



POLICY DOCUMENT

“Bioenergy” amid the competing demands of climate change mitigation and poverty reduction

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I. "Bioenergy" amid the competing demands of climate change mitigation and poverty reduction

Many people in Europe and the USA believe that using crops to generate energy will improve energy security and provide an environmentally friendly and CO₂-neutral energy supply. Representatives of international organizations, business and industry and politics often give the impression that this "green" energy will enable us to maintain our current lifestyle despite climate change and resource scarcity. All over the world, subsidies, tax breaks and blending quotas are therefore being used to promote the use of "bioenergy". To call such energy "green" is, however, misleading; the term implies that production is sustainable, but where renewable energy crops are grown this is usually not the case – such crops are produced as monocultures covering large areas and involving the use of large quantities of agrochemicals. This paper therefore avoids the term "bioenergy", preferring to refer to energy crops.

Particular interest is currently focused on the use of agrofuels¹, i.e. liquefied plant energy used as motor vehicle fuel. Since 1 January 2007 the European oil industry has been obliged to ensure that a certain minimum proportion of agrofuels in all petrol and diesel for transport purposes is placed on their markets. For 2010 this proportion is 5.75%; it will rise in subsequent years.²

In Germany and Europe, insufficient farmland is available to enable such a quantity of energy crops to be produced domestically.³ The cultivation of fuel crops will be concentrated in the southern hemisphere, where greater solar irradiance and longer vegetation periods increase productivity per unit area.⁴ High-consumption lifestyles mean that every person in the EU already uses almost twice the amount of land that he or she would be entitled to if availability were averaged on a global basis.⁵ This land is used to grow animal feed, oil plants and food crops. The large-scale production of these crops already has major ecological and social impacts in developing countries; for example, small farmers may be forced off the land where such crops are grown. The very dynamic export market for agrofuels that has now opened up will, in our view, exacerbate these problems in the developing countries.

At the same time the energy supply of the poor is not secured. Up to three billion people use traditional sources of energy (such as wood) to meet their household energy needs. Two billion have no access to electricity, so that basic avenues of development are closed to them. People who themselves have no access to energy will witness agrofuels being produced in their fields and villages for export to rich industrialized nations – a business from which they will rarely profit.

MISEREOR as an aid agency of the Catholic Church is committed to assisting those who suffer most from poverty and injustice – the poor in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Christian social ethics require development to serve the fulfilment of fundamental material and spiritual needs, to protect human rights, and to respect creation.

For many years MISEREOR has warned that poverty in the developing countries and the resource-hungry lifestyle of people in the industrialized world are threatening the natural bases of life and endangering the future of humanity.

¹ The term agrofuel is used here to describe biodiesel and ethanol from crops.

² For the years 2011 – 2015 a mandatory overall quota that rises linearly to 8% promotes the further expansion of biofuel capacities (Biofuel Quota Law – Biokraftstoffquotengesetz, BioKraftQuG) (Bundestag Printed Paper 16/2709, Bundestag Printed Paper 16/3035).

³ Europe would have to use 70% of its farmland for the production of biofuels, which would have devastating consequences for food production ("Sprit vom Acker", Le Monde Diplomatique/June 2007).

⁴ For example, five times more bioethanol can be produced from sugar cane than from the same acreage of barley ("Flächenkonkurrenz bei der weltweiten Bioenergieproduktion", FUE 2006).

⁵ Use of 0.43 ha per capita in the EU as compared to 0.25 ha per capita on a global average ("Flächenkonkurrenz bei der weltweiten Bioenergieproduktion", FUE 2006).

With this position paper, MISEREOR aims to extend the current debate on energy crops for agrofuels by drawing on the perspective of the poor in the developing countries. Do agrofuels offer new development opportunities for the poor, or are they an obstacle to development?

