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Newsletter IEA Bioenergy Task 37: 09/2022

Policy on biogas

Topics:

[Clare Lukehurst - the grand old lady of UK's AD died](#)

[Austria: Gas labeling mandatory as of 2023](#)

[REPowerEU: Joint European action for more affordable, secure sustainable energy](#)

[EU meets 2020 renewable energy target in transport](#)

[Brazil launches Methane Zero National Program](#)

[Swedish Government announces biogas investment plan](#)

[Spain wants to further develop biogas](#)

[Spain adopts guarantee of origin for green gas including hydrogen](#)

[Switzerland begins consultations to promote cleaner energy, including biogas plants](#)

[Call for tenders for biomethane production facilities with gas injection in France](#)

[Final clean fuel regulations are out in Canada](#)

[AFNGV calls on Europe to recognize RNG as a renewable low-carbon fuel](#)

[Australian state of Victoria invests record amount in bioenergy](#)

[DOE announces \\$96 million for advancing clean vehicle technologies](#)

[European Commission approves Italian scheme to increase biomethane production](#)

[Senate introduction of RNG motor fuel tax credit bill](#)

Clare Lukehurst - the grand old lady of UK's AD died

With Dr Clare Lukehurst, who has died aged 87 on April 23, 2022, we lost one of the longest and most engaged members of IEA Task 37. From 2005 until her death, Clare was the UK's National Team Leader. As a tireless promoter of AD, Clare had a strong appreciation of the intrinsic value that the international collaboration IEA Bioenergy provided. Despite her age she rarely missed a meeting of our Task. In addition, she was present for many years on all major European conferences with a particular interest for site visits. This international knowledge was extremely useful: she had been known to set UK policymakers right when their perspective was too limited and to provide all the necessary information

and evidence to support the needs of the biogas sector which she so clearly understood. For quite some years she was dealing with serious illness, but she remained indefatigable in her work and in her support of the international bioenergy network. For several years, when the UK government was reluctant to pay the IEA membership fees for its biogas Task, she campaigned personally to raise the necessary funds, touring UK Bioenergy conferences to solicit financial support from key industry players. Once she had made up her mind for a specific project, she never gave up until she reached a successful outcome. She always remained polite and friendly but very determined, sometimes even stubborn. Our team always had great respect for all the work she has done and the success she had in the UK's AD development. We will miss her.

Austria: GAS LABELING MANDATORY AS OF 2023

The previously voluntary gas labeling will become mandatory in Austria. It will apply from 2023 for the calendar year 2022, according to E-Control. The regulator further reports that it will be the central point of contact for registration and will also be responsible for organizing the system. The gas label will apply to all domestically active producers of renewable gases, such as biomethane or hydrogen, as well as to all producers of fossil gas. The scheme will result in improved information for end customers. The transparency for the end customer will be increased to a significant extent, thus facilitating a conscious decision by the end customers in favor of the consumption of renewable gas.

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REPowerEU: Joint European action for more affordable, secure sustainable energy

In May 2022 the European Commission proposed a **plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels well before 2030**, starting with gas, in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In order to make the EU less dependent on natural gas, the production of green hydrogen and biogas is to be accelerated, among other things. To accelerate green hydrogen production, the EU authority promises to quickly adopt the 2018 Renewable Energy Directive Delegated Act (RED 2). It sets criteria for liquid and gaseous fuels of non-biological origin. The criteria are expected to be milder than in its first draft, which was criticized by the European hydrogen industry association. In the area of biogas, the EU Commission proposes an EU-wide production target of 35 billion cubic meters by 2030. Member states are to draw up national plans for this. The recently reformed agricultural market reform is intended to give farmers incentives to produce biogas. The European Council of Energy Regulators (CEER), the EU's energy agency Acer and the European Association of Transmission System Operators Entso-g are to develop guidelines on how biomethane can be more easily injected into the gas grid. Permitting procedures for renewable energy plants are also to be shortened to two years, as required by the RED 2 directive. Already in December 2021 a group of about 30 companies and organisations, coordinated by European Biogas Association and Common Futures published a Biomethane Declaration. In this Declaration they called for a scale-up of biomethane to 350TWh by 2030, which roughly equals 35bcm. Today the EU produces 3 bcm of biomethane. Scaling-up to 35bcm requires the mobilisation of sustainable biomass feedstock, mostly waste and residues, plus building about 5,000 new biomethane plants. From a technical perspective this is feasible during the next eight years. And it's cost-effective as well. The group developed also a break-down for the 35bcm based on available biomass feedstock.

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EU meets 2020 renewable energy target in transport

The EU has met the 10% target level for 2020 for the share of renewable energy (including liquid biofuels, biomethane and 'green' electricity) used in transport. This target was included in Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources. Eurostat data

show that the average share of energy from renewables in transport increased from 1.6% in 2004 to 10.2% in 2020, standing 0.2 percentage points (pp) above the target level. Among the Member States, 12 surpassed the target. Sweden was the clear leader in the use of renewables in transport with 31.9%, followed by Finland (13.4%), the Netherlands and Luxembourg (both 12.6%). Sweden's leadership is explained by the high use of compliant biofuels. In contrast, Greece (5.3%) and Lithuania (5.5%) registered the lowest use of renewables in transport. In 2020, all EU Member States, with the exception of France (no change, 9.2%) and Finland (-0.9%), registered an increase in the share of renewable energy in transport compared with 2019, with the largest increases observed for Estonia (+5.9%), Luxembourg (+4.9%), Belgium (+4.2%) and Cyprus (+4.1%).

