

PR BI News

**INTEGRATED PROMOTION
OF THE BIODIESEL CHAIN**

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BIOFUELS: A SAFE ALTERNATIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF EUROPEAN REGIONS

Within the framework of sustainable development in Europe and the Green Book "Towards a European Strategy for the Security of Energy Supply", the European Union has designed an action plan directed at increasing the percentage of biofuels to more than 20% of the European consumption of petrol and diesel fuels by the year 2020. The ultimate objective of this policy is to reduce the dependency on the use of fuels derived from oil, which is a cause for concern for the European Union and its regions both from an environmental point of view and with regard to the security of supply.

In this context, the PROBIO project (coordinated by the Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Burgos (Provincial Energy Agency of Burgos)) has a special relevance in the economic and environmental aspects of several European provinces and regions, as it strives to promote one of the most important biofuels of the present day, biodiesel. This implies that alternatives for our agricultural and rural sector will be developed, in the face of the inevitable decrease in agriculture subsidies, energy crops represent a real alternative for our farms and a development opportunity for our rural sector.


Furthermore, through the promotion of the production and supply of biodiesel on a local scale, the project seeks to promote the environmental, economic and development advantages of Biodiesel for farmers and producers, suppliers, local companies and the general public.

With the collaboration of the different international Partners of the Project, the Diputación Provincial de Burgos (Provincial Council) and the Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Burgos (Provincial Energy Agency of Burgos) seek to transmit their commitment to achieving sustainable development in European regions and provinces.

Vicente Orden Vigara
President of the
Burgos Provincial Council



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INFORMATION OF INTEREST

WHAT IS BIODIESEL?

Biodiesel is a liquid synthetic fuel which is derived from renewable raw materials (vegetable oils - rape seed, sunflower, soya, palm-, animal fats or residual cooking oils) through esterification and transesterification industrial processes and is used in the partial and complete substitution of petrodiesel or diesel fuel derived from oil.



The complete substitute is B100, and others, such as B5 or B30 are blends and the numbers refer to the proportion or percentage of biodiesel used in the blend. Currently, biodiesel is used in more than 25 countries around the world.

Biodiesel is the only fuel derived from renewable materials that works in any conventional diesel engine, without any modifications. To the technical advantages of this product over diesel fuel (better lubricant, lengthens the life of the engine, does not contain benzene or other cancerigenous aromatic substances, its safer storage and transport) we can add the environmental advantages; it is a biodegradable product and has a neutral balance of CO₂ emissions, as it emits the same quantity of gas as is absorbed by the oleaginous plant during its growth (leading to a significant reduction in greenhouse gases). Furthermore, the production of Biodiesel represents an alternative use for land and rural development (energy crops) and an opportunity for recycling used oils.



HOW IS IT DERIVED?

The transesterification process, which is applied in the production of biodiesel, consists of blending oil (usually vegetable oil) with a light alcohol, usually methanol producing glycerine as a residue with added value which may be used by other industries, such as the cosmetic industry.

ACTIONS DEVELOPED DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF THE PROJECT

LAUNCH MEETING HELD

The participants in the project met on the 1st and 2nd March 2007 to hold the launch meeting. Representatives from each of the partner organisations were present. The meeting began with an introductory presentation, followed by a press conference, chaired by the President of the Provincial Council of Burgos, Mr. Vicente Orden Vigara, the Collaboration Agreement was signed between the eight Partners and different presentations were made regarding the technical and financial aspects of the project. All of the partners expressed their full commitment to the satisfactory development of the tasks assigned to them and to collaborating with the other partners.



ACTIONS DEVELOPED DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF THE PROJECT

PROJECT WEBSITE

One of the main tools of communicating the Project, its website, has been operating since April. The website contains all the information relating to the project and the activities, events and news related to biofuels, as well as photos, interesting links, etc.

Visit us at www.probio-project.com



STUDY OF THE CURRENT USES OF BIODIESEL IN THE PARTICIPATING REGIONS: RESULTS

With the objective of analysing the current situation of Biodiesel in each of the participating regions, the partners of the project have carried out a comparative study which determines the percentage of consumption of pure biodiesel in relation to the quantity of diesel fuel used in the transport sector. The data obtained from the different producers, distributors and suppliers reveal that the levels of consumption of biodiesel during 2006 are a long way from the objectives established by the European Union.

Percentage of biodiesel in relation to the total consumption of diesel fuel in transport (2006)	Province of Burgos (Spain)	0.32%
	Province of Avila (Spain)	0.21%
	Province of Huelva (Spain)	2.13%
	Region of Pomurje (Slovenia)	1.12%
	Region of Abruzzo (Italy)	3.00%

THE PROBIO PROJECT HAS THE OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING THESE PERCENTAGES OF CONSUMPTION IN THE MID TO LONG TERM SO THAT THE PARTICIPATING REGIONS MAY COME CLOSER TO FULFILLING THE OBJECTIVES ESTABLISHED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

EXPERT PANELS ESTABLISHED IN PARTICIPATING REGIONS

The partners of the Project have set up “Panels of Experts” in each of the participating regions and provinces. These panels, formed by the main local agents involved in the chain of production and consumption of biodiesel (farmers, producers, distributors, consumers, public authorities, etc.), will have a fundamental role in the Project.



The first action to be undertaken with the panels of experts of each region has been the report regarding the detection of existing barriers in the development of the biodiesel chain. In the five participating regions, the barriers detected are fundamentally related to the difficulty in obtaining raw materials of local origin, the need to improve the biodiesel distribution and logistical network and the lack of public information and public awareness. In the coming months, the partners of the project will design a common strategy to overcome these barriers.

NEWS***BURGOS: New Biodiesel plant in Villahoz***

The first biodiesel plant in the province of Burgos, located in the town of Villahoz, will be in full operation within a year. On 23rd February 2007, the ceremony for laying the first stone of this plant was held. The plant will produce around 25 million litres of this green fuel each year. The representatives of the Council of Villahoz and the company Green Alliance, who are the responsible parties of the project, were joined by the principal public authorities of the province at the event. The plant will become a strategic industry for the area of Arlanza and a significant one for Castilla y León.

***AVILA: The province has new "bio-refuelling stations"***

During the first semester of 2007, the province of Avila has created two new service stations which offer biodiesel to consumers. With the opening of the new pumps in the service stations located in the towns of Arévalo and Chaherrero, the total number of "bio-refuelling stations" in the province of Avila has risen to seven, which has increased the distribution and consumption potential of biodiesel in the province. As a result, the Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Ávila (Provincial Energy Agency of Avila) hopes that the sales of biodiesel in the province for 2007 are slightly higher than those for 2006.



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