

Biofuel Cities Update – October 2007

Issue #3 / October 2007

Welcome!

Welcome to the third issue of the Biofuel Cities Update, your monthly electronic newsletter providing information on developments in the field and from the Biofuel Cities European Partnership.

What is the Biofuel Cities European Partnership? The Biofuel Cities European Partnership is a forum for the application of biofuels. Open to all stakeholders in the area of biofuels for vehicles, it offers access to the www.biofuel-cities.eu information and exchange portal; workshops and study tours; news, publications and tools. **The Partnership is supported by the European-Commission funded Biofuel Cities project. Participation in the Biofuel Cities European Partnership is free.** To join more than 730 peers or to find out more, visit www.biofuel-cities.eu or write to secretariat@biofuel-cities.eu

Biofuel Cities Update welcomes your contributions – just send your news to secretariat@biofuel-cities.eu. In addition to publication in the Update, your news will receive exposure on www.biofuel-cities.eu. News from Biofuel Cities European Partnership participants enjoy publishing priority.

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1. NEW EU BIOFUEL REGULATIONS RESULT IN POSITIVE CLIMATE IMPACT BUT ALSO POSSIBLE AIR POLLUTION

New proposed EU regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions when generating and producing fuels would result in a positive environmental impact, but also possibly create extra air pollution. This is the stance taken by the European Parliament, with respect to the European fuel quality guideline.

To read more:

<http://gave.novem.nl/gave/index.asp?id=25&lan=en&detail=1849>

(Source: GAVE-news, Oct 2007)

2. NATURAL GASOLINE TAXIS FOR BASEL

One year following the launch of its project, 27 natural gasoline or biogas taxis are on the road in the Swiss region of Basel. The goal is to build a taxi fleet of about 100 environmentally friendly vehicles by 2015 to serve the north-western part of Switzerland.

The results of a recent study indicate that almost 90% of customers believe that natural gas taxis are a sensible alternative to regular taxis. Moreover, 19 taxi companies have already joined the project.

To read more:

<http://www.iwb.ch/de/erdgas/treibstoff/erdgastaxis.php>

(Source: IWB, 15 October 2007)

3. BIOFUEL FLIGHTS READY FOR TESTING AS EARLY AS END OF 2008

Air New Zealand plans to mount the first test flight of a commercial airliner partially powered by biofuel. The 747 flight is one part of a deal between the airline, engine producer Rolls-Royce and aircraft manufacturer Boeing. One of the four engines will run on a mixture of kerosene and a biofuel, and is set to take off in late 2008 or early 2009. It will not carry passengers.

To read more:

http://www.biofuels-news.com/news/biofuels_testflights.html

(Source: Biofuels International, October 2007 / Autoblog green)

4. LARGEST BIODIESEL PLANT IN THE UK GIVEN GREEN LIGHT

ABS Biodiesel, a UK-based biodiesel production company, will start construction of a new biofuel production facility in the UK, following a decision by Bristol City Council planning department on 3 October. The site will produce approximately 225,000 tonnes of biodiesel, with the capacity of the site enabling a potential increase to 500,000 tonnes.

The 191,000 tonnes of biofuels consumed in the UK is estimated to climb to 2.5 million tonnes by 2008.

To read more:

http://www.biofuels-news.com/news/ukbiofuels_greenlight.html

(Source: Biofuels International, October 2007 / Evening Post, Bristol)

5. EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN ETHANOL INDUSTRIES COUNTER OECD REPORT

The Renewable Fuels Association (RFA) and the European Bioethanol Fuel Association (eBIO) have called upon the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to disavow the paper issued several weeks ago by the OECD criticising world ethanol production. The highly publicised report prepared on the responsibility of the Chair of the Round Table on Sustainable Development at the OECD delivers some damaging news concerning the effectiveness of biofuels for climate protection.

To read more:

http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Newsroom/070920_OECD_letter.pdf

(Source: eBio, September 2007)

6. PILOT PROJECTS WITH LOCAL DISTILLERY - REGION OF BREMEHAVEN, GERMANY

In September 2007, the TTZ Bremerhaven (Technology Transfer Centre) started a regional biofuel project in the Rotenburg rural district, Germany. In collaboration with a local distillery, the TTZ has been piloting the regional, small-scale production of biofuels with the goal of demonstrating that such a concept can be successful, cost-efficient and sustainable as well as economically beneficial for the region.

The distillery Rockstett has been equipped to produce the innovative biofuel E85, consisting of 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline - compatible with a wide range of usual gasoline-driven vehicles but causes significantly less CO₂ emissions.

To read more (in German):

<http://idw-online.de/pages/de/news226570>

(Source: Informationsdienst Wissenschaft, September 2007)

7. MAKING YOUR OWN BIODIESEL - AN EXAMPLE FROM THE UK

Since the authorities in the UK have exempted the first 2.500 litres of homemade diesel from excise duty, production has increased significantly. EcoTec Resources UK, the largest supplier of DIY (do-it-yourself) kits, has reported that 360 kits have already been sold. Homemade biodiesel is considerably cheaper than fossil-based diesel purchased from filling stations. According to Andrew Hodson from EcoTec, biodiesel can be made using the EcoTec DIY kits for 12 pence (17 eurocent) per litre, 'snackbars and restaurants are happy to give you

their old frying oil, and if you collect it from them then you just have to pay the production costs'.