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Brazil launches Methane Zero National Program

On March 21, 2022, the Brazilian Government launched a new package of incentive measures seeking to stimulate programs and actions to reduce methane emissions, particularly through development of biogas and biomethane initiatives. The new package – called Federal Strategy of Incentive to the Sustainable Use of Biogas and Biomethane is aligned with the commitments made by Brazil in the context of COP26. One of the main targets of the incentive package is to promote the development of carbon markets, particularly introducing the methane credit. Although the package does not provide further details on such methane credits, they are supposed to represent a ton of methane that has not been emitted and are expected to be aligned with existing carbon credits markets, in the sense that the marketing of such methane credits should generate additional income to biogas and biomethane projects. Brazil already has a successful regulated market for credits related to decarbonization through biofuels – RenovaBio – that has been fully functional since 2020 and currently presents a 98% compliance rate.

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Swedish Government announces biogas investment plan

The new regulation means those who produce biogas can receive a subsidy of up to 30 ore (€0.02) per kWh if the biogas is upgraded to the same quality as natural gas. Liquefied biogas can receive an additional 15 ore (€0.01) per kWh in support. In the long term, it is hoped this can reduce the country's dependence on imports of fossil natural gas. In the budget bill for 2022, SEK 500 million (€47.9 million) was set aside to increase biogas production and strengthen producers' competitiveness. In 2023 and 2024, it is proposed that SEK 700 million (€67 million) per year be provided for the same purpose. The investment could continue until 2040.

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Spain wants to further develop biogas

The Spanish Council of Ministers has just validated a new biogas development plan. The aim is to multiply its production by 3.8 by 2030 and exceed 10.4 TWh. Focused on the recovery of waste (agricultural, food industry, municipal and sewage sludge), it should promote the use of biogas for the production of electricity and useful heat -in particular for industry-, and for the supply of biofuel for sustainable mobility. The new roadmap for the development of RNG includes no less than forty-five measures, divided into five axes; proof that the government of Madrid is determined to give a boost to the use of biogas! Beyond the usual economic incentives (150 million euros in subsidies will be distributed) or the encouragement of research and development efforts; the Spanish government is introducing three additional axes to support the development of RNG: 1) The creation of a guarantee of origin system, so that consumers can distinguish biogas from conventional fossil gas. 2) The

implementation of new administrative procedures should allow the simplified use of waste in the manufacture of RNG and the reuse of production residues as agricultural fertilizer. 3) Sectoral quotas for bioNGV consumption will be introduced (RNG in vehicle fleets, thermal uses, hydrogen production and substitution of fossil gas in general). With this new package of measures, Spain clearly states its conviction that renewable gases are part of the solution to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.

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Spain adopts guarantee of origin for green gas including hydrogen

Spain introduces a governmental quality labeling system for green gas from renewable energy sources. This includes, for example, hydrogen produced with renewable energy. The Spanish Environment Ministry wants to award the seal for each megawatt hour of gas that comes 100 percent from renewable energy sources. The guarantee of origin is to provide information on where, when and how the gas was produced. In addition, the regulation sets targets for the share of clean fuels in road transport and transportation. In 2022, the share of biofuels is to increase to 10.5 percent, and by 2026 to 12 percent

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Switzerland begins consultations to promote cleaner energy, including biogas plants

Switzerland's Federal Council initiated consultations on a package of financial incentives meant to drive the expansion of renewable energy in the country. The measures, to be introduced as part of legislative changes, concern solar, wind, geothermal, biogas and hydropower. Investment subsidies will be provided for wind power and biogas plants running on agricultural biomass to cover up to 60% of the investment costs. Such subsidies will also be granted to geothermal plants. The one-time remuneration for PV plant of between 2kW and 150kW is fixed at € 438.- per kW while facilities over 150kW will get a one-time payment determined in auctions. Solar plants should also receive a winter bonus. The introduction of these instruments follows the decision of the Swiss parliament from October 2021 to replace the feed-in tariffs. All these new incentives will be available until 2030.

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Call for tenders for biomethane production facilities with gas injection in France

In April, a call for tenders "biomethane injected" was launched by the French Ministry of Ecological Transition together with the publication of the decree on the certificates of production of biogas constitute a real positive signal sent to the sector. They demonstrate the Government's desire to accelerate the development of renewable gases in France to achieve the transition, in a context of international tensions and soaring energy prices. Eligible for this call for tenders are new production facilities located in mainland France that produce biomethane from biogas captured in landfills or from digesters using household and similar waste. The call is divided into three half yearly periods; the first ending by December 16, 2022. For each period, a volume of 200 GWh per application period/year is reserved as a priority for projects with a projected annual Production less than 50 GWh PCS/year. In total 550 GWh will be supported per period. The aim of the call is to regain the development momentum that has been slowed down today, and thus reach 20% of gas consumption by 2030.

