

Mr Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President

.11.2020

Mr Valdis Dombrovskis
Executive Vice-President

Ms Kadri Simson
Commissioner for Energy

Sent by e-mail only

Mr Virginijus Sinkevičius
Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Mr Janusz Wojciechowski
Commissioner for Agriculture

Subject: A joint non-paper on the biomass and bioenergy aspects of the EU taxonomy

Dear Vice-President Timmermans, Vice-President Dombrovskis, Commissioner Simson, Commissioner Sinkevičius and Commissioner Wojciechowski,

On behalf of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, allow us to forward you our joint non-paper on the biomass and bioenergy aspects of the EU taxonomy.

Forest biomass use for energy production has been referenced in several Green Deal initiatives. The Biodiversity Strategy regarded sustainable bioenergy as one of the priority solutions for decarbonising the EU energy system. We welcome the Commission's focus on ensuring that only sustainable biomass is used in the EU and hope to contribute with our experience as forest-rich countries to the Commission's further analysis in this field. All the undersigned Member States prioritise the sustainable management of their forests and the use of forest biomass according to the agreed sustainability criteria of the Renewable Energy Directive (EU 2018/2001).

Therefore, it is utmost important that decisions that influence the future of energy policy are made in close co-operation with Member States and in the relevant policy fields. The delegated act currently being developed under the Taxonomy Regulation should be based on the existing Renewable Energy Directive in terms of the criteria for biomass and bioenergy sustainability. This would ensure the consistency of different policy fields and certainty for the bioenergy sector. Going beyond the Directive's requirements at this stage would demand a thorough impact assessment and close consultation with Member States and the relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, any future modifications to the delegated act should respect the same principle of taking the most recently agreed requirements of the Renewable Energy Directive as its basis.

Together with the joint non-paper on taxonomy, we are attaching the country specific fact sheets on the biomass usage and forest management practices in Estonia, Latvia and the Czech Republic. These fact sheets show the current state and the future of forest biomass use in these countries and some of the logic behind the activities of ensuring biomass sustainability, which is of the highest government priority. We are ready to elaborate on these topics with the relevant Commission services and if needed provide further information.

Yours Sincerely,

signed digitally

Taavi Aas

Minister of Economy and Infrastructure,
Estonia

signed digitally

Janis Vitenbergs

Minister of Economics,
Latvia

Enclosed:

1. Joint non-paper on the biomass and bioenergy aspects of the EU taxonomy
2. Fact sheet on forest biomass in Estonia
3. Fact sheet on forest biomass in Latvia
4. Fact sheet on forest biomass in the Czech Republic