II. The opportunities and risks of agrofuels

Many countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa are preparing to help meet the rising global demand for energy crops. For example, demand for palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia has grown rapidly on the world market. At the EU's first international conference on "biofuels" in July 2007, the EU and Brazil resolved to strengthen cooperation in this area and to expand the import of ethanol from sugar cane from the "future Saudi Arabia of Latin America". In Africa, too, many states are planning to produce agrofuels for the world market. National governments are promoting the production of energy crops through subsidies and tax breaks; this enables them to improve their foreign exchange balance through exports and secure their own energy supply at the same time. However, many social organizations and NGOs fear that it will not be the local population that will benefit from the raw materials boom but the giant companies that dominate the world market. They have already seen this happen not only in the extraction of fossil fuels but also in the cultivation of tropical and subtropical fruits and animal feedstuffs for export; the profits remain in the hands of a small number of companies and have failed to promote integrated regional development.

II.1 Security of energy supply versus food security

Although the world community undertook as part of the Millennium Development Goals to halve hunger by 2015, the number of people who suffer from hunger has increased steadily in recent years. One must therefore ask whether the growing demand for energy crops is at the expense of food production and is therefore causing even more hunger. The linkages, however, are rather more complex.

The world already produces enough food to feed its entire population adequately.⁶ Hunger is not a consequence of production deficits; its causes lie instead in the unfair distribution of and access to production resources and income and in an unfair world trade system.

A great deal of agricultural land is not used for the production of food crops. Almost half the agricultural land in Brazil, for example, is used to grow soya, almost all of which is processed into animal feed for export. Across the world some 300 million tonnes of meat are produced annually; meat production requires around 20 times the land area needed to grow cereals and vegetables.

Expanding the cultivation of energy crops inevitably increases the competition between food, animal feed and energy crops for land and water⁷, with prices rising as a result. In addition, it increases competition for the use of certain crops that can be utilized either for food or for fuel production. The resulting shortages then lead to a rise in the prices of many foods as well as to higher fuel prices.

⁶ Current world production could provide every person with an average of approx. 2,800 calories – i.e. more than the 2,200 – 2,500 calories needed by a healthy person ("Can organic farming feed the world?", Brian Halweil, World Watch Institute, see papers from the FAO conference on organic agriculture and food security, May 2007).

⁷ The American "Foreign Affairs" Magazine has calculated that filling the 95-litre tank of an American car with pure ethanol requires 200 kg of maize – enough to feed one person for a year ("How biofuels could starve the poor", Foreign Affairs Magazine, May 2007).

The effects of this cost spiral can already be observed. MISEREOR partners report from Indonesia that the price of cooking oil has risen by around 30% because palm oil – the most important oil used for cooking in Indonesia – is not only used industrially in the margarine and cosmetics industries but is now also traded as a raw material for the production of biodiesel. The large palm oil companies can make more money from exports than by selling on the local market; as a result, there is a shortage of cooking oil on the domestic market and its price rises. This has a direct impact on the poor who are dependent on purchased foodstuffs, often endangering their livelihoods.

With increasing demand for cereals and plant oil, world market prices – which have been kept artificially low by subsidies and the dumping of surpluses by the industrialized countries – will rise markedly within a short period; this could make production worthwhile again for smallholder farmers in developing countries. However, it would have a negative impact on all those who have no access to land or are unable to produce enough for their own needs, and on the urban poor, who are directly affected by high food prices. The principal beneficiaries of the rising prices will be the large companies that make money both from the fuel boom and from food.⁸

These facts show that the export-oriented production of agrofuels tends to lead in the medium term to increases in the price of land and food and will contribute to a rise in the number of people suffering from hunger.

II.2 Potential income for the poor in connection with energy crops

Globalized agricultural trade has plunged the livelihoods of many small farmers into crisis; such farmers are rarely able to compete if cheap imports force down the prices of their products on the local market or dealers pocket the profit margins. The new market for energy crops and the above-mentioned rise in world market prices for food could offer small farmers opportunities to share in the boom. According to this view, structurally weak areas could develop new opportunities and developing countries could improve their foreign exchange balance by exporting renewable raw materials. However, the initial experience of MISEREOR partner organizations leads one to doubt whether small producers can genuinely benefit from this trend.

