



**"EU Bioenergy Policies and their effects on rural areas and agriculture policies"**

**Contract n° 044437**

**Specific Support Action Project**

**Priority 8.1 Policy Orientated Research**

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## **PUBLISHABLE FINAL ACTIVITY REPORT**

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Period covered: from 1. May 2007 to 31. October 2008

Date of preparation: 18. December 2008

Prepared by: Timo Kaphengst, Thomas Dworak (Ecologic)

Start date of project: 01/05/2007

Duration: 18 months

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*Project coordinator organisation name: Ecologic – Institute for International and European Environmental Policy, Berlin*

## PROJECT EXECUTION

AGRINERGY (EU Bioenergy Policies and their effects on rural areas and agriculture policies) is a Specific Support Action (SSA) within the Sixth EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6). The project aimed to analyse and understand the socio-economic, environmental and societal issues of EU bioenergy policies and their effects on future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and how they fit into the concept of sustainable rural development.

The AGRINERGY project began in May 2007 and has been completed in November 2008.

1. The project is coordinated by **Ecologic**, Institute for International and European Environmental Policy in Berlin, **Germany**, and the following partner organisations:
2. **SGGW** – the Warsaw Agricultural University, Poland
3. **CEPS** - Centre for European policy studies, Belgium
4. **BIONORM** – Biomasse Normandie, France
5. **LEI** - Agricultural Economics Research Institute, Netherlands
6. **Ecologic**– Institut für Internationale und Europäische Umweltpolitik gemeinnützige GmbH, **Austria**<sup>1</sup>

The key objectives of AGRINERGY were to summarise and explain the link between the Common Agricultural Policies (CAP), the development of rural areas, environmental protection, trade policies and EU bioenergy policies. Second, one of the objectives was to bring together policymakers, decision makers, stakeholders and experts in the field of the CAP, bioenergy, environment and international trade, in order to develop a common language and understanding. Finally, it aimed to develop cornerstones for future EU bioenergy-policy-making, ensuring the sustainable use of biomass for bioenergy (environmentally friendly and socially acceptable) and analysing synergies for the development of rural areas in Europe.

### Methodology and Structure of activities:

The **support activities** of this SSA project are structured around 6 work packages consisting of (1) Preparation of a general survey, (2) the organisation of an expert seminar (3) preparation of background papers (4) Conference, (5) preparation of three policy briefs (6) Dissemination of results.

The support activities are logically consecutive. It is clear however that, since the partners already possess a broad concept of the research initiative envisaged together, the synthesis will be a continuous process throughout the SSA project.

The *support activities work packages* are outlined briefly below for easier comprehension of their subsequent description. Comments are made regarding the work methods and participation of the project partners (leadership for drafting the deliverables is underlined) and associate members.

The **management activities** consist of one work package: co-ordinating and administering the project (WP 0).

### Overview of the work packages and deliverables:

- WP1: Preparation of a general survey,
- WP2: The organisation of an expert seminar
- WP3: preparation of background papers for the conference
- WP4: Conference
- WP5: preparation of three policy briefs
- WP6: Dissemination of results.

Del. no.	Deliverable name	WP	Lead participant	Delivery date (project month)
D1	Kick off meeting	WP1	1	1
D2	Information on the Internet page	WP6	1	1
D3	General Survey	WP1	4	7
D4	Summary of the expert seminar	WP2	1	6
D5	Background note 1: Biomass and environmental effects	WP3	5	11
D6	Background note 2: Biomass and effects on future rural development	WP3	5	11
D7	Background note 3: Biomass policy and its relation to the future WTO negotiations	WP3	5	11
D8	Conference Website	WP4	1	8
D9	Conference binder	WP4	1	12
D10	2 days Conference	WP4	1	12
D11	Conference summary	WP4	1	13
D12	Policy Brief 1: Biomass and environmental effects. Strategies to mitigate negative environmental effects from biofuel production.	WP5	6	17
D13	Policy Brief 2: Biomass and effects on future rural development. Strategies on how to increase information and knowledge transfer into rural areas and how to strengthen them.	WP5	6	17
D14	Policy Brief 3: Biomass policy and its relation to the future WTO negotiations	WP5	6	17
D15	Final report of the project results	WP6	1	18