(Source: GAVE-news, October 2007)

8. ABENGOA SUSPENDS BIOETHANOL PRODUCTION IN SPAIN

Spanish engineering and energy company Abengoa Bioenergy has suspended bioethanol production at the largest of its three Spanish plants because it was unprofitable. The company has cited high grain prices and uncertainty about the national market for ethanol.

Earlier this year, Abengoa said the bioethanol market needed the Spanish government to impose mandatory blending. The government has said it is considering this, but so far has talked about a mandatory 2% biofuel content, not the 5.75% target the European Union has set for 2010.

(Source: Biofuels International- News / Planet Ark-News)

9. BIODIESEL FROM COOKING OIL IN HUNGARY

As a result of growth in tourism as well as the price increase in the raw materials for biodiesel production, it is expected that in this year 10% more - altogether 5000 tons of used cooking oil - will be collected in Hungary. As it was stated by György Deák, Chief Executive Officer of market leader Biofilter Co., this growth is mainly attributed to the increase in tourist numbers during the summer Hungarian restaurants. In one of Hungary's main tourist areas (around Lake Balaton) almost 3 times more used cooking oil could be collected this year compared to last year. Currently only 3% of the total amount is collected from private households.

To read more: http://www.eltis.org/show_news.phtml?newsid=1021&mainID=461

(Source: ELTIS news, September 2007 / Hungarian News Agency)

10. USING MAIZE AND GRASS AS ENERGY CROPS

Research carried out in Belgium (Bioengineering at the Catholic University of Louvain) has shown that using maize and grass as energy crops to feed anaerobic digesters saves a significant amount of CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels despite the fact that they need to be transported to the plants by road.

In spite of the fossil energy consumed for their production and transformation to biogas, maize and grass energy crops allow a net production of renewable energy together with a significant reduction in fossil-energy-related CO₂ emission.

To read more:

<http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/futures/31118>

(Source: Environmental Research Web, September 2007)

11. POLICIES UPDATE

26.10.07 EU scales down on biofuel crop subsidies

A special farm aid scheme aimed at developing Europe's energy crop sector will be scaled back, after it emerged that farmers have already massively shifted production towards biofuels, overshooting a two million hectare target, the European Commission announced recently.

The programme was introduced in 2004 in order to stimulate the European biofuels sector. At the time, just 0.31 million hectares were devoted to biofuel crops and the Commission hoped to raise this to 2.0 million hectares in 2007. But with applications already reaching 2.84 million hectares this year, the EU's €90 million budget is unable to cope.

To read more:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/sustainability/eu-cuts-back-biofuel-crop-subsidies/article-167713>

(Source: EURActiv, Oct 2007)

22.10.07 European biodiesel sector wants import duty on US biodiesel

At the end of October, European biodiesel manufacturers threatened to file complaints to the European Commission and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) concerning US biodiesel subsidies. The manufacturers say that these are threatening both European industry and the Union's ambitious target of achieving a 10% share for biofuels in transport fuel by 2020.

To read more:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/transport/eu-biodiesel-producers-threaten-action-unfair-us-subsidies/article-167685>

(Source: EURActiv, Oct 2007 / GAVE-news, Oct 2007)

12.10.07 Excise duty increase for biodiesel under discussion in Germany

The German government fears that the next increase in excise duty on biofuel, planned for 1 January 2008, will give small to medium-sized biodiesel manufacturers considerable problems. The government is currently considering cancelling this duty increase. In August 2006, German tax authorities began adding 9 cents per litre to the price of biodiesel. The plan was to slowly increase the excise duty until it reached a level (in 2012) of slightly less than fossil-based diesel. In practice, however, the 9 cents per litre has been sufficient to make biodiesel more expensive than conventional diesel. According to the Berliner Zeitung, half of the current production capacity is now lying idle, or is running at reduced capacity.

To read more (in German):

<http://www.dlz-agrarmagazin.de/?redid=188445>

(Source: GAVE-news, October 2007)

02.10.07 European Parliament pushes for compulsory certification of biofuels

The European Parliament passed a resolution on the 18 September supporting a mandatory blend of biofuels at European pumps. The European Parliament supports the 10% biofuel objective for 2020, provided the biofuels are produced sustainably. In order to monitor the sustainable aspects of biofuels, the politicians at the European Parliament are lobbying for a compulsory certification, which also takes account of water stocks, biodiversity, and carbon reserves (due to a changing land use) and social problems, such as rising food prices and the relocation of local populations. Although they would not be classified as being "bad" biofuels, they could never benefit from tax exemptions or European funds.