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Final clean fuel regulations are out in Canada

Canada is leading the way with their latest clean fuel regulations that will rely heavily on the use of low-carbon biofuels like increasing ethanol use by 2030, bring more clean tech and energy efficient practices, and more. The government's latest regulations will also support the country's bioeconomy

while driving down emissions towards net zero. The 227 pages long regulations have been designed to ensure there will be no immediate impact on fuel prices. In addition, the *Clean Fuel Regulations* come at a time when refining margins on gasoline in Canada are up more than 113 percent between June 2019 and June 2022, and oil and gas companies are experiencing record cash flows. In this context, it is an opportune time for industry to invest in new, clean technology. *The Clean Fuel Regulations replace the current federal Renewable Fuels Regulations*. In moving to adopt regulations that focus on emissions throughout the lifecycle of fuels, Canada is following similar approaches that already exist in British Columbia, California and Oregon. In combination with the Government of Canada's \$1.5 billion Clean Fuels Fund, the CFR will create incentives for the increased domestic production of low-carbon-intensity fuels. Working in tandem with pollution pricing and the forthcoming oil and gas emissions cap, the *Clean Fuel Regulations* will also help diversify energy choices and promote faster adoption of zero-emission vehicles by incentivizing the deployment of vehicle-charging infrastructure.

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AFNGV calls on Europe to recognize RNG as a renewable low-carbon fuel

As the revision of the European CO2 regulation (EU) 2019/1242 for new heavy-duty vehicles gets underway, the French natural gas vehicle association (AFNGV) calls on the European authorities to recognize the renewable nature of biofuels, and in particular of RNG. Today, the calculation of CO2 emissions is based solely on tailpipe emissions, leaving out certain sectors that are nevertheless virtuous on a much more global cycle. As the discussions on the revision of the European regulation on new heavy-duty vehicles begin, the AFNGV and its members have written a note calling for a change in the calculation method.

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Australian state of Victoria invests record amount in bioenergy

On behalf of the Victorian Government, Sustainability Victoria is delivering \$10 million to encourage investment in the state's bioenergy sector – the biggest ever Victorian grant funding investment in bioenergy. The Waste to Energy Fund: Bioenergy will support projects that create bioenergy from organic waste. The output of which may be electricity, heat, gas or liquid fuels. The fund is expected to deliver an additional 5,000 kW to Victoria's renewable energy production. Funding is also available to develop end uses for the residual products created by the treatment process. The programme will support organisations to dispose of waste in an environmentally friendly way while reducing their operational costs, including energy bills. Projects will process waste that would have otherwise gone to landfill or been disposed of in a way that does not leverage its value as an energy source, such as crop residue burning.

A wide range of sectors will be supported by the fund, including: agricultural and livestock; forestry; food production; food retail and wastewater management. Residential curbside waste is not included.

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DOE announces \$96 million for advancing clean vehicle technologies

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced a \$96 million funding opportunity to support decarbonizing the domestic transportation sector. The funding will focus on expanding electric vehicle (EV) charging accessibility, create cleaner non-road vehicles through electrification and the use of alternative fuels, and develop electric drive components and materials to maximize EV efficiency and affordability. Non-road vehicles, including agricultural and construction equipment, rail, marine and aviation, are a major source of pollution, emitting more carbon pollution than any other sector of the U.S. economy. Lowering vehicle emissions will support President Biden's goal to achieve to net-zero economy by 2050. Further, in accordance with President Biden's Justice40 Initiative.

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European Commission approves Italian scheme to increase biomethane production

The EC has approved, under EU State aid rules, an Italian scheme made available through the Recovery and Resilience Facility ('RRF') to support the construction and the operation of new or converted biomethane production plants. The scheme will also contribute to the objectives of the REPowerEU Plan to reduce dependence on Russian fossil fuels and fast forward the green transition. The scheme, notified by Italy, will run until 30 June 2026. It will support the production of sustainable biomethane to be injected into the national gas grid for use in the transport and heating sectors. In particular, the measure is aimed at promoting the construction and the operation of new or converted biomethane production plants in Italy. In order to qualify for aid under the scheme, the biomethane production must comply with the requirements set out in the EU Renewable Energy Directive. For biomethane to be used in the transport sector specifically, only the production of advanced biomethane will qualify for aid, as it is the most sustainable and environmentally friendly fuel, to help the EU achieve its climate and energy objectives.

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Senate introduction of RNG motor fuel tax credit bill

The two US Senators Richard Burr (R-NC) and Mark Warner (D-VA) introduced the Renewable Natural Gas Incentive Act, a bipartisan effort to provide a tax credit for heavy-duty vehicles that use renewable natural gas (RNG) to further support clean and efficient transportation across America. The RNG Incentive Act would create a \$1.00 per gallon tax credit for dispensers of RNG used for transportation. In 2021, 64 percent of all on-road fuel used nationwide in natural gas vehicles was from a renewable source.

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