

NGO Statement on Bioenergy

As civil society members, we are participating in the meeting on “Understanding Bioenergy Trade and Supply Chain Risks” by delivering our key messages on biomass energy and palm oil-based biofuels.

Globally, bioenergy production and consumption are on the sharp rise due to renewable energy policy support. Governments around the world are incentivizing biomass-to-power and palm oil-based biofuels to meet their renewable energy and fuel targets.

However, bioenergy developments have been criticized due to sustainability concerns on the environment, climate and local people. The increase in production and consumption of bioenergy pushes the demand for feedstock imports and exports. Bioenergy production is linked to deforestation, local air pollution, land grabbing, and human rights abuse. Industrial scale bioenergy reverses the original goal of renewable energy policy by increasing greenhouse gas emissions and threatening our ecosystem biodiversity.

Despite the sustainability risks of its supply chain, bioenergy is still regarded as green energy because of its ability to replace oil and coal in existing facilities. Carbon neutrality of bioenergy is a myth and replacing fossil fuels with bioenergy often does not help our societies to decarbonize.

Together, we demand:

- For forest-centered bioenergy: Governments and corporations to end deforestation for production of bioenergy and to protect biodiversity.
- For people-centered bioenergy: Governments and corporations to end exploitative and abusive practices in the biomass and biofuels supply chain, and to respect the rights of local communities, peasants, women, indigenous peoples and smallholders.
- For climate-centered bioenergy: Governments to end financial supports for industrial scale biomass and biofuels to tackle climate crisis.
- For sustainability-centered bioenergy: Governments to revoke the unjust policies for unsustainable bioenergy and to strengthen sustainability requirements for biomass and biofuels and enforce the adoption of international norms for bioenergy investment.
- For governance-centered bioenergy: Governments to stop relying on bioenergy to meet their carbon neutrality goals, and to actively engage civil society organizations throughout energy transition planning processes.