Ø Biodiesel programme in Brazil

Since 2004 the Brazilian government has been operating a biodiesel programme aimed at enabling structurally weak areas and poor smallholder farmers in the north-east of the country to participate in the agrofuel boom. Drought-resistant *Ricinus communis* (castor bean) is to be grown as the raw material for biodiesel. In order to reduce the competition for land with food production, the programme provides for the mixed cultivation of *Ricinus communis* and beans. Local NGOs nevertheless view the programme with scepticism: small producers have insufficient capital to process their raw materials. They are therefore at risk of becoming dependent on the large processing companies, which offer them very low prices.

Ø Promotion of jatropha cultivation

Similarly pessimistic arguments apply to the cultivation of jatropha. This drought-resistant oil-bearing plant appears, like *Ricinus communis*, to be a promising crop; it can help improve the soil by preventing erosion and can be included in the agricultural production system without displacing food production.⁹ In the African Sahel, various development programmes have for the last 20 years attempted to encourage jatropha cultivation as a source of additional income and of decentralized energy. So far, however, key questions of production and profitability remain unanswered.

⁸ Two major companies, Cargill and Archer Daniels Midlan (ADM), control around 65% of the global trade in grain ("Sprit vom Acker", Le Monde Diplomatique, June 2007).

⁹ In India assurances of profits for small producers appear so far to be exaggerated. The price paid by the state oil industry for jatropha oil is too low for production to be worthwhile, because yields are low and harvesting costs very high ("Jatropha Curcas Production Systems for Small Farms", Sustainet 2005).

Moreover, large companies have for a long time been taking an interest in jatropha production. Some major companies such as BP are already investing large sums in the creation of jatropha plantations.

Many governments are offering companies "wasteland" or fallow land, so-called commons, for jatropha cultivation, as a MISEREOR partner organization from Rajasthan, India, reports. This is worrying, since these lands are crucial to the survival of poor population groups and pastoral communities. Common land is traditionally used as grazing grounds and is communal property; often no title of ownership exists. The privatization of such land is tantamount to the expropriation of these traditional user groups.

These examples show that the poor do not currently profit from the agrofuel boom; on the contrary, the expansion of agroindustry pushes them further to the margins.

II.3 Energy crops and human rights

The privatization of land, described above, also extends to nature conservation areas, as the example of Uganda shows. In that country, important centres of biodiversity of great significance to the local population have been released for the production of agrofuels from sugar and palm oil. Closer inspection reveals that there is little unused land anywhere in the world that could be converted into agrofuel plantations without causing problems for some people. A change of use of these lands almost always represents a loss of marginalized groups' natural life-support systems.

The felling of the Indonesian rainforests without consideration for the people who have lived in these forests for generations violates the rights of the people who live there. In Colombia, paramilitaries have for years been driving the Afro-Colombian population off their land in order to plant giant oil palm plantations.¹⁰ More and more people are drawn into conflicts over land, often involving violence.

MISEREOR partner organizations in Brazil point out that the promised creation of jobs in agroindustry cannot compensate for the disadvantages associated with the cultivation of energy crops, described above. Plantations create far fewer jobs than, for example, a system of agricultural smallholdings.¹¹ At the same time, internationally agreed minimum standards are often not adhered to – in many cases the workers are kept in conditions which amount to slavery. It is estimated that some 30,000 people still work as virtual slaves in Brazil, most of them on the sugar cane plantations.¹² For these reasons, the Brazilian Catholic Bishops Conference has voiced its opposition to an expansion of the large-scale production of agrofuels.

As many reports show, the industrial production of agrofuels often involves infringement of the economic, social and cultural human rights of the poor.