The milestones and deliverables achieved during the project, i.e. from 1. May 2007 to 31. October 2008 were the following:

1. A project kick off meeting (Deliverable 1, Workpackage 1) was held in May, 10-11, 2007 in Berlin with all project partners and the European Commission's scientific officer Piero Venturi, DG RTD.
2. At the beginning of the project a project-website (D2, WP6) <http://www.agrinergy.ecologic.eu/index.html> has been established, that informed about the progress, relevant links and project results.
3. A general survey "**EU Bioenergy Policies and their effects on rural areas and agriculture policies**" (D3, WP1) was prepared and finished by May 2008 and updated in September 2008. It provides a comprehensive overview of the links between the CAP, rural development and EU biomass policies as well as international trade impacts.

The target audience of the general survey is the scientific community, policy makers and the interested wider public.

In order to prepare the general survey, a review of relevant literature has been carried out. The literature covered includes legal and policy issues as well as scientific and technical issues related to biomass production. The survey also bases on the AGRINERGY expert workshop, which was held in Brussels in November 2007 (see below).

*Structure and overview of the content of the survey:*

First information is provided on the main sources and pathways of bioenergy production. Therein the main recent developments and potential future developments are described, mainly for Europe.

This is followed by a chapter explaining the links between the different policy areas influencing the agricultural production of biomass for energy purposes. This part of the scoping study addresses the objectives, mechanisms and instruments of EU bioenergy policies and their relationship to other relevant EU policies such as the CAP, structure policies, water and climate policies.

The next chapter deals with bioenergy cropping and environmental effects: The production and energetic use of agricultural biomass can both support environmental protection in rural areas and potentially create additional environmental pressures, such as on biodiversity, soil and water resources due to pesticides, fertiliser, over abstraction of water and further intensification of European agriculture. The chapter assess the different positive and negative environmental effects based on previous research activities at the EU and Member State levels.

Hereafter, indications are given on the first effects of increased biomass production on employment in rural areas are. However it has to be recognised that there is only little research on this issue and that further research is needed to get a more comprehensive picture.

The following chapter assesses how biomass policy is related to future WTO negotiations. The main focus is on the effects future WTO rules might have on the development of the bioenergy sector.

Then the issue of sustainable standards for bioenergies are discussed, from a trade perspective as well as from an environmental point of view.

Finally, the main conclusion of the study is presented, and the main further research needs are lined out.

The survey will be published as a book by Ecologic in 2009.

4. An expert workshop was organised in Brussels November, 20, 2007. Building on the outcomes of the general survey three background papers for discussion in the working groups have been prepared:

- **Background note on international biomass trade.** What are sound policy approaches to guarantee a fair trade of biomass without further depletion of natural resources in exporting countries?  
Eleni Kaditi and Johan Swinnen, CEPS
- **Background note on Biomass production and future rural development in Europe.**  
Does bioenergy contribute to local added value and can it further enhance future development of rural areas?  
Floor Brouwer, Peter Nowicki and Geert Woltjer, LEI
- **Background note on measures and policies for sustainable bioenergy supply.**  
How can sustainability measures for bioenergy be inserted in EU agricultural, energy and environmental policies.  
Stephanie Schlegel, Timo Kaphengst and Thomas Dworak, Ecologic Berlin/Vienna

The first two issues on biomass and their interface to trade policies and rural development were discussed in breakout groups. The third topic on sustainable bioenergy supply addressed a wide range of policy measures and was discussed within the whole group.

To summarise, the participants of the AGRINERGY workshop have raised many doubts about the compatibility of an expansion of biomass production in exporting (developing) countries with international sustainable development. These doubts concern, inter alia, rising food prices with severe consequences for the poor, land competition between energy crops and food production, accelerated GHG emissions due to deforestation and land use changes, and harmed land rights of indigenous people. The main conclusion of the experts' discussion was therefore that trade in biomass needs to be beneficial both for combating climate change and for biomass producers and society in exporting countries. Efforts should be deployed to ensure that the development of international sustainability criteria and certification systems for biomass production contribute to reaching socioeconomic and environmental objectives.

