



The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

September 15, 2010

Dear Administrator Jackson:

Representing the leading association of biomass to energy producers and the nation's foremost environmental groups, we are committed to ensuring that bioenergy production is carried out in a way that helps address our nation's energy needs in a responsible and environmentally sustainable manner.

When responsibly sourced, cleanly processed, and undertaken at a sustainable scale, bioenergy can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, limit greenhouse gas emissions, and create thousands of well paying jobs in local communities. While we are confident that biomass needs to play a large role in our clean energy future, as a nation we must follow the science to ensure that our actions maximize the carbon benefits from the generation of energy from this renewable resource.

Specifically, we urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use the best available science to establish a full-cycle carbon accounting system that recognizes that the net carbon released and stored when biomass is used for energy varies depending on the types of biomass, ecosystems, regions, and land management practices involved. Our organizations recognize that not all biomass has the same carbon footprint. Converting unutilized waste products from sustainably managed timber plantations, for example, has a fundamentally different carbon cycle than harvesting merchantable timber from natural forests. These examples demonstrate that burning biomass can produce a range of carbon footprints. It is therefore essential to have an accounting system that both recognizes this spectrum and ultimately helps incentivize practices which lead to biomass utilization resulting in the maximum reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Once again, we urge EPA to establish science-based rules of the road that are scale-appropriate, workable, and helpful in the development of sustainable, low-carbon bioenergy. Pursued responsibly, this homegrown resource will increase national security and provide sustainable energy options.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert E. Cleaves".

Robert Cleaves
President
Biomass Power Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances Beinecke".

Frances Beinecke
President
Natural Resources Defense Council

cc: The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
The Honorable John A. Boehner
Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
House Agriculture Committee
House Energy and Commerce Committee