



GLOBIOM study: Corn ethanol has a low impact on land use change

CEPM welcomes the results of the GLOBIOM study sponsored by the European Commission to assess the impact of various biofuels used in the European Union on land use change (LUC). The study concludes that the contribution of corn ethanol to the European objectives generates the lowest LUC out of the conventional biofuels derived from arable crops. However, CEPM considers that we have to look beyond the LUC debate, which is based on the opposition of uses for agricultural land, and favour an approach based on their complementarity in the bioeconomy.

The GLOBIOM study created a model of the consequences of the increase in biofuel demand to meet the European 2020 targets. It concludes that corn ethanol is the biofuel with the lowest LUC* among the cereal, sugar and oilseed crops. The use of corn ethanol does not affect world maize prices either.

CEPM is pleased that this study highlights the assets of corn ethanol, along with other biofuel sources, to meet the European renewable energy incorporation targets in transports for 2020 and 2030.

However, CEPM considers that this study brings confirmation that LUC assessments are uncertain, and unable to identify the contribution of indirect effects. LUC assessments are only models, and remain dependent on the hypotheses included in the biofuel development and reference scenarios. In certain hypotheses, corn ethanol presents a negative LUC, and therefore appears as a carbon sink.

Faced with these lingering uncertainties over ILUC, CEPM considers that the future European bioenergy policy should be broadened to take into account the positive role of agriculture towards climate change mitigation and towards food security. In this framework, CEPM favours bioeconomy, as it is based on the complementary of uses of the biomass (food, bioenergy-bioproducts, carbon storage). This should enable the development of a more inclusive approach of the contribution of agriculture and maize to a whole range of European Union objectives, from food to energy and climate policies.

EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF MAIZE PRODUCTION
C.E.P.M.

Emissions linked to land use change

in grams of CO2 equivalent per MJ of biofuels	LUC
Corn ethanol	14
Wheat ethanol	34
Sugar beet ethanol	15
Sugar cane ethanol	17
Rapeseed oil biodiesel	65
Soybean oil biodiesel	150
Palm oil biodiesel	231

Source : GLOBIOM

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