

Frank Rosillo-Calle

THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (IEA) BIOENERGY AGREEMENT TASK40¹: “SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONAL BIOENERGY TRADE: SECURING SUPPLY AND DEMAND- A GENERAL PERSPECTIVE”

Frank Rosillo-Calle: Research Fellow, Imperial Centre for Energy Policy and Technology, Imperial College London, f.rosillo-calle@imperial.ac.uk

Overview

The interest for international bioenergy trade is growing rapidly. In recognition, the IEA set up in December 2003 Task 40 to assess the implications of large scale trade in bioenergy. Given the nature of bioenergy, this could have major social, economic and environmental impacts. The core objective of IEA Bioenergy Task 40 is to support the development of sustainable, international bioenergy markets, recognizing the diversity in resources and applications. The vision of Task 40 is that bioenergy trade will develop into a real ‘world commodity market’.

Methods

The study assesses the work carried out by Task 40 and compares it with its objectives. Through the international platform provided by IEA Bioenergy, combined with industrial partners, government bodies and NGO’s, Task 40 contributes to the development of sustainable bioenergy markets in the short and long-term at different scales (from regional to global). The areas of greatest interest and growth have been primarily on sustainable international bioenergy trade markets, optimization of supply chains, assurance and certification, formulation of policy and involvement of industry and traders. Forestry and agricultural residues, woodchips, pellets, bioethanol, biodiesel, and vegetal oils, are all traded at national, regional and global levels.

The study assesses the achievement and failures of key aims of Task 40: i) improvement in the understanding of bioenergy markets and trade; ii) analysis of some steps taken to develop biomass resources and exploit biomass production potentials in a sustainable way; iii) development of frameworks to secure the sustainability of biomass resource production and utilization.

Results

Task 40 is now recognized as a unique and leading international platform on international bioenergy trade for its analytical capacity and high quality outputs.

Members of Task 40 operate at two levels: i) internationally in cooperation with other Task 40 members. In this case all members contribute to the overall objectives/ deliverables agreed by the membership of the task; and ii) at national level where members address issues of specific interest to their member countries. This study will put emphasis on development in the United Kingdom and policies being implemented to promote bioenergy and how this is leading to greater international bioenergy trade.

Conclusion

The study shows the despite its short history, Task 40 has been able to investigate a large number of issues; there have been achievements and failures. It poses some hard questions

¹ Current member countries are Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and UK. For further details of Task 40 please visit www.bioenergytrade.org

e.g. how realistic are the objectives of Task 40; how and why bioenergy should or should not be treated in the same way than any other traded commodity; what could the possible impacts on food production, particularly prices.