

## PRESENTATION

Speech  
Bioeconomy  
Energy  
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Water

# Freshwater Impacts of Proposed Biofuel Policy in Germany

TimeLoc

6 July 2012

Suzhou

China

[Andrew Ayres](#) [1]



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On 6 July 2012, Andrew Ayres of Ecologic Institute presented a paper on water management and expanded biofuel use at the Fourth International Conference on Applied Energy in Suzhou, China. The paper, entitled "Germany's Water Footprint of Transport Fuels," details how the water footprint indicator can be used to estimate the water resource use necessary to produce fuels in Germany under the requirements of the EU Biofuels Directive. The presentation is available for download.

At the conference, Andrew Ayres explained how previous estimates of the water footprint of Germany's transport fuel sector, assuming compliance with the EU target of 10% renewable sources in surface transport fuel by 2020, were inaccurate and that meeting this target could exacerbate the challenges for sustainable water resource management. Indeed, meeting this target could affect water resources not only domestically but also globally, as Germany could begin importing these biofuels from abroad in the future.

Using more accurate and reliable German data for projected energy demand in 2020, regional production and water footprints of biofuel feedstocks, and the current state of the biofuel market in Germany, this paper finds that the water footprint of Germany's transport fuel sector could be almost three times larger than previous studies had indicated the total water footprint of the expanded biofuel sector could be.

Although the current debate about the sustainability of EU biofuel policy centers on their greenhouse gas mitigation potential, it is important for policy makers to be aware of the effects biofuel expansion can have on domestic and global water resources as well. Although the water footprint cannot alone inform policy makers about the sustainability of water use, the results paint a more water-intensive picture of German biofuel expansion than previous studies had done.

The cross-cutting nature of the Fourth International Conference on Applied Energy's theme of "[Energy Innovations for a Sustainable World](#)" [3] was reflected in the various disciplines that were represented there. Papers focusing on engineering, environmental and policy analysis, urban planning, and social aspects of energy

use could be found among the many presentations and posters. Topics included strategies for harnessing high-altitude wind resources, footprinting of biofuel use, managing uncertainty in energy technology development and planning, and case studies of energy and policy innovations from around the world, among many others. Keynote speeches were given by Bjorn Stigson of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Weiayang Fei of Tsinghua University, Pil-Bae Song of the Asian Development Bank, and Dennis Best of the International Energy Agency.

The conference was organized by the Elsevier journal [Applied Energy](#) [4].

The [presentation](#) [5] [pdf, 355 KB, English] of Andrew Ayres is available for download. His paper is going to be published as part of the conference proceedings.

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### **Links**

[1] <https://www.ecologic.eu/4324>

[2] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/presentation/2013/logo\\_icae.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/presentation/2013/logo_icae.jpg)

[3] <http://www.applied-energy.org/index.htm>

[4] <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/applied-energy/>

[5] [http://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/presentation/2013/ayres\\_12\\_Freshwater\\_Impacts\\_of\\_Biofuels\\_Germany.pdf](http://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/presentation/2013/ayres_12_Freshwater_Impacts_of_Biofuels_Germany.pdf)