

# The benefits of energy crop cultivation outweigh the costs

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An article in the current issue of *Global Change Biology Bioenergy* reveals that *Miscanthus x giganteus*, a perennial grass, could effectively reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, while lowering atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>.

Using a simulation tool that models the future global climate, researchers predict that the carbon that is released into the atmosphere from the loss of natural vegetation will be paid back by *Miscanthus* within 30 years. Previous estimates for other liquid biofuels, such as [corn ethanol](#), were estimated to take 167-420 years to pay back their carbon debt.

The global concern over [climate change](#) has challenged researchers to explore ways to mitigate the damage we are doing to our environment. They are looking more closely at energy crops, like *Miscanthus*, to replace our need for fossil fuels like natural gas and oil, which raise atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

According to John Hughes, UK Met Office Research Scientist, "Our study demonstrates the huge potential of energy crops, in particular of *Miscanthus*. Also, by scaling the results up to the global scale as we do in this study we are developing a new set of tools for evaluating energy crops."

Provided by Wiley

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