Altogether 24 high level experts from all over Europe and with different expertise and scientific backgrounds participated at this event.

Subsequently to the expert workshop a summary document was prepared (D4, WP2) that was published on the AGRINERGY project website on December 19, 2007.

Following the expert workshop a project meeting was held to discuss the project's progress and start preparing the conference, foreseen in May 2008.

5. The objective of WP 3 was to prepare three background notes on the linkages between agriculture and rural areas and the EU bioenergy policies as well as other policy areas such as environment and international trade. These background notes would provide relevant information and serve as a basis for discussion for the conference organised in May, 19 – 20, 2008 (WP 4).

Originally, the background notes should have covered the following cross cutting issues:

- Background note 1: Biomass and environmental effects (D5)
- Background note 2: Biomass and effects on future rural development (D6)
- Background note 3: Biomass policy and its relation to the future WTO negotiations (D7)

However, during the expert workshop that took place in November 2007, it became obvious that the background notes should have a broader scope. Therefore, a more general set-up of the background notes was chosen:

- **Background note 1: International dimensions of EU bioenergy policies** (Eleni A. Kaditi & Johan F.M. Swinnen, CEPS – Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels), April 2008. It stresses that, as the development of international biomass trade is still in its initial stages, sustainability criteria and certification systems may be instrumental to ensure environmentally friendly biomass production, though attention should be given to possible derived barriers to international trade, especially for exports from developing countries.

- **Background note 2: Technologies and pathways of bioenergy production** (Geert Woltjer, Marie Guliet, Floor Brouwer, Peter Nowicki, WUR-LEI/Biomass Normandie, April 2008) According to Background note 2, current biofuel policy is focused on a limited number of technologies and discriminates against other technologies that may solve the problem. Mandatory biofuel requirements will be combined with certification schemes, but this does stimulate to use the cheapest types of biofuel that are allowed for, not the most efficient ones.

- **Background note 3: Bioenergy policy - implementation and best practice on a regional level** (Thomas Dworak, Timo Kaphengst and Stephanie Schlegel – Ecologic, Berlin, April 2008) The third note 3 concludes that the EU's political objective to extend the use of biomass for energy purposes is not yet sufficiently harmonized by rural development policies and implementation measures. Finding the right balance requires an integrated approach that moderates the interests from

different policy fields influencing bioenergy production such as agriculture, environment, transport, rural development, waste disposal, technology development etc.

6. A two days international high-level conference “**Reality Check on EU Bioenergy targets**” that took place in Brussels, May, 19-20, 2008 has been conceptualised and organised (WP4, D10) to provide a forum to discuss the future of Europe’s bioenergy production and use from a socio-economic and policy perspective with experts and stakeholders from science, administrative bodies and NGOs. The outcomes of the conference resulted in science based recommendations for further policy making as well as the identification of research needs.

After the opening of the conference and an introduction on the importance of this conference for the further development of the EU Research on bioenergy in the particular field of biomass, the participants were divided into three working groups with a specific focus (same as WP3 background notes):

1. WG 1: International Dimension of EU Bioenergy Policies

*Key messages:*

- 2nd generation bioenergy can play a leading role in the global transition to clean and sustainable energy due to two decisive advantages over other renewables: biomass is stored energy and it can produce all forms of energy including heat, electricity and fuels for transport.
- Policies should incorporate a variety of targets (e.g. sustainable agricultural production, modernization of energy generation, poverty reduction) which can only be achieved with a governance framework created in parallel to the target setting dimension. That is, certification schemes are one tool, but they have to be complemented by capacity building and an institutional framework, which should be established in exporting countries and in the EU, applying a mix of measures and strategies among different countries and regions. These measures should be designed in accordance with the evolving willingness of big biomass producers to apply sustainability standards to their core business.

2. WG 2: Technologies and pathways of bioenergy production

*Key messages:* Based on the working group discussion, the following research suggestions on technological pathways were generated.

