The bioenergy industry has given a mixed response to the European Commission’s revised Renewable Energy Directive (RED).

The revised RED, published yesterday (30th November), strengthens the existing EU criteria for bioenergy sustainability and extends them to cover also biomass and biogas for heat and power, according to the EC.

Commenting on the sustainability criteria, Didzis Palejs, president of the European Biomass Association (AEBIOM), said: "This proposal is an important step for the European bioenergy industry, which has been calling for an EU harmonised policy over the past years."

The European Commission’s proposal took a pragmatic approach considering some ground realities faced by many European bioenergy players. Proposing sustainability requirements for installations over 20MW capacity, endorsing a risk-based approach for forest biomass and allowing the possibility to recognise voluntary schemes are among the crucial aspects considered by the proposal.

The European Commission also opted for a rational land-based sustainability approach per type of biomass (biomass from forestry, biomass from agriculture, etc.) and not per energy use.

"As wood can be used to make biofuels or produce heat and electricity, the Commission’s approach addressing sustainability of forest biomass, whatever its energy end use, makes sense,” said Palejs.

However, Sini Eräjää, EU Bioenergy policy officer at environment group BirdLife Europe & Central Asia, said: “Ignoring science and brushing aside evidence of the destructive impacts of current bioenergy use will not make these problems go away – it will more likely make them worse.

“The EU needs to limit the use of bioenergy, rather than putting new targets for its use in heating and transport and stop the use of whole trees and land based crops for energy. The European Commission has to come clean on bioenergy.”

According to BirdLife, as Europe heads for full decarbonisation and an increasing share of renewables, more caution about their deployment is needed across the different technologies...
to ensure that they do not harm biodiversity and actually provide genuine decarbonisation.

Ariel Brunner, Senior Head of EU Policy, BirdLife Europe & Central Asia said: “Europe needs to get more ambitious, not only about the amount of renewable energy but also about its quality. "Stronger safeguards are not only needed to scrap harmful bioenergy but also to ensure wind, solar and other renewables are planned and located in a smart way. Environmental integrity is still missing from the Commission’s Clean Energy Package.”

**Heating and cooling**

The revised RED also provides Member States with options to increase their share of renewable energy in heating and cooling supply, aiming at increasing the share of renewable energy by 1% point per year in their total supply until 2030.

It also opens access rights to local district heating and cooling systems for producers of renewables, under certain conditions.

“How is the EU planning to reach its 2050 objectives and its COP21 commitments by keeping endorsing fossil fuels in its energy system?” said Jean-Marc Jossart, Secretary General of the European Biomass Association (AEBIOM).

The Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) currently does not specify which sources and technologies are eligible to meet its energy efficiency targets, AEBIOM said in a statement.

**‘Accelerate the phase-out’**

“The lack of eligibility criteria under the energy efficiency legislation is a missed opportunity to increase transparency of EU legislation and ensure climate change objectives are met,” said Philippe Dumas, Secretary General of the European Geothermal Energy Council (EGEC).

He added: “We now urge Member States and the EU Parliament to accelerate the phase-out of even condensing heating oil and coal boilers, and start the phase-down of gas-boilers with a 2050 perspective.”

“Even if more efficient than the old ones, new oil boilers can continue to burn oil well beyond 2050. And this is not compatible with the EU long-term objectives. Solutions that are not ‘2050 ready’ should not be promoted anymore. Instead, renewable and highly efficient solutions must be phased-in fast. The industry is ready for this but requests clearer goals,” said Thomas Nowak, Secretary General of the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA).

The revised Renewable Energy Directive contains attempts to promote a fuel switch in the heating and cooling sector such as minimum share of renewables in nearly zero energy buildings.

"Member States should endeavour to increase the share of renewables in the heat sector, but this should now be made mandatory” said Pedro Dias, European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF) Secretary General.

The general lack of ambition of the package is a missed opportunity to develop different renewable sources of energy, including those capable of decarbonising the heating and cooling sector, such as geothermal, solar thermal, biomass, and efficient heat pumps.

Supporting the switch to renewables in the heating sector is an opportunity for the EU not only to effectively combat climate change, but also to decrease its energy imports and develop a native and competitive industry, creating growth and jobs within the EU.

"was written by Liz Gyekye, editor of Bioenergy Insight."
Bioenergy industry gives mixed response to EC’s RED II | Bioene...

http://www.bioenergy-news.com/display_news/11449/Bioenergy_...
The UK’s 540 anaerobic digestion (AD) plants now generate more energy than the landfill gas sector and represent 2% of total UK gas production. According to data from the UK Anaerobic Digestion... [Read More]

The bioenergy industry has given a mixed response to the European Commission’s revised Renewable Energy Directive (RED). The revised RED, published yesterday (30th November), strengthens the existing... [Read More]

Retail heavyweights Waitrose, John Lewis and Argos long-distance lorries are among the first users in the UK of a renewable biomethane fuel which is 35%-40% cheaper than diesel and emits 70% less CO2. UK-based... [Read More]

NexSteppe, a US feedstock provider for the bio-based industries, announced today that it has entered into an agreement with Longping High-Tech Arable Land Remediation Technology Company, a subsidiary of... [Read More]

Hong Kong-based China Everbright International has announced that it has secured the entrusted operation rights of Wuxi Xidong household waste-to-energy project in Jiangsu Province, and will be responsible... [Read More]

French energy company Engie has announced two new major collaborations to foster new innovative green gas production methods across Europe. According to Engie, green gas is a key element of the energy... [Read More]

The European Commission has released its long-awaited revised Renewable Energy Directive (RED) and proposed the phase-out of food crop-based biofuels from 2021. The wants to simultaneously introduce... [More]
Bioenergy industry gives mixed response to EC’s RED II | Bioenergy...
Bioenergy industry gives mixed response to EC’s RED II | Bioene...

http://www.bioenergy-news.com/display_news/11449/Bioenergy_...
IFS warns of biggest squeeze on pay for 70 years over Brexit theguardian.com/busi...

12:33 pm - 25th November 2016