

Committee on World Food Security
Civil Society Mechanism: Biofuels Intervention
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In relation to biofuels, the obligation of the CFS is to ensure that the rapid and recent expansion of first-generation biofuels, and its projected continued expansion, is not undermining agreed rights to food, land, and natural resources. We strongly believe it is, and the evidence is clear. The HLPE report is unambiguous about the contribution of biofuels to food price increases, added pressure on land and water rights, and gender inequities.

Other independent research has confirmed such findings, particularly in relation to the US and EU biofuel programs. A report last month to the European Commission by the Joint Research Centre showed that eliminating current EU tax incentives and blending requirements would lower vegetable oil prices significantly and prevent the conversion of 6 million hectares of land to biofuel production, with much of that land instead devoted to cereals production for human consumption.

In the United States, 40% of maize is consumed by ethanol production, accounting for 15% of global maize supplies. Estimates on price impacts range from 20-79%, as Prof. de Gorter argued yesterday.

The oil industry can find or hire scientists who will claim to prove that climate change is not happening. That does not make it true. The scientific consensus is otherwise. So too is the consensus on biofuels and food security, as confirmed by the HLPE, in two different reports, with comprehensive literature reviews, as well as by a wide range of international agencies and experts.

The time to act is now.

As an open letter from 80 civil society organizations, released this afternoon, states:

“We are deeply concerned that the recommendations in the current CFS draft Decision Box would not protect the right to food from existing biofuels policies and the growing demand for biofuels. Instead, the text proposal refers to the alleged benefits of biofuels, which have not been shown to exist at any significant scale.”

As the Special Rapporteur has pointed out, the delegates to the CFS would betray their obligations if they fail to take action to address the very real impacts of biofuel expansion on world food security.

Thank you.

[Read the full text of the open letter](#)