



Newsletter IEA Bioenergy Task 37: 12/2021

Policy Issues

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Norway: Biogas equal to electricity and hydrogen in all policies

The Norwegian Parliament voted on important proposals for the biogas market in May. The Standing Committee on Energy and the Environment have for some time discussed policies and incentives to increase production and use of biogas, and one of the important discussions have been to equalize biogas with electricity and hydrogen in all public policies. Both on a national level and locally. The parliament took the following decisions: 1) Change of the use of the term zero emission in all government objects and plans to zero emissions and biogas, this is to achieve equal treatment of biogas, electricity and hydrogen. This term is to be used in all adopted public plans and future public plans. 2) Secure development for all infrastructure needed for zero and low emission technology and improve the financial support scheme from the Norwegian authorities for filling stations and heavier vehicles. 3) Simplification of the application process for financial support to biogas vehicles. 4) Biogas vehicles are to be treated equally to zero emission vehicles in all toll roads valid from 1st January 2022.

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Austrian Energy Expansion Act: Important success for biogas

With the adoption of the Renewable Energy Expansion Act Package by the Austrian National Council, the legal framework has finally been established to set the course for the domestic biogas industry towards active participation in Austria's energy transition and the grandfathering of existing plants. A separate target for renewable gases (5 TWh by 2030) has also been included. New plants should therefore be built in first priority close to the well-developed gas grid to inject the biomethane produced. A key element in the Gas Industry Act is the envisaged cost-bearing rule for gas grid access. In addition, there will be investment subsidies for both, the construction of new biomethane plants and the conversion of existing biogas plants. This will finally start the conversion of the gas grid to

renewable energy.

There will also be significant changes to on-site electricity generation in future. Only small new plants near gas grids (<250kWel.) shall further receive feed-in tariffs together with larger plants, which are located more than 10km away from the grid. These plants shall mainly serve for grid stabilization and security of supply. The same applies to existing biogas plants. Larger plants, close to the gas grid, should switch to gas upgrading. Only plants far from the gas grid or small plants will continue to receive support in electricity generation. It is important to mention that the support of existing plants will be secured up to 30 years of operation. Unfortunately, an essential point could not be achieved with the new legislation, i.e. the lack of a feed-in tariff for biomethane.

[More](#) (in German)

Senate bill aims to provide tax incentive for biogas projects

Sens. John Thune, R-S.D., and Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, on July 22 introduced the Agricultural Environmental Stewardship Act, a bill that aims to provide tax incentives for farmers and rural electric cooperatives that invest in biogas technology. The bipartisan legislation aims to encourage investment in biodigester and nutrient recovery systems while establishing a market for farmers who already have a surplus of waste materials that can be used for biogas production. The bill provides a 30 percent investment tax credit to help offset the upfront costs associated with building biodigester systems.

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B.C. enables increased investments in renewable gas

British Columbia has amended the Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Clean Energy) Regulation to increase the production and use of renewable gas as well as green and waste hydrogen. B.C. is the first province in Canada to make these kinds of changes allowing for the increased production of renewable gas. Changes to the GGRR will enable natural gas utilities to increase the amount of Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) by increasing the supply from 5% to 15% of their total annual supply of natural gas.

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Roadmap to promote biogas in Spain

The Spanish Ministry for the Ecological Transition has released the long-awaited Biogas Roadmap for public consultation. In it, the Government proposes the regulation of guarantees of origin -as already foreseen in the renewable directive that came into force on July 1- and the increase in the weight of this energy that will multiply by 3.8 the sustainable production of this gas of renewable origin until 2030.

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European Commission OKs Sweden's biofuel tax exemptions again

The European Commission has yet again approved, under EU State aid rules, the prolongation of the tax exemption measure for biofuels in Sweden. Sweden has exempted liquid biofuels from energy and CO₂ taxation since 2002. The measure has already been prolonged several times, the last time in October 2020). By the new decision, the Commission approves an additional one-year prolongation of the tax exemption (from 1 January to 31 December 2022). The objective of the tax exemption measure is to increase the use of biofuels and to reduce the use of fossil fuels in transport. The support to food-based biofuels should remain limited, in line with the thresholds imposed by the revised Renewable Energy Directive. Furthermore, the exemption can only be granted when operators demonstrate compliance with sustainability criteria.

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UK to launch fourth round of CfD energy scheme

U.K. has announced the fourth round of its Contracts for Difference (CfD) energy scheme. Landfill gas, sewage gas, energy-from-waste with CHP, large-scale anaerobic digestion, and dedicated biomass with CHP are among the eligible technologies. The fourth round of the CfD is divided into three pots.

Technologies eligible for Pot 1 include landfill gas and sewage gas. Pot 2 is open to advanced conversion technologies (ACT), anaerobic digestion projects with at least 5 MW of capacity among others. According to the BEIS, £265 million (€314 million) per year will be provided to businesses in the fourth round of the CfD scheme, which aims to double the renewable electricity capacity secured in the third round and generate more than the previous three rounds combined. The BEIS said £10 million will go to Pot 1, with a cap of 5 gigawatts (GW) on total capacity. A total of £55 million will go to Pot 2 with no capacity cap imposed. The fourth CfD round is set to open in December. Additional information is available on the BEIS website.