(Source: GAVE-news, October 2007 / Autoblog Green)

28.09.07 EC publishes Green Paper on urban transport

The new Green Paper on Urban Transport, formally presented by the EU Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot on the 25 September, outlines a large range of potential solutions and areas where the EU could take action in order to tackle the growing congestion, pollution and safety problems in Europe's cities.

The aim behind the Green Paper is to create "free-flowing and greener towns and cities, smarter urban mobility and an urban transport which is accessible, safe and secure for all European citizens". The Paper suggests a number of means to achieve these goals, such as:

- supporting the introduction of clean and energy-efficient vehicles through 'green public procurement', which could mean including life-cycle costs for energy consumption and CO₂ and other pollutant emissions in the award criteria in addition to the vehicle's price;
- setting harmonised minimum performance standards for the operation of vehicles.

To read more:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/transport/commission-unveils-urban-mobility-strategy/article-167100>

Link to EC Green Paper:

http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Newsroom/2007_09_25_gp_urban_mobility_en.pdf

24.09.07 Biofuels: the second generation

With ethanol and biodiesel coming under increasing criticism for driving up food prices and putting biodiversity at risk, the EU has committed to second-generation' biofuels as a clean alternative for transportation - but many challenges remain before they find their way into our cars.

To read more:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/biofuels-generation/article-165951#links>

(Source: Euractiv, September 2007)

12. PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

24.10.07 Biomass Gasification for Synthesis and Production of Renewable Automotive Fuels (GASPAR)

This project comes under a broader research and development programme that aims to develop in the medium term an industrial process capable of transforming any type of biomass into biofuel that can be used in today's automotive engines, at a competitive cost. The technical pathway selected is thermochemical conversion by steam.

To read more:

http://www.cirad.fr/ur/index.php/biomasse_energie/projets/projets/gaspar

(source: Biofuel Cities Project Database)

24.10.07 SHAMASH

A French scientific research project coordinated by the INRIA Sophia Antipolis, which started in 2006. The objective is to produce biofuels in the form of methyl ester from microalgae, which can accumulate up to 50% their weight in fat acids. Shamash brings together eight French teams and enterprises - experts in microalgae culture and use, in biotechnology process modelling, in liquid purification and in biofuels- for an overall budget of €2.8 million.

To read more:

<http://www-sop.inria.fr/comore/shamash/>

(source: Biofuel Cities Project Database)

18.10.07 ILUBE - Integrated Logistics for Use of Biomass Energy

The project has taken a significant step in creating a market for renewable fuel, wood pellets, in northwest Slovakia. LIFE funding was vital for the reconstruction of boiler rooms and the construction of a processing mill that provides pellets in schools, public buildings and some private homes across the region and beyond.

To read more:

<http://www.biomasa.sk>

(source: Biofuel Cities Project Database)

11.10.07 SIPTRAM - Sustainability in the Public urban Transport Market

The SIPTRAM project aims to encourage local and regional authorities across Europe to improve the environmental and quality standards in urban public transport through the competitive tendering process

To read more:

<http://www.increase-public-transport.net>

(source: Biofuel Cities Project Database)

13. NEW PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

New resources this month range from downloadable publications such as:

- Biodiesel in Australia: benefits, Issues and Opportunities for Local Government Uptake

to links to relevant online resources such as:

- Bio-d.net: a webpage from where you are linked to webpages about, among others, Ethanol (Ethanol Gas, Alternative Fuel, Ethanol Production and Ethanol Density).

In addition to the Resources Database, the Resource Centre offers information to Biofuel Cities European Partnership participants, e.g. Study Tours, Workshops, Twinings.

To register your participation in the Biofuel Cities European Partnership (registration is free of charge) visit: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4025>

14. EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

30.10.07 Call for Papers - 16th European Biomass Conference and Exhibition, Feria Valencia, Spain, 2008

At the end of October, ETA – Renewable Energies Florence and its partner organisation WIP – Renewable Energies Munich announced a Call for Papers for the 16th European Biomass Conference & Exhibition to be held from 2-6 June 2008 at Feria Valencia, Spain.

This international conference is aimed at stimulating public discussion and promoting awareness of the biomass community. Scientists, industry, suppliers, funding bodies and decision-makers are invited to meet the more than 1,500 expected attendees.

Deadline for abstracts (call for papers): 30 November 2007.

For more information:

<http://www.conference-biomass.com>

Download Call for Papers:

http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Newsroom/Call_for_Papers.pdf

12-13.11.07 Regional Workshop On Sustainable Biofuels Production and Use In Central & Eastern Europe, Dubrovnik, Croatia

Workshop website: <http://www.unido.org/en/doc/69350>

13.11.07 Next Generation Bio-Ethanol, Geneva, Switzerland

The recent increase on oil prices is putting stress on economies around the World. World energy demand, however, will continue to increase, exacerbating this situation. Alternative energy sources, therefore, are receiving a lot of attention. Particularly, for transportation, ethanol, derived from biological sources, has become the most popular alternative fuel.

Conference website:
<http://www.cmtevents.com/eventschedule.aspx?ev=071148&>

15. Editorial and legal information

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