

Forests and REVISION of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED): UPCOMING ITRE VOTE - 13 July

12th July 2022

Dear Italian MEPs in ITRE Committee,

At next week's ITRE vote on the Renewable Energy Directive you have the **opportunity to protect our forests** which are currently damaged by over-logging, largely due to RED incentives for use for energy. It is estimated around half of the total EU forest harvest is now burned to create energy [1].

On behalf of GREEN IMPACT and GUF - Gruppo Unitario per le Foreste Italiane - we urge you to vote to stop the subsidies and incentives for burning trees, so that

- our forests can remain standing to support vital biodiversity and keep CO2 sequestered to help EU climate goals.
- the annual €12 billion of subsidies under RED, and further €12 billion from free CO2 emission allowances under ETS [2], can instead be invested in real renewables of solar, wind, and geothermal, and
- a fair level playing field can be provided for wood industry using timber for long-lived products alongside forest biomass plants, which currently get taxpayer subsidies to burn trees for energy.

Priority recommendations for the ITRE vote:

SUPPORT the following:

1) Definition of Primary Woody Biomass and Secondary Woody Biomass ENVI AMs 33 & 34 - Art 2.2 (new) & ENVI AM 8 (recital 4)

The distinction between primary and secondary woody biomass allows for stopping support for burning primary wood for energy, the most valuable wood in forest biomass. This definition is an integral part of ENVI's Opinion on support schemes and should be supported by ITRE.

[1] https://forestdefenders.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JRC-study-biomass-study-overview_final.pdf

[2] <https://www.birdlife.org/news/2022/05/12/press-release-new-report-industries-dodge-12-billion-euro-bill-annually-due-to-emissions-loophole-for-biomass/>

2. Cascading Principle: Art 3.3.3

Support the full application of the cascading principle of a hierarchy of use for wood, respecting wood as a valuable economic resource and using wood according to its highest material use - first priority for long lived products. ITRE CA2 covers the application of this principle via an implementing act instead of the proposed delegated act.

REJECT the following:

3. Sustainability criteria and support schemes: Article 29

REJECT ITRE AMs: 68-70; 1167-1196

All amendments tabled to Article 29 either weaken or delete biomass sustainability criteria, or remove protective measures for forests. They should therefore be rejected. The ENVI Opinion on Art 29 (**ENVI AMs 91-105**), should be supported in full at plenary.

The EU needs to protect and restore forests, for people, for biodiversity and for the climate - not log them for energy.

Please vote to protect our future.

With best wishes,

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