

Episode 56GA July 12, 2023. Scientists' letters telling EU in 2021, & U S in 2020 to stop wood burning & telling US in 2010 to count wood burning emissions.

Alaska

[Alaska and 9 other states threaten to sue EPA over wood-burning stove standards](#)

GovExec.com

Particulate pollution from wood-burning stoves and other sources can get trapped in that stagnant air, resulting in violations of Clean Air Act ... An electrical factory in Fairbanks, Alaska. State officials say wood-burning stoves are responsible for much of the area's air pollution, ...

California, San Francisco, East Bay

[Dust-proof - East Bay Express](#)

East Bay Express

It measured "coal-related PM 2.5 associated with: 1) rail conveyance of coal ... with expertise in identifying particulate matter, including coal, ...

Georgia

[EPD climatologist explains air quality measurements | Georgia Public Broadcasting](#)

Georgia Public Broadcasting

Oser said it is easy for these pollutants to enter lungs. Two sizes of particulate matter are measured. "One is 10 microns and one is 2.5 microns," ...

New York, New York City

[Air Quality Health Advisory in effect for New York City, Long Island, Rockland and ...](#)

CBS News

Reduce or eliminate outdoor burning and attempt to minimize indoor sources of PM 2.5 such as smoking. To find out more about ground level ozone, CLICK ...

New York, New York City

[Air Quality Advisory issued for New York City, parts of Tri-State for Wednesday](#)

ABC7 New York

Advisories are issued when either ozone or fine particulate matter (PM2.5) ... and attempt to minimize indoor sources of PM 2.5 such as smoking.

New York, Bucks County

[Wooden pallets burned outside of Buck Springs Water Company | Local News - KJAS.com](#)

KJAS.com

A large pile of wooden pallets along with what may have been plastic or rubber burned late Tuesday morning outside of Buck Springs Water Company ...

South Carolina

[It's better to breathe in this big SC city than nearly any other in the US. Here's why - The State](#)

The State

Wildfires, along with contained fires like fireplaces and wood burning stoves, ... Avoid secondhand smoke: Make your home and car smoke-free.

Texas, Houston

[Wildfire pollutants may have caused dozens of premature deaths in Houston area, researchers report](#)

Houston Public Media

Particulate matter 2.5, also known as pm2.5, is an inhalable particle or droplet that is 2.5 microns or smaller. For example, a red blood cell is ...

Washington, Seattle, Kitsap County

[Outdoor recreational fire ban issued in Kitsap County - FOX 13 Seattle](#)

FOX 13 Seattle

Under a Stage 2 burn ban, all recreational burning in the open is prohibited. ... Use a metal screen over wood-burning fires to keep sparks from ...

Washington, DC

[The wood industry releases more carbon than Russia — and we're not counting its emissions: study](#)

The Hill

Much of what remains is sold as firewood — to be burned in homes — or wood pellets, which largely go to power plants. While this energy is renewable — .

United Kingdom, Hackney

[DUP leader urges peaceful and positive July 12 celebrations - Hackney Gazette](#)

Hackney Gazette

Sir Jeffrey Donaldson said the burning of flags or election posters on ... mainly made by stacking wooden pallets, have been burned already, ...

United Kingdom, Salisbury

[No injuries reported in Kenly Street fire - Salisbury Post](#)

Salisbury Post

"I knew that was too much smoke to be from somebody burning wood," he said. "I got around the corner to where I could see the house and heard the ...

Asia, South Asia.

[Paths for reducing harmful air pollution in South Asia identified - Newswise](#)

Newswise

Newswise — Fine particulate matter comes from wood burning, power generation, motor vehicles and other combustion sources that emit tiny particles ...A new analysis of fine particulate matter exposure led by researchers at ... At only 2.5 micrometers or smaller, these particles are small enough ...

PM2.5 and Human Health

[Wildfires aren't going away. Here's how smoke can affect your health - Science News](#)

Science News

Ground-level ozone, particulate matter (both PM10 and PM2.5), carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide are the primary parameters ...