- First, because uncertainty in projections is very high, a deeper investigation of plausible developments in bioenergy technology and opportunities for increases in crop productivity is required. Research on crop productivity on non-arable land is important in order to get good estimates of second generation productivities and realistic evaluation of impacts on water and carbon stock of the soil.

- Second, current policy is focused on specific regulations, like a share of biofuels in transport fuels, and not on rewarding different solutions with respect to their effect on the broader policy aims. Therefore, research into institutions that may help to create a level playing field for all GHG or crude oil dependency reducing options is required. This requires also research into the life cycle effect of different energy options, including the indirect land use effects of those options.

### 3. WG 3: Bioenergy policy – Implementation and best practice on the regional level

#### *Key messages:*

- It is important to develop integrated national/regional action plans as they can trigger the development of a comprehensive and integrated approach, which requires detailed land use plans and discussions on conflicting interests for biomass and not only bioenergy.
- The second important point is that there is a need to create security for investment by long term (policy) commitments.
- Third, it was highly recommended by all experts that it is important to investigate the different technology pathways, considering the different regional context and in particular agricultural and forestry resources and production patterns as well as consumption patterns.
- There was an agreement that the current debate on biofuels in the press is a partly misleading. In order to achieve a more sustainable level, the focus of discussion should be changed towards a more holistic view (e.g. footprint for all production patterns, link agriculture to GHG emission trading)

After reporting back from the working groups, the conference discussion lead to a more general view of biomass production.

Finally, reflecting on the different topics and discussions during the conference the final panel discussion moderated by Andreas R. Kraemer (Ecologic- Berlin) was centred on two main questions

- What are the most urgent research questions in bioenergy for the future?
- Which policy recommendations can be drawn from the conference?

Altogether approximately 80 international participants, experts, stakeholders and decision makers participated in this event.

Following the conference, a very comprehensive summary document was prepared (D11, WP4) and published on the AGRINERGY project website 2 weeks after the end of the conference.

The AGRINERGY project website was also used for the purpose of the conference: registrations and organisational information about the conference were managed via the website. This had the additional advantage of giving the AGRINERGY project a high visibility and to clearly connect the conference to the project. All presentations,

background notes and the conference summary (D8, WP4) as well as the conference binder (D9, WP4) are available for download on the project website.

7. Based on the findings from previous work package activities, the aim of work package 5 was to develop three Policy Briefs on the link between the EU biomass policy and the CAP and rural development policy. The Policy Briefs should aim at the timeframe before 2013 including the next “round“ of the CAP. The three policy briefs envisaged to cover the following topics:
  - Policy Brief 1: Biomass and environmental effects. Strategies to mitigate negative environmental effects from biofuel production. (D12)
  - Policy Brief 2: Biomass and effects on future rural development. Strategies on how to increase information and knowledge transfer into rural areas and how to strengthen them (D13)
  - Policy Brief 3: Biomass policy and its relation to the future CAP and WTO negotiations (D14)

Each policy brief would outline possible cornerstones for future policy-making fostering the production of large volumes of biomass in agriculture and ensuring sustainable (environmentally friendly and socially acceptable) development of rural areas. The focus of the Policy Briefs is on policy recommendations for the European level as well as the national level. The target audience of the policy briefs is high-level policy makers who are directing the further development of agricultural, rural development and biomass policies.

However, due to the ongoing policy developments in the area, the increased importance of the issue in the public debate and the results from the previous work packages the policy briefs have been combined to one overall brief. **“Bioenergy from agriculture in the European Union –analyzing opportunities and constraints”** (D12-13-14, WP5)

After the conference organised under WP 4 the consortium had a post meeting, discussing the outcomes and ensuing possibilities. At this meeting it was agreed to develop an outline, combining all three briefs into one. Further it was discussed that the focus of the brief should be put more clearly on open research questions, identified in the previous work of AGRINERGY.

