These are people who have money, but have been priced out of being able to buy food.’

Joint Research Centre, European Commission, January 2008, published March 2008 (ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc_biofuels_report.pdf)

“Assuming that people do not change eating habits because of biofuels, diverting EU production from food or animal feed markets will result in increased food imports. Together with directly imported feedstock, these will add to world food demand, and the reduction in EU exports will detract from world food supply. ...On economic impacts: Despite all the uncertainty the conclusion is very solid: there is virtually no chance of benefits exceeding costs!”

Florian Siegert, Tad Patzek, David Pimentel, Mario Giampietro, Helmut Haberl,
Open letter to Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the IPCC, 30th October 2007
(<http://www.grain.org/agrofuels/IPCCLetter-to-DrRKPachauri.pdf>)

“Even at a small scale, cultivation of biofuels often will take fertile land away from agricultural use, and thus lead to land-use change emissions, as the market-place encourages the world farming frontier to expand into forests and other often carbon rich ecosystems to accommodate. This is currently leading variously to major damage to biodiversity, irregularities in land acquisition and other human rights abuses, water pollution and stress on water resources in addition to the land disturbance emissions.”

Study by Paul Crutzen, A. R. Mosier⁴, K. A. Smith⁵, and W. Winiwarter,
September 2007

(<http://www.physorg.com/news109581631.html>)

When the extra N₂O emission from biofuel production is calculated in "CO₂-equivalent" global warming terms, and compared with the quasi-cooling effect of "saving" emissions of fossil fuel derived CO₂, the outcome is that the production of commonly used biofuels, such as biodiesel from rapeseed and bioethanol from corn (maize), can contribute as much or more to global warming by N₂O emissions than cooling by fossil fuel savings.

Study by Renton Righelato and Dominick Spracklen, 17th August 2007

(<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/317/5840/902>)

“As even this low substitution level [a 10% EU target] cannot be met from existing arable land, forests and grasslands would need to be cleared to enable production of the energy crops. Clearance results in the rapid oxidation of carbon stores in the vegetation and soil, creating a large up-front emissions cost that would, in all cases examined here, outweigh the avoided emissions”

Florian Siegert, professor of ecology, Ludwig-Maximilians Universitaet, Munich,
interview with Neue Zuericher Zeitung, 2nd April 2007

“The massive expansion of palm groves is occurring at the expense of rain forests, Siegert said. As rain forests are burned out to clear large tracts of land to plant palm trees, the burning releases enormous CO₂ emissions, thereby invalidating all expectations that palm oil-based bio-fuels would reduce net emissions, Siegert charged. He called bio-fuels ‘climate killers’”.

Politicians, Political Advisers and Rapporteurs and Political Institutions:

Jeffrey Sachs, Economic Advisor to the UN, 5th May 2008

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=42247>

"The U.S. programme has a larger impact (on food prices), but neither of them makes much sense in terms of environmental effects, energy balance or food policy. I would advocate reconsideration of both."

Olivier de Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food, May 2008

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=42247>

"The ambitious objectives for the production of biofuels that have been set by the United States and the European Union are irresponsible. The production of rapeseed, palm oil destroys the forests in Indonesia. The use of one-quarter of corn in the United States is a scandal, in which taxpayers' money is used solely to serve the interests of a small lobby. I call for a freeze on all investment in this sector."

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, head of the International Monetary Fund, 18th April

http://in.news.yahoo.com/reuters_ids_new/20080418/rtrbs/tbs-biofuels-poses-a-moral-problem-imf-s-796e4e8_1.html

"When we make biofuels from agricultural products not used for food, that is fine. But when they are made from food products, this poses a major moral problem," Asked if he would support a possible moratorium on biofuels, Strauss-Kahn said: "When they use foodstuffs." "In terms of food-related riots, the worst is unfortunately possibly in front of us," he said. "Hundreds of thousands of people are going to be affected."

Robert Zoellick, World Bank President, 11th April

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21726628~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

"While many are worrying about filling their gas tanks, many others around the world are struggling to fill their stomachs, and it is getting more and more difficult every day."

Stavros Dimas, European Environment Commissioner, 15th January

2008(<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/7186380.stm>)

"We have seen that the environmental problems caused by biofuels and also the social problems are bigger than we thought they were."

Environmental Audit Committee, UK, 15th January 2008

(<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmenvaud/76/7602.htm>)

"The stimulation of biofuels production by the Government and EU is reckless in the absence of effective mechanisms to prevent the destruction of carbon sinks internationally....Support for biofuels has been premature given the substantial environmental risks associated with current technologies....the Government should place a moratorium on policies aimed at increasing the use of biofuels"

Louis Michel, European Development Commissioner, 11th January 2008

(<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=40762>)

"The risks Mr Ziegler has spoken about are real. It's good to issue warnings on the illusions about biofuels. It is clear the use of forests for the manufacture of biofuels is dangerous. The use of arable land to produce the resources necessary for biofuels could be detrimental to agricultural production."

Jean Ziegler, as Special UN Rapporteur for the Right to Food, October 2007 (<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/10/15/europe/EU-GEN-EU-UN-Biofuel.php>)
Calling for a 5-year moratorium on biofuel production: "You don't have the right, even if you're battling climate change, to (perpetuate) this total massacre" [caused by lack of food].

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, May and June

2007 (http://www.checkbiotech.org/green_News_Biofuels.aspx?infoId=14672 and <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/biofuelwatch/message/681>)

"The main reason for the dramatic expansion of oil palm plantations, notwithstanding their adverse impacts on people and the environment, is that these provide big profits to domestic and international plantation owners and investors. These mega-profits are ensured by cheap labour, low cost of sale or rent of land, ineffective environmental controls, high demand, support from multilateral and bilateral donors and a short growth cycle."

"She said there are few statistics showing how many people are at risk of losing their lands, but in one Indonesian province - West Kalimantan - the U.N. has identified 5 million indigenous people who will likely be displaced because of biofuel crop expansion. The clearing of forests to make room for these new crops is putting at particular risk the 60 million indigenous people who depend on forests almost entirely for their survival, according to the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues."
(from article following a press conference)