II.4 Agrofuels and environmental protection

Energy crops are treated as an environmentally friendly and non-finite alternative: many people hope that by filling up their car with so-called biodiesel or ethanol or investing in shares in the palm oil industry they are contributing to CO₂-neutral energy usage and thus helping to slow down climate change and its negative consequences.

In practice, the balance sheet for energy crops is not as favourable as has been hoped: depending on the crop and the process used, the use of agrofuels saves only 10-30% of CO₂ emissions when

¹⁰ Cf. Fidel Mingorance, Human Rights Everywhere and Coordination Belge pour la Colombie, El flujo del aceite de palma Colombia – Belgium, November 2006.

¹¹ For the creation of approx. 5-10 million jobs in palm oil plantations approx. 35 million people lose their bases of life ("Agrofuels in Asia", Almuth Ernsting, www.biofuels.watch, in GRAIN Seedling, May 2007).

¹² Cf. "Agribusiness and biofuels: an explosive mixture", FBOMS + Heinrich Böll Foundation.

compared with mineral oil.¹³ The low level of the reduction in greenhouse gases is primarily a consequence of the cultivation and production process, which involves the use of fossil fuels and hence the emission of CO₂. Because large quantities of synthetic fertilizers are used – whose production process is very energy-intensive – nitrous oxide (N₂O) is also released; this is a potent greenhouse gas.

The production of ethanol from sugar cane and of biodiesel from palm oil also brings with it a risk that intact forests will be destroyed. This has a negative impact on the greenhouse gas balance, because forests are major carbon reservoirs. Thus the felling and burning of the Indonesian peat forests to create palm oil plantations contribute significantly to global CO₂ emissions.

MISEREOR has for some years observed how the use of land for agriculture has encroached on natural environments such as forests, wetlands and arid regions that were previously ecologically intact; this process is accompanied by a significant loss of biodiversity. The large-scale felling of forests also lowers the water table, with negative impacts on soil fertility and river water flow rates and hence on the environment and human communities. In order to be competitive in comparison with the price of mineral oil, agrofuel-producing companies rely on a high output per unit area, which they achieve through cost-intensive agroindustrial cultivation with little use of labour. From an ecological and social perspective, industrialized agriculture entails major risks; it normally involves intensive use of pesticides, which results in pollution of groundwater and rivers and is often harmful to the health of plantation workers and local communities.

The plantation system also involves the use of extremely large volumes of water. The increased export of agrofuels is therefore equivalent to the indirect export of water, which in regions at risk of drought is undesirable. The final element in the equation is that the pattern of land concentration that goes with monocultural cultivation forces small farmers and their families off their land; they are compelled to move to ecologically intact regions in order to survive.

The majority of consumers in the EU view the cultivation of genetically modified plants for food and animal feed very critically, because the consequences for the environment, for people and for animals have not been adequately researched. It is likely, however, that the use of genetic engineering in the production of plant-based energy will meet with more acceptance, on account of the assurance that these plants do not enter the food chain. Agrobusinesses are already promoting the expanded production of genetically modified plant-based energy raw materials. There are fears that this will even further restrict the genetic diversity of seed material, that genetically modified traits will be transferred to other plants and that farmers will become more dependent on agrobusinesses as a result of patents and prohibitions on propagation. In addition, the higher level of acceptance is likely to lead to the gradual incursion of genetic engineering into food products.

These facts lead one to conclude that a large-scale expansion of agrofuel production, such as is currently under way in developing countries, destroys the environment and thus the life-support systems of large numbers of people, and exacerbates climate change. Climate protection through replenishable feedstocks can only be achieved if forests are not cleared for this purpose and if cultivation meets comprehensive environmental and social sustainability criteria.

