

Biofuels regime failing to meet its objectives under current regulatory framework

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The European Union (EU) regulatory framework for biofuels has the potential to address its climate, energy and environmental objectives, but only if carefully tailored and effectively implemented, according to research from the University of Eastern Finland. The current regulatory framework for biofuels is failing to meet these underlying objectives.

Biofuels are part of the EU climate and energy package

Biofuels fall under the regulatory framework created by the Renewable Energy Directive introduced as part of the EU's Climate and Energy Package, and biofuels are vital both to the EU's battle against [climate change](#) and in boosting its [energy security](#). The Directive sets a mandatory target for [renewable energy](#) in transportation (consisting mainly of biofuels) use to constitute 10% of energy use within the EU by 2020. However, the EU is currently setting new targets to extend beyond 2020 as well as revising the Renewable Energy Directive. Debating the relevant issues while taking the challenges of the regulatory framework into consideration is therefore of crucial importance to avoid replicating the flaws of the current system in the future EU [climate](#) and energy package.

The doctoral dissertation of Seita Romppanen, MSc (Admin.), applies a new governance approach to the examination of the regulatory framework. According to the study, the EU biofuels regime is a good

example of a mode of new governance suitable for governing complex regulatory challenges such as sustainable biofuels, but its regulatory architecture and the particular mechanisms of new governance it deploys endanger the achievement of the underlying climate and environmental objectives and the legitimacy of the EU biofuels regime.

Sustainable biofuels governance calls for coherent and comprehensive regulation

According to the study, it is important to put in place binding targets in respect of the introduction of biofuels as part of our future [energy](#) systems, as well as substantive rules setting the parameters to ensure this mandatory introduction of biofuels is achieved in a sustainable manner. However, it is equally crucial to have in place a credible regulatory framework capable of guaranteeing that the system established to govern these targets and rules on sustainable biofuels performs effectively and legitimately. New governance is an approach that allows all relevant actors, processes and instruments fundamental to the governance of sustainable biofuels to be evaluated together. Based on the comprehensive evaluation of the current EU biofuels, the study suggests ways towards how the flaws undermining the sustainable achievement of the climate and environmental objectives should be corrected. Furthermore, in order to improve the [regulatory framework](#) for EU biofuels to meet its objectives more effectively and legitimately, steps should be taken to realise the potential already inherent in the governance mechanisms (such as options to better facilitate the public-private cooperation in EU biofuels governance).

The findings were originally published in *European Energy and Environmental Law Review*, *Journal of Renewable Energy Law and Policy*, *Review of European Community & International Environmental Law*, *Ympäristöjuridiikka (Finnish Environmental Law Review)* and *Climate Law*.

More information: The doctoral dissertation, titled "New Governance in Context, Evaluating the EU Biofuels Regime," is available for download at [publications.uef.fi/pub/urn_i ... bn_978-952-61-1763-8](https://publications.uef.fi/pub/urn_i...bn_978-952-61-1763-8)

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