PM2.5 and Human Health

[Early air pollution exposure linked to decreased sleep quality in preschoolers - Healio](#)

Healio

While PM2.5 exposure was collected through a satellite-based model using participants' residential addresses, researchers assessed preschoolers' sleep ...

PM2.5 and Human Health

[Wildfire Smoke Creates Unhealthy Conditions and Potential Property Damage for Millions in ...](#)

WebWire

People with heart or breathing problems, and children and the elderly may be particularly sensitive to PM 2.5. "Wildfire smoke can also react with .

<https://www.wwf.eu/?2128466/500-scientists-tell-EU-to-end-tree-burning-for-energy>

500+ scientists tell EU to end tree burning for energy

Posted on 11 February 2021

"Regrowth takes time the world does not have to solve climate change", they write.

Over 500 scientists are writing to EU Commission President Von der Leyen, European Council President Charles Michel, US President Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Suga and South Korean President Moon, [in a letter](#) published today.

Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates.

The scientists - including Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, former chair of the IPCC and Peter Raven, U.S. National Medal of Science winner and former President of the American Society for the Advancement of Science - write:

"The burning of wood will increase warming for decades to centuries. That is true even when the wood replaces coal, oil or natural gas"

"To avoid these harms, governments must end subsidies and other incentives that today exist for the burning of wood whether from their forests or others. The European Union needs to stop treating the burning of biomass as carbon neutral in its renewable energy standards and in its emissions trading system".

What's more, over 40,000 Europeans have [signed a petition](#) to the EU against the burning of forests and food for energy.

The petition calls for an end to the rules which allow wood burning for energy to be counted as “renewable” and so receive public subsidies.

The petition answers were submitted as part of the Commission's public consultation on the revision of the EU Renewable Energy Directive, which closed on 9 February.

Alex Mason, Senior Policy Officer at WWF European Policy Office said:

“it’s what you’re burning that matters, not how sustainably the forest was managed. The revision of the EU renewables law is a crucial chance; the Commission must listen to scientists and citizens and stop trees being burned in the name of the climate.”

for each kilowatt hour of heat or electricity produced it “will likely to add two to three times as much carbon to the air as using fossil fuels”.

Crucially, the scientists point out that carbon accounting at landscape level “cannot alter these results”. This is why WWF considers the bioenergy criteria in the Renewable Energy Directive to be largely meaningless and is calling for the EU to limit incentives to wastes and residues.

“If the world supplied just an additional 2% of its energy from wood, it would need to double its commercial wood harvests” the scientists say.

For more information:

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Over 500 scientists - and many thousands of citizens - have told the EU to end subsidies for forest biomass under the Renewable Energy Directive.

© Biofuelwatch

Related links

[Letter from over 500 scientists urging an end to subsidies for woody biomass](#)

[Read WWF's comment on the EU Commission's recent report on biomass - 'Most forest biomass harms climate, biodiversity, or both'](#)

[More on WWF's work on bioenergy](#)

<https://news.mongabay.com/2020/05/scientists-warn-congress-against-declaring-biomass-burning-carbon-neutral/>

Scientists warn U.S. Congress against declaring biomass burning carbon neutral

by [Justin Catanoso](#) on 13 May 2020

Some 200 U.S. environmental scientists have sent a letter to congressional committee chairs **urging they reject new rules proposed in April under the Clean Air Act that would define biomass, when burned to produce energy, as being carbon neutral.**

The scientists say that biomass burning — using wood pellets to produce energy at converted coal-burning power plants — is not only destructive of native forests which store massive amounts of carbon, but also does not reduce carbon emissions.

Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates.

A long-standing UN policy, recognizing biomass burning as carbon neutral, has caused the U.S. forestry industry to gear up to produce wood pellets for power plants in Britain, the EU, South Korea and beyond. Scientists warn that the failure to count the emissions produced by such plants could help destabilize the global climate.