II.5 Attempts at risk reduction

Certification and its potential for ensuring social and environmental acceptability

Alerted by many studies and reports, politicians in the EU and Germany are becoming increasingly aware of the risks associated with the cultivation of energy crops. Yet many governments are keen to develop the energy sovereignty of their countries and promote the currently emerging market. They are therefore investing in the “sustainable” cultivation of energy crops. Certification of cultivation areas and methods in accordance with environmental and social minimum standards is seen as a way of

¹³ Study by the Eidgenössische Materialprüfungs- und Forschungsanstalt (Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research, EMPA), 2007.

reducing the negative impacts of the cultivation of energy crops and making better use of the potential opportunities. Experience with other certification systems – such as the FSC Certificate of the Forest Stewardship Council¹⁴ – and climate protection projects linked to the Clean Development Mechanism¹⁵ shows that certification criteria provide no guarantee that minimum standards will be adhered to. This applies in particular in countries in which, despite rigorous environmental protection laws, nature and the environment are already being exploited at the expense of the population. It is in these countries, which include Brazil and Indonesia, that the cultivation of agrofuels is being pushed forward. MISEREOR partner organizations such as Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT) and the landless workers' movement MST in Brazil are therefore critical of certification. They are concerned that "certified" cultivation of energy crops will not be able to solve all the associated problems. As demand for land as a production factor increases, they also see a diminishment of opportunities for agricultural reform and state-organized redistribution of land to the landless and the poor.

Second-generation fuels

Processes are currently being developed to liquefy the entire biomass of a plant for use as fuel (biomass to liquid, BTL). These "second generation" agrofuels have the significant advantage that they can be made out of plant remains, enabling by-products of food production to be utilized. This means that there is not necessarily competition between the production of crops for food and for energy production. The energy balance is improved, since more utilizable biomass is produced for the same investment of energy for cultivation than was the case with the first generation of agrofuels. However, the advantages of this higher productivity are offset by the fact that a great deal of energy is lost from the plant when it is converted into liquid fuel. Manufacturers and traders in the fuel sector see "second-generation" agrofuels as an opportunity to continue to make money from energy crops despite the public pressure exerted by environmental and development organizations. The technology is, however, not yet fully developed; it is likely to be another ten years before it is fully usable. Moreover, increased output per unit area will not automatically mean that less land will be used for agrofuel production.

MISEREOR takes a critical view of the hopes attached to certification and new generation fuels. In combating climate change, renewable energies and the use of energy crops can and should play a crucial role. But they must be deployed where the best use of their savings potential can be made: from an energy efficiency standpoint it is inappropriate to use energy crops as fuel. They should instead be used in direct combustion, without conversion losses, in decentralized generating units with combined heat and power production (CHP), as proposed by the German Council of Environmental Advisors (Sachverständigenrat für Umweltfragen, SRU).¹⁶

III. Another world is possible – ways out of the crisis

The slogan of MISEREOR's 1977 Lenten Campaign, " Anders leben, damit andere überleben", i.e. " Live differently, adopt another lifestyle, so that others may survive", is more relevant than ever: in retaining the prevailing growth-oriented model of production and consumption, people in the industrialized

¹⁴ The FSC Certificate awarded by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a certification system for wood products from sustainable forestry. It was set up to encourage the sustainable use of forests; management standards are designed to contribute to socially acceptable, environmentally friendly and economically sustainable forestry practices. For a critique of the FSC certification system in developing countries see www.wrm.org.uy.

¹⁵ The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is one of the flexible mechanisms established under the Kyoto Protocol. An industrialized country can carry out climate protection projects in a developing country and have the reduction of greenhouse gases credited to its own account. This is intended to help keep climate protection costs as low as possible. CDM projects must promote local sustainable development, but this is inadequately implemented. See www.cdmwatch.org.

