

This response was submitted to the consultation held by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on *New approaches to biofuels* between December 2009 and March 2010. The views expressed are solely those of the respondent(s) and not those of the Council.

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QUESTIONS ANSWERED:

Question 1

ANSWER:

I would like to see a realistic cost benefit analysis - which includes land use etc. In principle if it adds up then great, but I do not expect to see gaps in the numbers just to make the case look good

Question 2

ANSWER:

Of course Land use is critical - and this especially includes "marginal land" GM worries me, as I've yet to see a single GM claim live up to the hype. Also when GM spreads (as it does) those "infected" are treated as the bad guys! This needs a much clearer and more honest approach, which does not just favour "big business"

Question 3

ANSWER:

Not at a technical level, but I understand the basic's and can spot a pup (made up benefits, with no real benefits) a mile away. I read up on this and other subjects from all over. I do not expect much real information from the press though, sadly

Question 4

ANSWER:

fuel security is key, but so is food security. I would rather have food than fuel! it's a difficult mix, and what we really need to do is use / waste less (both fuel and food). I would like to see an open and honest review of the benefits, and understand the impact on land use, warts and all

Question 5

ANSWER:

Lets do a full and realistic lifecycle assessment BEFORE we go full out and promote the next gen bio fuel - don't make the same mistakes again.

Question 6

ANSWER:

I'm open to all approaches, but only if the impact on the whole environment is taken into account - and we really understand the impact before we go live. GM is of major concern, but the same issues are valid for all others - lets take a precautionary approach not just assume all is well, as we have to get to market NOW We need to understand how these things interact with the rest of the planet, not wait until after we've made the mistakes

Question 7

ANSWER:

Lets be realistic here, this is not going to happen. History tells us the local populations will be pushed off their land and massive machines operated by a small number of low paid people will take over. So lets no

kid ourself. Sorry to be pessimistic, but 1st gen bio, soya, oil, the list goes on and on, and its never yet brought any benefits to the locals (unless you count a very few people in power)

Question 8

ANSWER:

RE: Lignocellulosic biomass – the fibrous, inedible material from plants. This makes it sound like its a waste product which will just polute the place! We live in a closed loop system (the world) and you can't keep taking and not expect nothing to happen. If you don't feed the soil (with the fibrous, inedible material etc) then you loose fertility and have to replace it with something brought in from an external source! When you apply all these external items to the fields make sure you count them in the cost benefit sums!

Question 9

ANSWER:

same answer for all three. Do we really understand how these things work, and interact with the outside world? What happens when they interact with other plant (and thus animal) life? Be VERY careful when you talk glibly about marginal land - just because you can't run a combine over it does not mean it's scrap and useless. learn the lesons from 1st gen bio - NO really learn them, look at the amazing claims, few of which were found to be true in the long term. view 2nd gen bio with a critical eye, especially where these novel new technologies are used.

Question 10

ANSWER:

Look at the massive genetic theft which is going on today - a massive failure on the part of governments! Its in favour of bug business and to EVERYONE else's detrement.

Question 11

ANSWER:

I can't think of any

Question 12

ANSWER:

We need to look at the benefit to EVERYONE, rather than just a few big companies, especially where they are using public funds (hidden or open)

Question 13

ANSWER:

I'm sure it will be exactly the same as today. Profit will win out, the environment and the people (esp. in the developing world) will not even get a look in. Look at oil, soya, wood, gold, diamonds, and any other resource we in the rich west want - we have more money so we get exactly what we want and leave devestation in our wake.

Question 14

ANSWER:

in the west we might have to pay a little more for fuel and food, but it's not going to be a major issue. In the developing world people will starve, get tossed off their land, shot, imprisoned etc. Business as usual

Question 15**ANSWER:**

off-setting does not work, it's a con. If I shoot someone, but pay someone else NOT to shoot someone can I claim to have off-set the crime? No, it's rubbish.

Question 16**ANSWER:**

we need a realistic debate on the subject once we have the REAL facts and figures to hand. I can't currently see many environmental benefits to 2nd gen bio fuel, but based on history I can see a lot of negatives

Question 17**ANSWER:**

Of course it will cause a problem, food vs. fuel. the problem is that the people who will give up their food are different from those who get the fuel. And the winners have the money

Question 18**ANSWER:**

we have the money so we get the fuel. the developing world will get turned over as usual. many people will die, so we can carry on driving our cars and trucks.

Question 19**ANSWER:**

we're escalating the game with all the novel new technologies, unless we REALLY test this stuff we will not know for years what the impact is. The workers will suffer as they do today, because they are poor

Question 20**ANSWER:**

the same reason we move food production to the developing world, the locals have no rights and we can get what we want cheaper with no questions asked. sadly its business as usual again

Question 21**ANSWER:**

I think we should invest public money in developing small scale solutions.

Question 22**ANSWER:**

When the public fund R&D (directly or indirectly) then they should have a real say in what happens

Question 23**ANSWER:**

take a real view on the benefits and the costs - leave nothing out and discuss openly. we cannot allow big business to run around causing chaos just for profit, its too expensive for everyone else

Question 24

ANSWER:

Maybe we can involve people in the developing world who have been affected by 1st gen bio fuel. lets hear their views on the issues. Don't be fooled that the new stuff is better.