

Sustainability Subcommittee 2009 Recommendations

Bucket List:

- Choice of Models
- Indirect Land Use
- Water Use/Quality
- Resource Conservation
- Biopower
- Sustainability Regulation

Choice of Models

- The committee recommends that a unifying set of guidelines be developed for the creation and interpretation of predictive models used in setting policy which are:
- Science based, limited to data that is quantifiable and verifiable
- Allows comparisons of alternatives- (i.e. biobased and non-biobased)
- Flexible enough to provide broad guidance, but capable of assessing specific exceptions
- Broad enough in scope to address multiple environmental, economic, and social impacts
- Available for public use

Indirect Land Use

- The committee observes that sufficient data does not exist and interpretation of data is not conclusive to demonstrate the causal relationship between energy feedstock use in the U.S. and land use changes in other countries. The committee recommends that more evaluation and validation of the current indirect land use models need to be done for there to be sufficient ability to interpret the causal relationships of energy demand and indirect land use in the U.S. and other countries.
- Examples: Total U.S. crop acres are trending down as yield and supply are trending up
- Deforestation in Brazil is half of what it was in 2002 as renewable energy has doubled.

Water Use/Quality

- The committee recommends research and development to better understand the short and long term impact of agricultural water use, process water use, and output water volume and quality for integration into the sustainability metrics. We further recommend that these findings be applied consistently across all energy sectors.

Resource Conservation

- The committee recommends the sustainable production of all bioenergy feedstocks will incorporate sufficient R&D to address “resources of concern” from production, transportation, processing, and delivery of finished products.

Biopower

- The committee recommends that we increase basic and applied research on the integrated use of biopower generation for heat, steam, and electricity and the use of other renewable energy as input energy for biofuels, biopower, and bioproducts.

Sustainability Regulation

- The committee recommends that the USDA study and develop quantifiable indicators on sustainability relative to land use, agriculture, and forest resources, and provides these indicators to the EPA for the development of enforceable sustainability standards.

Funding

- The committee observes that sustainability is a unifying theme among the goal we have discussed and recommends that a greater dollar amount is allocated to the identification, understanding, and support of the crosscutting efforts relative to economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