The United Kingdom’s **Drax power stations,** one of the world’s largest users of woody biomass for energy production. Shown here is the Drax biomass dome, which once burned coal, is ramping up its burning of biomass. **The uncounted carbon from Drax flows** into the atmosphere, adding to climate change.

Even as the COVID-19 pandemic attracts much of the world’s attention, some 200 environmental scientists from 35 states signed onto a [letter](#) delivered to U.S. congressional leaders imploring them to “oppose legislative proposals that would promote logging and wood consumption, ostensibly as a natural climate change solution.”

Currently, biomass producers in the U.S. and Eastern Europe are gearing up to deliver millions of tons of wood pellets to the EU, Great Britain and other nations to meet a rising global demand for biomass burned at industrial-scale levels at power plants, replacing coal. According to the scientists, wood pellets have been erroneously declared carbon neutral by the United Nations, creating what's been dubbed "a carbon emission accounting loophole" that could help destabilize the global climate.

The scientists urged chairs of House and Senate environment-related committees to resist claims that logging and wood consumption "represent an effective carbon storage approach, or claims that biomass logging and incinerating trees for energy represents renewable, carbon-neutral energy."

The text was followed by nine pages listing signatories, including leading names in climate science and conservation. The letter backs up its conclusions with citations to [24 scientific papers](#)

The document comes at a critical moment: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler informed federal lawmakers in April that the agency is presently drafting [new rules](#) under the Clean Air Act that will define biomass, when burned to produce energy, as being carbon neutral.

That decision would almost surely intensify U.S. logging for wood products used in energy production.

Generally, biomass burning carbon neutrality stems from the notion that CO2 emissions from trees that are harvested, turned into wood pellets, and burned to produce electricity are offset, or canceled out, by the planting of new trees that will absorb those emissions from day one.

However, the scientists behind the congressional letter point to numerous studies that conclude that carbon neutrality, if trees are replanted at all, takes 50 to 100 years — time that the world doesn't have. A [2018 special report](#) by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that nations must dramatically decarbonize their economies by 2030 to avoid catastrophic global warming impacts.

Still, the UN carbon-neutrality policy remains popular with governments, energy companies and investors across the European Union, in the United Kingdom and [South Korea](#). There, burning wood pellets in former coal-fired power plants is a fast-growing energy source that enables countries to claim on-paper-only carbon emission reductions. [Recent studies](#) find that burning wood actually produces more emissions than coal.

Moreover, much of the pelletized wood comes from the Southeastern U.S., destroying sensitive ecosystems and weakening environmental resiliency against climate change-intensified storms and flooding.

The handfuls of wood pellets and the green sleeves seen here are part of a biomass industry-supported PR campaign claiming that burning wood to produce energy is carbon neutral — a view with which many scientists adamantly do not agree.

On May 5, The Hill [published a rebuttal](#) to the Perciasepe-Bonnie commentary, written by four of the congressional letter signatories.

One myth the rebuttal authors strive to bust: the immediacy of carbon storage. Trees, they point out, do not sequester substantial amounts of carbon until they are at least 30 years old, and then keep accumulating carbon for centuries; newly planted trees, which biomass advocates promote as climate savers, do not become significant carbon sinks for decades.

They will do more harm in legislating in favor of biomass. It's not climate safe. Biomass is not carbon neutral.

In related news, biomass critics were dealt a setback this week in Europe. [A 2019 lawsuit against the European Union](#) demanded that the EU annul a portion of its mandated Renewable Energy Directive (REDII) which established that the burning of biomass would be considered renewable on par with solar and wind energy, and thus carbon neutral. That suit was [dismissed](#) on May 11 by the European General Court in Luxembourg for lack of legal standing.