¹⁶ "Klimaschutz durch Biomasse" (Special report of the German Council of Environmental Advisors (Sachverständigenrat für Umweltfragen, SRU), July 2007).

world knowingly accept that this is at the expense of the poor. A "business as usual" approach which merely substitutes renewable energy sources for fossil fuels is not ecologically sustainable; furthermore, it destroys the livelihoods of the poor in developing countries in the short term and the basis of our own existence in the long term. Action at international and national level must be governed by principles of human rights and environmental protection. The creation of decentralized, locally managed and sustainable structures should contribute to a redistribution of profits from and use of agricultural production. This applies both to the equitable access of the poor to production inputs (such as land, water, seed, know-how), to processing and marketing facilities and the use of energy crops. Since the world's resources are limited, this means that within both the global and the national context the rich must reduce their consumption of resources in order that the poor may live a life that is compatible with their dignity as human beings. This requires a re-orientation of policy. Securing the food and energy supply of disadvantaged population groups in developing countries must take precedence over export interests.¹⁷

III.1 Prospects for sustainable poverty reduction

Fifty years' experience in development cooperation have shown MISEREOR that it is possible to protect creation while at the same time tackling poverty and securing food and energy supplies on a sustainable basis at local level. MISEREOR therefore supports partner organizations and the local population in developing optimized, highly productive systems. These do not rely on external expert know-how and energy-intensive inputs. Instead, they are based on local knowledge; they strengthen people's ability to utilize available resources with the means at their disposal and to adapt their economic activities to changing environmental conditions. MISEREOR therefore supports numerous projects and initiatives that are effective in various areas and are intended to illustrate the potential inherent in fair and sustainable development:

Sustainable land use systems operated by smallholders' communities and traditional user groups combine environmental protection requirements with sustainable food security while also meeting social needs. They can form the basis of the decentralized, sustainable production of renewable raw materials and thus help to prevent environmental damage, increased concentration of land and income and the replacement of food production.

- In the semi-arid north-east of Brazil, MISEREOR supports farming families who are developing ecological agroforestry and reintroducing native, drought-resistant seed. This enables the smallholder farming families to regain control of their production, post-harvest processing and marketing. Usage systems that are adapted to local conditions in this way enable people to cope better with climate fluctuations.
- In India, MISEREOR supports indigenous groups which have lived for generations by gathering a range of forest products; they are protecting their natural environment by reviving traditional systems of use and thus helping to prevent the overexploitation of nature. In this way they not only secure their own supply of food and firewood; by preserving the forest, they are also preserving a part of the Earth's "green lungs".

Innovative initiatives in energy supply that function on a decentralized basis and are locally managed reach people who fall through the net of the state's social security and supply systems.

- In Indonesia, MISEREOR supports a rural hospital in using its sewage to produce biogas which can be used for cooking and hot water production and replaces firewood.
- Also in Indonesia, MISEREOR supports a technical academy that has developed a hand-operated press for producing jatropha oil. This enables communities in remote regions to produce oil and use it for energy.

¹⁷ Smallholder organizations have coined the concept of food sovereignty for this purpose. The concept can also be extended to energy provision.

- In Tanzania, MISEREOR supports the market development of decentralized plant-oil production and processing. Small-scale producers, traders, banks, small businesses and church organizations work together to produce plant oil from sunflowers and jatropha.

Information and advocacy by MISEREOR partners in the South and by MISEREOR in the North complement initiatives at local level. People are enabled to stand up to their governments in defending their rights and to call for transparent, poverty-oriented policies, food sovereignty and equitable access to resources.

- In Chad, MISEREOR supports a network that helps the population of the oil-producing regions to claim their share of the profits of oil extraction and to monitor the activities of the large mineral oil companies.
- In Brazil, MISEREOR supports the Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT), an organization that works for the rights of the landless, small farmers and their families and sugar cane workers by providing legal advice, undertaking information and educational work and taking legal action when human rights and land rights are infringed.
- In Indonesia and India, MISEREOR supports campaigns against the illegal expropriation of traditional user groups to make way for palm oil and jatropha plantations.

III.2 Opportunities for action for committed Christians and critical consumers

MISEREOR would like to spark a discussion of values that addresses questions about the meaning of life in a modern context. Instead of pursuing a lifestyle based on consumption and growth which destroys creation and sows the seeds of hunger and poverty, we must discover ways of living together that emphasize quality of life and spiritual development. People will need to become informed; they must consider the impacts of their own actions, including the global dimension, take responsibility for this and limit themselves to essentials.