- Policy targets on biofuels have to be critically revised regarding their impact on global land demand corresponding with threats to ecosystems, rural communities’ wellbeing and food security.
- The discussion on phasing out trade distortion instruments (e.g. tariffs, local standards) has to be supported by more scientific investigations analysing the effects of such a phasing out with regard to social and environmental issues.
- Learn from the experiences of independent certification organisations. Internationally implemented private sustainability standards and certification schemes have accumulated experience in developing social and environmental standards that could be taken into account in the development of a EU sustainability standard for bioenergy.

- Partnership with export countries such as Brazil, Malaysia, South Africa and others but also with the US have to be built to ensure a sustainable biomass trade. This is also a prerequisite for the implementation of internationally accepted and universally valid sustainability standards. These partnerships would be important to increase reliability of the life cycle assessments of different energy crops.
  - Institutional requirements for meaningful enforcement have to be analysed and put into practice and limits of certification schemes have to be recognised and explored in detail.
8. The dissemination activities, such as the creation of the AGRINERGY website, the dissemination of results via newsletters and publications and the preparation of materials and summaries after the workshop and the conference have been undertaken all along the project.

The AGRINERGY research objectives, research papers, meeting and dissemination documents are available at the AGRINERGY project website: <http://www.agrinergy.ecologic.eu/index.html>

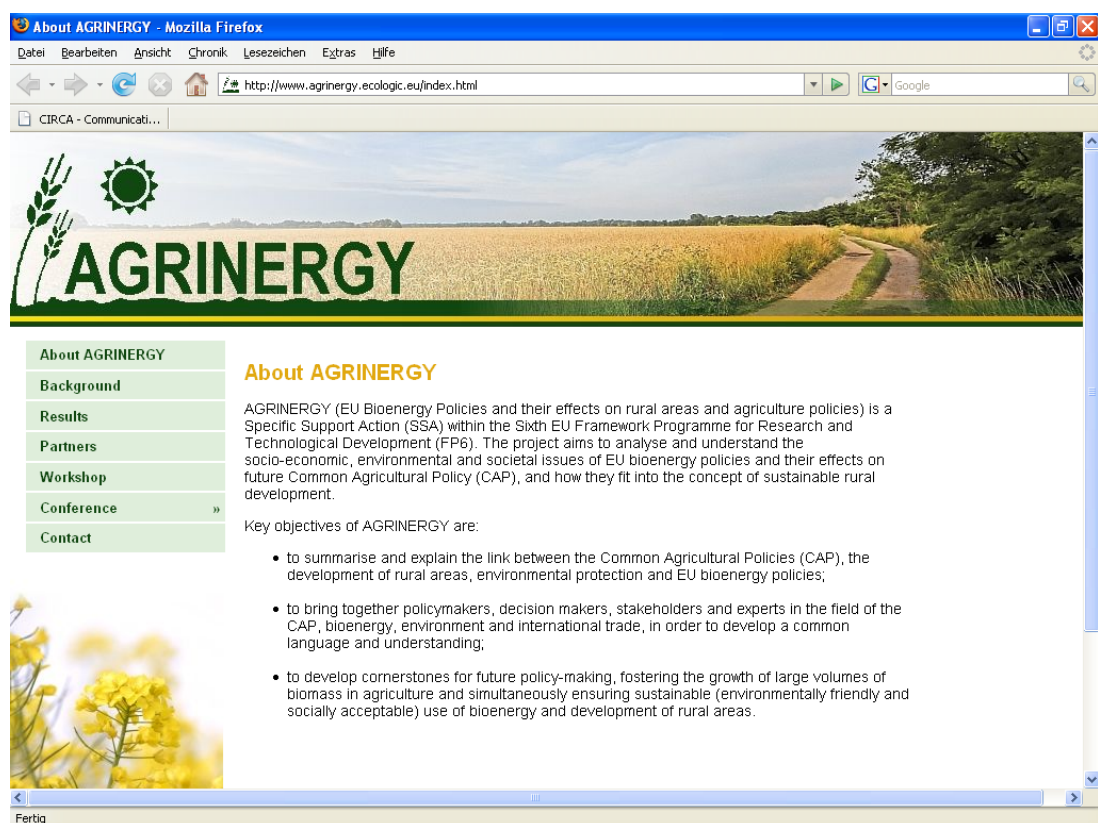


Figure 1: screenshot of the AGRINERGY website

For an overview of the main dissemination activities, see below.