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Italian NRPP gives opportunities for the development of biomethane

Within the framework of the Next Generation EU, the instrument aimed at responding at the economic and social crisis caused by Covid-19, the Italian Government approved the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). Agriculture, renewables and green transition are among the main investment areas of the NRRP. €59.47 billion of the NRRP are committed for sustainable agriculture, circular economy, energy transition, sustainable mobility, energy efficiency of buildings, protection of water and land resources.

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Methanization: The French Senate calls for a "New French Model"

Chaired by Senator Pierre Cuypers, the information mission on methanization in the energy mix was launched last March and brought together 23 senators from all political groups. After seven months of work, it delivered its conclusions in October. The report states that "Renewable, steadily produced and storable biogas contributes to diversify the energy mix". A sector that is also a provider of jobs that cannot be relocated. The production of biogas in France has experienced a very strong growth, from about 1 to nearly 7 TWh between 2007 and 2019. Injected biomethane has seen the fastest dynamism between 2012 and 2019, starting from around zero to reach more than 1.2 TWh. At the end of 2020, France had 1,075 biogas production facilities in operation, including 214 injecting biomethane into natural gas networks, with an effective production of 2.2 TWh. Although the methanization sector is booming, the report notes that its support framework remains ambiguous. The proposed French methanization model includes a set of 61 proposals based on five major orientations: 1) Clarify public policies; 2) Structuring the sector; 3) Territorializing projects; 4) Improving practices and 5) preventing risks.

[More \(in French\)](#)

Biogas and the future of Sweden

The Swedish government announced its support for biogas as an important factor in the transition to a circular and biobased economy. To increase the Swedish biogas production and its competitiveness in the international market, an investment proposal for 1 900 million SEK (190 million Euro) for the period 2022-2024 has been presented. Investments are expected to continue until 2040. Such long-term milestone is a great achievement for a sector often limited by short term policies.

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B.C. Launches CleanBC Roadmap to 2030

British Columbia is launching a stronger, more ambitious climate plan to deliver on its commitment to reduce climate pollution and build a cleaner, stronger economy for people throughout B.C. The CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 plan accelerates measures in B.C.'s continent-leading climate plan that has been proven effective and introduces new ideas to help B.C. achieve the Paris emissions reduction targets for 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050. The Roadmap to 2030 builds on the progress British Columbia has made since 2018 by making polluting more expensive and the shift from fossil fuels to clean alternatives more affordable. The Roadmap includes a series of actions across eight pathways. They include among others stronger regulations that will nearly eliminate industrial methane emissions by 2035; developing

new ZEV targets for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles; and support for innovation in areas like clean hydrogen, the forest-based bioeconomy and negative emissions technology.

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Imported biomethane accepted to heat buildings in Germany

In response to an official association inquiry, the German Federal Ministry of Economics (BMWi) has clarified that there are no additional requirements for the use of imported biomethane. For biomethane application in combined heat and power (CHP) plants, the principles of the Building Energy Act (GEG) apply. It is not specified where the biomethane used comes from. Since also in the Federal Emission Control Act (BEG) with the promotion of the use of biomethane for the heating and cooling energy requirement with buildings no statement is made to the feed from abroad. According to the BMWi, the most important statements here are that the principles of the GEG apply to the use of biomethane in the BEG. An important factor is the amount of biomethane used for the building. It should be ensured that that amount corresponds to the amount of biomethane that has been fed into the gas grid. The EEG does not regulate the injection of biomethane from abroad either. This is a very good decision because biomethane is particularly interesting as an admixture to reduce the primary energy factors in buildings and heating networks, as well as to fulfill the renewable energy share in heat.

[More \(in German\)](#)

Australia's Bioenergy Roadmap released

The Bioenergy Roadmap lays out a vision for a sustainable bioenergy industry that delivers lower emissions, regional growth, energy resilience and waste management benefits for Australia. The Bioenergy Roadmap was developed in broad consultation and collaboration with industry, governments, researchers and the general public. This cross-sectoral approach, with multiple opportunities for stakeholder input, ensured varied stakeholder views were considered. Given the extent of bioenergy's potential, this Roadmap outlines a collaborative framework to showcase where bioenergy has a comparative advantage and where it can complement other low emissions technologies; identify current barriers to the development of the bioenergy sector; provide findings for industry and government to drive commercial outcomes; and highlight opportunities to inform and empower the broader community. Modelling supporting the Bioenergy Roadmap explored potential future scenarios of the Australian bioenergy industry from 2021 to 2050. Among the opportunities and actions evaluated, a closer look has been given to road transport and electricity markets as well as production of renewable industrial heat, aviation and renewable gas grid injection.

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