Through critical consumption, consumers have control over the production and sale of goods of all types. Instead of allowing ourselves to be manipulated by the advertising and selective information policy of multinational companies, we must persuade these companies to act in a socially and environmentally responsible way. By exercising a preference for locally and ecologically produced goods, people can help stem the proliferation of energy-intensive, non-sustainable patterns of production and consumption; in so doing they will be helping to revive regional economies and will be taking a stand against increasing concentration and the loss of jobs.

III.3 Political demands

The experiences of MISEREOR partners frequently confirm what critical studies reveal: the use of energy crops from developing countries is accompanied by significant social and ecological problems. Instead of creating sustainable and equitable access to energy and income opportunities for the poor, the present trend exacerbates social injustice, hunger and poverty without living up to the promise of environmental compatibility. An expansion of the use of energy crops from developing countries to meet our energy needs cannot be justified. It is indefensible to call for sustainability criteria for energy crops without radically questioning global patterns of trade and consumption.

- Ø MISEREOR calls for energy policy in Europe to have a social and environmental focus. This entails a drastic reduction of energy consumption in Germany and the other industrialized countries, systematic promotion of energy saving and the development of highly efficient forms of energy use and renewable energies. This development must be based on efficiency standards and environmental and social criteria.

Appropriate instruments include the reduction of private transport and the expansion of public transport systems, the promotion of efficient fuels and the use of replenishable feedstocks in stationary on-site generating units with combined heat and power production (CHP).

To this end the EU and other countries should abolish their statutory blending quotas for agrofuels.

- Ø MISEREOR calls for energy crops to be grown in a manner that is environmentally sound and socially equitable. The governments of the developing countries and the international community must strive to ensure that cultivation of these feedstocks does not force out small producers and indigenous groups or lead to the further concentration of land and income; in addition, the human rights of the workers involved must be respected. The cultivation of energy crops must not endanger food security, health or the environment.
To this end, the EU and other countries should impose sanctions on the importation of energy crops that do not meet these criteria.
- Ø MISEREOR calls for the international community, in cooperation with civil society, to reorganize and effectively monitor world trade in order to ensure fair trading conditions for all.
This requires the introduction of environmental and social standards for all areas of production and trade, with civil society actors being involved in formulating and monitoring these standards.
- Ø MISEREOR calls for product manufacturing to involve mandatory labelling of resource consumption, so that conscientious consumers can deliberately select environmentally friendly and socially acceptable products¹⁸. This instrument must be accompanied by a government-backed information campaign and educational work that targets consumers.

Further information

- "Energy for the Poor", MISEREOR 2004 (www.misereor.org)
- "Sustainable Germany: A Contribution to Sustainable Global Development", BUND & MISEREOR 1996
- Climate Change: A Focal Point of Global, Intergenerational and Ecological Justice. Commission for Society and Social Affairs/ Commission for International Church Affairs No.29en (2nd, updated edition, April 2007)
- GRAIN Seedling, July 2007 (www.grain.org)
- EcoFair Trade Dialogue, "Slow Trade – Sound Farming", Heinrich Böll Foundation, MISEREOR + Wuppertal Institute 2007 (www.misereor.org)
- Position paper of FASE (Federação de Órgãos para Assistência Social e Educacional) on agroindustry and monoculture "Agronegócio e Monoculturas: Diagnóstico e Propostas da FASE para o debate com parceiros", Brazil, Dec. 2006
- "Access to land as a food security and human rights issue – A MISEREOR discussion paper for dialogue with its partners", MISEREOR 2005 (www.misereor.org).

¹⁸ A concept such as that of the Ecological Rucksack can be used as an indicator in order to calculate the resource consumption of a product or service. For further information see www.quarks.de/dyn/4187.phtml.