## DISSEMINATION AND USE

The following table gives an overview of the most important dissemination activities undertaken by the AGRINERGY partners.

<b><u>Actual Dates</u></b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Type of audience</b>	<b>Countries addressed</b>	<b>Size of audience</b>	<b>Partner responsible /involved</b>
May 2007	Launch of the project website	Research, policy makers, general public	International		Ecologic, all
Since May 2007	Ecologic Newsletter	Research, policy makers, general public	International	Appx. 600	Ecologic, all
Since May 2007	Press release and direct e-mailing	Experts			CEPS
Since May 2007	Project web-site	General public			CEPS
Since July 2007	Description of project and link from Biomasse Normandie's website to Agrinergy 's Project web-site	Large public (professionals, authorities, individuals)	France		Biomasse Normandie
18 October 2007	Lecture	Research, general public	International	100	Ecologic (Berlin)
20-21 November 2007	Expert workshop	Research	International	25	all
December 2007	Publication, peer reviewed journal	Research	International	Approx. 800	Ecologic (Berlin)
Denver, March 2008	Presentation in the context of a Dinner Dialogue of the American Council of Germany in Denver "Renewable Energy: A Boom for Germany and Europe?" 17. March 2008	Research and Consultancy	International		Stephanie Schlegel, Ecologic Berlin

Warsaw 14.05.2008	Academic Forum	Research	Poland	120	SGGW
19-20 May 2008	Agrinergy Conference	Research, general public	International	60	all
Konstancin June 2008	Press conference	Journalist	Poland	15	SGGW
August 2008	Presentation at the international seminar, 28.-29. August 2008, R�o de Janeiro, Brazil	Administration, Research, NGO, Consultancy	International	50	Timo Kaphengst Ecologic Berlin
September 2008	Presentation of Agrinergy Project	Professionals, authorities, research, policy makers	France	Approx 50	Biomasse Normandie
September 2008	Publication, peer reviewed journal	Research	International		CEPS
December 2008	LEI monthly Bulletin “Newsflash”	mainly partners in research, ministries and NGOs	Europe (around 75%), North- America (5- 10%), Africa (5-10%) and Asia (5-10%)	circulation of around 1,000 subscribers	LEI
1 – 12 December 2008	Exhibition followed the COP14/MOP4 in Poznan	General public	Poland and partly international	Approx. 1500	SGGW
2009	Publication of AGRINERGY general survey	General public	Europe		Ecologic Vienna & Berlin

- *Ecologic (Berlin)*: In May 2007 the project web site <http://www.agrinergy.ecologic.eu/> was launched. This website has been used to inform about the project, to disseminate results and to communicate with participants before and after the conference.
- *Ecologic (Berlin)*: an AGRINERGY flyer has been designed in English and German as a dissemination tool. It has been distributed at conferences, meetings and to interested partner institutions at the beginning of the project period
- *Ecologic (Berlin)/ all*: Publication and dissemination of three Background notes and the summary document of the expert workshop in November 2007
  - Background note on international biomass trade.  
What are sound policy approaches to guarantee a fair trade of biomass without

