



Editorial:

The World is getting ready for the Copenhagen climate change summit 2009 (December 2009), since the Kyoto protocol to prevent climate change will run out in 2012. Society support to act against global warming is quite strong in many groups and this was also stimulated by the fact that the International Panel on Climate Change received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2007.

Although renewable resources can play a major role in the transition to a bio-based economy and in the reduction of GHG emissions, still there is a lot of resistance to really push the transition forward. Do we need to speak of a renewable resources paradox?

Since the use of renewable resources for the production of materials, chemicals and fuels can reduce significantly the GHG emissions (the production is of course not carbon dioxide neutral), quite a lot of discussions are slowing down the process. These discussions range from “the food versus fuel debate”, the “direct and indirect land use change debate”, the “net energy discussion” upto slowing down young economies by the GHG emission reduction. Some of these are indeed concerns that need to be taken into account, however we are at a time that we cannot waste too much time before really taking action and to stimulate the renewable resources transition.

But not only in view of the GHG emissions, it is time to take action to support the agricultural sector again with new opportunities before the sector further disappears in Western countries because of extremely low world prices. It is time to act to create opportunities in rural areas who have now difficulties to support their inhabitants leading to migration to the big cities. It is time to stimulate renewable resources production (without major land use change) in poor areas by introducing a better agricultural practice.

Much more human damage is being created by dumping food on world markets at extremely low prices and by preventing developing countries to protect their internal markets for a certain degree.

However more and more international companies, also many petrochemical companies, have started big investment campaigns related to bio-based projects and are helping to develop the transition to a bio-based economy.

So, let's continue the good work in the renewable resources business with an open view for problems, but lets keep going in stead of slowing down the progress with concepts that have never been applied to existing products and technologies. The new technologies will need some time to develop into real sustainable practices. Lets give it this time before slowing it down too much.