



# Enagri Defends UK Biofuel Industry

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A UK-based information service for bioenergy and energy agriculture has come to the defence of the UK biofuels industry after a misleading article in a Sunday newspaper blamed the Government's policy on biofuels for poor practice in the Indonesian palm oil industry.

The original feature by Jonathan Green appeared in the 'Live' supplement of the Mail on Sunday on 29 April 2007. It blamed UK policy for the destruction of tropical wetlands, illegal deforestation and the theft of land from indigenous peoples. However, while elements of the palm oil industry are undoubtedly responsible for bad and illegal practices, the UK biofuel industry cannot be held responsible.

Enagri's editorial director, Richard Crowhurst, said, "We can't comment on any of the allegations made in the article regarding the activities of palm plantations, which may or may not be true. However, there were some very basic errors in the report which made us question the tone of the article.

"The feature repeatedly stressed that palm oil is cheapest feedstock for biodiesel production, yet recently movement in the commodity markets has meant that this is not really the case. In fact, one company referenced by the article is actually failing to meet its target due to higher than predicted palm oil prices. The article didn't mention this."

As the leading online information source for bioenergy in the UK and Europe, Enagri is keen to ensure that the biofuel debate is conducted with accurate facts on both sides.

Some of the specific errors included in the report include:

- The article repeatedly asserts that the cheapest form of biodiesel is made from palm oil. Palm oil is a global commodity, one whose price has risen steadily over recent months on the back of demand from the biofuel sector. Consequently palm oil is now relatively over valued in the market when compared with some of the other feedstocks mentioned in the piece, including indigenous rape oil.
- Overall targets for biofuel inclusion under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation and EU targets should not be confused with sustainable targets. Such a simplistic view fails to recognise the work currently being undertaken by the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership and others, against a background of complex international trade laws.
- It is misleading to say that there are only two forms of (liquid) biofuel as biobutanol is rapidly becoming seen as an extremely useful fuel. Technically, biogas (methane), bio-propane, Syngas, biofuel-derived hydrogen and other biofuels should be considered.
- While bioethanol is 'far more advanced' in the United States and Brazil, in Europe biodiesel accounts for a far greater proportion of liquid biofuels.

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Notes for Editors:

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