

For immediate release

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Evidence collected by EBA shows positive impact of sequential cropping on GHG reductions, biodiversity and soil quality

- **Bioeconomy should provide renewable energy and offer solutions for healthy and secure ecosystems.**
- **Evidence collected by EBA shows that biogas production based on sequential cropping is a powerful solution to decreased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, protection of biodiversity and restoration of soil quality.**
- **Renewable energy legislation should recognise the benefits of growing multiple crops on the same field and ensure full consistency with the proposed CAP reform, the biodiversity strategy and the farm to fork strategy**

Today the European Commission will adopt the biodiversity strategy for 2030 and the farm to fork strategy. The strategies will strengthen farmers' efforts to tackle climate change, protect the environment and preserve biodiversity. Developing a sustainable European bioeconomy should provide renewable energy, but it should also offer solutions for healthy and secure ecosystems for people, as well as all animal and plant species. The evidence that EBA collected from the biogas sector shows that proper biogas production based on sequential cropping is a sustainable activity. On top of that, it is a powerful solution leading to decreased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, protection of biodiversity and restoration of soil quality through agro-ecological innovation and organic fertilization.

Sequential cropping can lead to negative carbon emissions by stimulating natural photosynthesis and using carbon capture and storage (BECCS). Additional GHG emissions from chemical industries are avoided by using organic digestate to fertilise the crops, replacing mineral fertilizers¹. Methane emissions are also avoided when livestock manure is transported to a controlled environment for biogas production. At the same time, biogas production reduces farmers' dependence on livestock, which is an important source of GHG emissions in the agricultural sector.

In addition to the positive impact on emissions reductions, **sequential cropping done in a regime of crop rotation helps protect biodiversity and preserve healthy soils.** Farmers rely on healthy and fertile land to grow nutritious food and feed. Soil content of humus and carbon are very important indicators to assess soil health and fertility. Building humus in soil is possible when the land is covered with plants all year long, which is the case when sequential cropping is applied.

Despite the multiple benefits of sequential cropping, **the current policy framework does not recognise the possibility to grow multiple crops on the same field.** This hampers the production of biogas and the full deployment of this renewable energy. Food and feed production are not displaced when producers adopt sequential cropping. EBA warmly recommends the Commission to acknowledge the low ILUC risk potential of such a practice, which should be certified accordingly.

In the agricultural sector, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) should be a major driver of the Green Deal and promote a sustainable and efficient agriculture. Agriculture is not only aimed at food and feed production, it is also a primary source for textile products or chemical industries. **A forward-looking CAP should ensure flexibility for producers to organize and operate.** It should also enable societal benefits, including access to renewable energy, and environmental protection.

EBA acknowledges the need to protect human health, the environment, and the related ecosystem services, while providing renewable energy to decarbonise the economy. A coherent and supportive policy framework will be essential to recognise both the benefits of biogas and its capacity to deliver on the objectives of the Green Deal.

¹ According to the fertilizing product regulation, fertilizers are divided into organic fertilizers and mineral fertilizers. Organo-mineral fertilizers are a blended version made of natural and chemical inputs.

More details

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About EBA: The [European Biogas Association](#) is the voice of renewable gas in Europe since 2009. EBA advocates the recognition of biomethane and other renewable gases as sustainable, on demand and flexible energy sources that provide multiple knock-on socio-economic and environmental benefits. Supported by its members, EBA is committed to work with European institutions, industry, agricultural partners, NGOs and academia to develop policies which can enable the large-scale deployment of renewable gases and organic fertilisers throughout Europe, supported by transparent, well-established sustainability certification bodies to ensure that sustainability remains at the core of the industry. The association counts today on a well-established network of over 100 national organisations, scientific institutes and companies from Europe and beyond.