The March 2019 lawsuit was brought by plaintiffs from six countries, including one in the United States. The court ruled, as legal experts predicted, that [only EU member states and institutions have standing to sue, not individuals or NGOs.](#)

The Congressional letter was delivered this afternoon to Rep. Kathy Castor (D-Fla.), chair, House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis; Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee; Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.), chair, House Natural Resources Committee; Rep. Collin Peterson (D-Minn.), chair House Agriculture Committee; Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), chair, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; and Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), chair, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

<https://www.nrdc.org/bio/nathanael-greene/scientists-congress-obama-count-carbon-biomass>

Scientists to Congress & Obama: count the carbon in biomass

May 24, 2010

[Nathanael Greene](#)

[Senior Advocate, Renewable Energy, Climate & Clean Energy Program](#)

Today a group of leading scientists from across the country sent a [letter](#) to congressional leaders and Obama officials urging them to **carefully count the carbon from biomass burned for energy as part of a comprehensive climate bill or any other legislation or regulation.** The letter makes abundantly clear that failing to do so risks sacrificing forests around the globe and **putting more pollution into the atmosphere, not less.**

Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates.

As my colleagues have written about ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) more generally), the American Power Act (APA) proposed by Senators Kerry and Lieberman provides a solid framework for reducing our global warming pollution and investing in a cleaner economy. Unfortunately, as proposed, **the bill would turn a blind eye towards emissions from biomass** The letter from the scientists puts it clearly:

Replacement of fossil fuels with bioenergy does not directly stop carbon dioxide emissions from tailpipes or smokestacks. **Although fossil fuel emissions are reduced or eliminated, the combustion of biomass replaces fossil emissions with its own emissions (which may even be higher per unit of energy because of the lower energy to carbon ratio of biomass).** clearing or cutting forests for energy, either to burn trees directly in power plants or to replace forests with bioenergy crops, has the net effect of releasing otherwise sequestered carbon into the atmosphere, just like the extraction and burning of fossil fuels.

turning a blind eye to the emissions,

Most importantly, Congress needs to understand that they're not just creating a biomass loophole, they're **actively encouraging biofuels refiners, utilities and industry to burn more biomass.**

if we only squeeze on part (the fossil fuel emissions), we're just going to shift the emissions to the other part (the biomass emissions).

Unfortunately, taking its lead from Congress, EIA does not count the emissions from the combustion of biomass in its total greenhouse gas emissions, but they do **add up these emissions.**

... [I]ncluding direct CO2 emissions from biomass energy combustion would increase the 2008 total for energy-related CO2 emissions by 353 million metric tons (6.1 percent). In the AEO2010 Reference case, including emissions from biomass would increase the projected 2035 total for energy-related CO2 emissions by 813 million metric tons (12.9 percent).

EIA's data clearly shows that the carbon emissions associated with bioenergy threaten the very basic goal of climate legislation. We're talking about **a block of pollution equal to roughly half of the reductions the bill is supposed to provide.** Biomass sourced carefully could really be part of the solution but, how can we hope to get good biomass or solve global warming **if we don't count all the source of pollution as pollution.** **You can't fix a problem if you don't first acknowledge that it exists.**

It's time for Congress to act and pass a comprehensive climate bill. They should **follow the scientists and the science** and **account for biomass emissions carefully.**

Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, see <https://RAWSEPresidents.wordpress.com> and click on the nearest right icon for the latest month, July 2023, of PDFs of articles with U R L's to search on. To the right of that, Stickers to handout for RAWSEP <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/rawsep-sticker-templates-get-your-two-cents-in/> Games such as 1)Bingo for RAWSEP, 2)Crosswords for RAWSEP, 3)EndWoodSmokeJeopardy.

4)EndWoodSmokeMonopoly Games, 5) a RAWSEP Flyer, 6)the Un-Twist-it Game, and 7)"Vending Machines for PM2.5 monitors", and icon links to 30 minute Youtube videos and Spotify podcasts as well as podcasts on Amazon Music Prime (free for Prime subscribers), podcasts.google.com, Cast Box, and Pocket Cast (Pocket Cast is only free on the phone App. Pocket Cast works on Apple phones) and, below those icons, icon links to monthly PDFs of articles with URL's to search on, from June 2023 to May 2022.