- further depletion of natural resources in exporting countries? (Eleni Kaditi and Johan Swinnen, CEPS)
- Background note on Biomass production and future rural development in Europe.  
Does bioenergy contribute to local added value and can it further enhance future development of rural areas? (Floor Brouwer, Peter Nowicki and Geert Woltjer, LEI)
  - Background note on measures and policies for sustainable bioenergy supply. How can sustainability measures for bioenergy be inserted in EU agricultural, energy and environmental policies. (Stephanie Schlegel, Timo Kaphengst and Thomas Dworak, Ecologic)
  - Findings of the Expert Workshop. Nov., 2008
  - Ecologic (Berlin)/ all: Publication and dissemination of three Background notes and the summary document of the conference in May 2008
    - Background note 1: International dimensions of EU bioenergy policies (Eleni A. Kaditi & Johan F.M. Swinnen, CEPS – Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, April 2008)
    - Background note 2: Technologies and pathways of bioenergy production (Geert Woltjer, Marie Guliet, Floor Brouwer, Peter Nowicki, WUR-LEI/Biomass Normandie, April 2008)
    - Background note 3: Bioenergy policy - implementation and best practice on a regional level (Thomas Dworak, Timo Kaphengst and Stephanie Schlegel – Ecologic, Berlin, April 2008)
    - Conference Summary: Reality Check on EU Bioenergy targets (Thomas Dworak et al. July, 2008)
  - Ecologic (Berlin)/ all: (upcoming). Publication and Dissemination of the Policy Brief on the Agrinergy webseite and trough the newsletter service of Ecologic.
  - Ecologic (Berlin): Frequent updates about project milestones and results via the monthly Ecologic newsletter
  - Ecologic (Berlin): Publication: Schlegel, Stephanie and Timo Kaphengst 2007: “European Union Policy on Bioenergy and the Role of Sustainability Criteria and Certification Systems.” Journal of Agricultural & Food Industrial Organization, Vol. 5, No. 2, Article 7, 17 pages.
  - Ecologic (Berlin): Lecture Timo Kaphengst “Political, economic, environmental and social aspects of global biomass production and bioenergy”, 18 October 2007, St. Gallen, The Oikos-conference “Limits to growth.
  - Ecologic (Berlin): Presentation: Kaphengst, Timo 2008: “Biofuel policy in the EU – Quo vadis?” presentation at the international seminar “Biofuels: Between Energy Security and Climate Change - Latin America and the international discussion” organised by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Nueva Sociedad, 28.-29. August 2008, Río de Janeiro, Brazil

- *Ecologic (Berlin)*: Presentation: Stephanie Schlegel 2008: “Renewable Energy: A Boom for Europe?”, Presentation in the context of a Dinner Dialogue of the American Council of Germany in Denver “Renewable Energy: A Boom for Germany and Europe?” 17. March 2008, Denver
- *Ecologic (Berlin)*: Presentation: Stephanie Schlegel 2008: “The EU’s new Climate and Energy Package: A breakthrough in Europe's Renewable Energy Politics?” Presentation at the University of Denver, 26. February 2008, Denver
- *CEPS*: AGRINERGY is using CEPS News for releasing news related to the network. CEPS distributes several thousand copies of the CEPS News to keep a wide audience informed on the activities, contributions, results and policy recommendations coming out of CEPS activities. CEPS News is also available on CEPS website.
- *CEPS*: A link to the AGRINERGY website has been added to CEPS website.
- *CEPS*: Publication: Eleni A. Kaditi 2008: “Bio-energy policies in a global context”, Journal of Cleaner Production, doi:10.1016/j.jclepro.2008.08.023
- *Biomasse Normandie (Since July 2007)*: A link to the AGRINERGY website has been added at Biomasse Normandie website
- *Biomasse Normandie (September 2008)*: Agrinergy presentation at a national day organized in the context of Bapdriver (European project) - Carrying out of a power point presentation and oral presentation - Participation at the round table (discussion on standards for a sustainable production of biomass)
- *SGGW (May 2008)*: Preparation the presentation: EU bioenergy policy and Climate Protection (in Polish) and its presentation during Academic Forum.Warsaw 14.05.2008
- *SGGW (June 2008)*: Presentation of the results of AGRINERGY project during the press conference organised by the Polish Climate Coalition. Konstancin 21 June 2008
- *SGGW (December 2008)*: During the COP14/MOP4 in Poznan SGGW, together with the Polish Ecological Club and the Polish NGO Climate Coalition, hosted a stand on the exhibition: “Technologies for Climate Protection” following the Conference. The information about the result of the AGRINERGY project (in Polish) were presented and distributed (1500 copies). Additionally information in English was provided to interested people.
- *LEI (December 2008)*: A news item about the AGRINERGY policy brief has been added to the LEI newsletter “LEI Newsflash”. Newsflash is issued monthly and features information on issues relating to the Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI), new developments on the LEI website and forthcoming LEI events and activities