

IUCN World Conservation Forum
Biofuels – Potentials, Challenges and Solutions
Aliances Workshop #1236, **8 October 2008 16:30 – 18:00, CCIB Room 128**

Organiser: Richard L. Ottinger, Pace University Center on Environmental Legal Studies and CEL Specialist Group on Energy Law and Climate Change

- (1) **Introduction** – overview (Richard L. Ottinger, Organizer – Pace & CEL) (10 mins.)
- (2) **German and EU proposed standards and certification for sustainable biofuels, international agreement prospects and** (Klaus J. Hennenberg, Scientist, Energy and Climate Division, Institute of Applied Ecology, Oeko-Institut, Darmstadt, Germany) (10 mins.)
- (3) **Risk governance guidelines for bioenergy policies** (Christopher Bunting, Secretary General, International Risk Governance Council, Geneva, Switzerland) (10 mins.)
- (4) **Q & A** (15 mins)
- (5) **Developing country perspectives** (Mersie Ejigu, Senior Fellow, Foundation for environmental Security & Sustainability (FESS), President, Partnership for African Environmental Sustainability (PAES), former Minister of Agriculture and Panning of Ethiopia) (10 mins.)
- (6) **Engaging women in biofuels production in developing countries** (Gail Karlsson (ENERGIA –the international network on gender and sustainable development)
- (7) **Latin American Experiences and Opportunities** (Victor Tafur, Colombia, Riverkeeper Organization (10 mins.)
- (8) **Q&A** (15 mins.)

Overview

The objective of the panel is to highlight the economic and greenhouse gas reduction opportunities of biofuels for developing countries and the need for strong and enforceable biofuel environmental and social standards and regulations with respect thereto. The abstract submitted is as follows:

Biofuels have a tremendous potential to assist economic development and relieve poverty in developing countries because they can be produced from local products, provide local jobs, relieve dependence on costly fuel imports, and they do not require expensive import of complex equipment and expertise. Biofuels also can be of some assistance for all counties in relieving dependence on expensive imported fuels, increasing energy security and reducing greenhouse gas and other polluting emissions. On the other hand, if not rigorously regulated, biofuels can consume more fossil fuels than they save, increase greenhouse gas emissions, compete with and increase the price of agricultural products needed for food, exploit and/or displace local labor, decrease biodiversity, destroy land quality, decimate forests and, if dominated by large international agribusinesses, pay substandard wages, displace local farmers, and siphon off the profits from utilization of local resources, constituting a new form of economic colonialism. Developed countries also can and do impose duties on biofuel imports that inhibit local benefits. Therefore there is urgent need for adoption of international standards for biofuel development to protect the environment and assure local social benefits. An international certification program should be adopted verifying conformance with these standards, and biofuel importers should be constrained from importing uncertified biofuels that do not meet the prescribed standards. An international regulatory, enforcement and monitoring structure needs to be adopted with stiff penalties for violations (perhaps along the lines of WTO sanctions). Subsidies should be made available to developing countries to help them initiate certified biofuel programs, to train local personnel and educate the public re the potentials and risks of biofuel production.