

# Ensuring Forest Sustainability in the Development of Wood Biofuels and Bioenergy: Implications for Federal and State Policies

## A Policy Dialogue

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### Framing Thoughts:

- ❖ Wood bioenergy (fuels, power) has an important role in US energy future
- ❖ Bioenergy will change forest practice and policy
- ❖ Forests are a limited resources; renewable does not necessarily mean sustainable
- ❖ Goal: how to make wood bioenergy sustainable

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## Context for this issue

### ❖ **Bioenergy: using woody biomass to create**

- liquid fuels (e.g., ethanol)
- electricity
- heat

### ❖ **Drivers**

- Renewable Fuel Standard (EISA 2007): 16 bgy by 2022
- State renewable portfolio standards
- (draft) Federal renewable electricity standard
- 25% by 2025

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## *Context, continued – and some questions*

### ❖ **Main sources to meet RES/RPS: wind, solar, biomass** (efficiency often treated separately)

### ❖ **Renewable resources not evenly distributed**

### ❖ **Major increases in demand for woody biomass:**

- “Residuals” or “roundwood”?
- Increased harvest or bid from existing users?
- “Conventional” forestry or “plantations”
- Federal lands?
- Assuring sustainability – set asides or standards or both?

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## Heinz Center – Pinchot Policy Dialogue

- ❖ **Engage multiple interests re: forests or bioenergy to ensure adequate attention to forests**
- ❖ **First meeting – February 2009**
- ❖ **Participants:**
  - Biofuels, forest products, bio-electricity, combined heat/power, landowners (small and large)
  - Federal, state, local, and regional governments
  - NGOs (regional, national, forest-focused, broad agendas)
  - Academic and other experts

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## Key Initial Findings

- ❖ **Sustainability:** Major positive potential, BUT need to address lifecycle carbon benefits, local and landscape-scale effects.
- ❖ **Policy Ambivalence / Confusion:** What goal? Liquid fuel? Climate mitigation? Forest sustainability? Employment / economic development?
- ❖ **Tilted playing field**
  - Subsidies and incentives
  - Distributed generation and the grid

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## Future Dialogue Activities

- ❖ Mapping policy goals and effects
- ❖ Subsidies and incentives
- ❖ Grid-related issues
- ❖ Regional perspectives – how is this working out (or is it?) on the ground?

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## Concluding Thoughts:

- ❖ Wood bioenergy (fuels, power) has an important role in US energy future
- ❖ Bioenergy will change forest practice and policy
- ❖ Forests are a limited resources; *renewable* does not necessarily mean *sustainable*
- ❖ Goal: how to make wood bioenergy sustainable

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**Thank you**

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