

# PRINCIPLES for SUSTAINABLE BIOMASS

Biomass should be grown, sourced, and utilized only in appropriate scales, places, and manners. Programs designed to promote the biomass/bioenergy industry must include enforceable limits on what types of biomass sources and facilities can be incentivized. This document addresses principles that we believe should govern direct and indirect public incentives for bioenergy. We believe that the public has a right to know - and that legislators and regulatory authorities have a duty to ensure - that public biomass incentives protect core environmental values and genuinely reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Assure Sustainability:** Production, sourcing, and utilization of biomass receiving public incentives must assure the protection of all natural ecosystems (including those on public and private lands), habitat values, and air quality and water quality and quantity, and must not adversely affect soil productivity or contribute to soil erosion.

**Prevent Global Warming & Ocean Acidifying Emissions:** Biomass sources and facilities qualifying for incentives must result in lower life-cycle, cumulative and net GHG and ocean acidifying emissions, within 20 years and also over the longer term, than the energy sources they replace or compete with.

**Protect Conservation Land:** Incentivized biomass must not come from protected areas or agricultural conservation lands, including but not limited to any area designated by federal or state governments for conservation purposes, such as Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas, old-growth forests, Inventoried Roadless Areas, or aquatic buffers, except for invasive alien species and for material whose removal is necessary to protect public health and safety.

**Safeguard Special Ecosystems:** Incentivized biomass harvest must not occur on lands identified at the federal or state level as endangered, rare, or threatened at the global, national, or state level, such as old-growth forest stands and native grasslands or on other seriously diminished ecosystems such as late successional stands, except for material whose removal is required for restoration of the characteristic structure, composition and function of the ecosystem involved, if consistent with the other principles herein.

**Prevent Loss of Natural Ecosystems:** Biomass removed from lands converted from forests, grasslands or other natural systems into plantations or simplified, intensively managed or cultivated systems, will not qualify for incentives if the conversion occurs after the adoption date of such incentive program.

**Protect Threatened and Endangered Species:** Incentivized biomass harvest must not occur on lands identified at the federal or state level as harboring or potentially harboring any species classified as endangered, rare, or threatened at the global, national, or state level, or is a candidate for such status, except for material whose removal is required for restoration of the species habitat and protection of the species.

**Avoid Toxic and Other Air Pollutants:** Facilities receiving incentives for producing biomass energy must not contribute to greater air pollution per unit of energy produced than would result from the energy source they replace or compete with, including, for example, NO<sub>x</sub>, VOCs, and PM, must not increase local community exposure to such pollutants, and must not be afforded special treatment under the Clean Air Act.

**Be Energy Efficient:** Biomass energy use supported by public incentives must meet strong standards for efficiency in the conversion of biomass to useful energy.

**Require Sustainable Procurement:** Biomass energy producing facilities benefiting from public incentives must develop and implement a biomass sourcing plan that satisfies the above principles and is capable of supplying the facility for its operational life, accounting for competing biomass demand in the sourcing area.

**Environmental Working Group \* Environmental Defense Fund \* Friends of the Earth  
Geos Institute \* Greenpeace USA \* National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council \* Southern Alliance for Clean Energy  
Southern Environmental Law Center \* The Wilderness Society \* World Wildlife Fund**