

## **The Social Dimension of EU Biofuel Policy**

### **Project**

### **Research Program**

SÖF

### **Duration**

Dec 2011 - Feb 2012

Since the adoption of the EU Renewable Energies Directive in 2009 the sustainability of biofuels has been an issue of ongoing discussions among scientists, civil society and policy-makers. While environmental concerns usually dominate the debates, the study produced in this project focuses on the social impacts of the EU biofuels production. Of particular interest in this context is the role of sustainability criteria and certification schemes in EU biofuel policy and to which extent they can ensure a sustainable use of biofuels.

In 2009, the German Ministry on Research and Education (BMBF) launched a long-term research project, which specifically deals with the social implications of biofuels. Conducting case studies in Germany and Brazil, the project Biofuel as Social Fuel? aims to assess the conditions, under which biofuels can be produced in a socially acceptable manner. It also explores the societal conflicts behind the further expansion of biofuel production.

The Ecologic Institute produced this study in the context of the project "Biofuel as Social Fuel?" mainly in order to highlight the social impacts of the EU biofuels policy. It provides a brief discussion about its main impacts on vulnerable groups in developing countries and elaborates on the extent, to which social aspects are addressed in current EU policies. More specifically, it examines, how far social requirements are considered in certification schemes and which gaps still exist in ensuring a more sustainable biofuel production. Finally, the study shows possible ways on enhancing, reshaping or extending existing policies in order to fill these gaps.

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