

# Why FRA Supports Forest-Based Biomass

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## Why Carbon Neutrality Matters:

- The concept of biomass carbon neutrality, recognized as scientifically valid around the world, is the bedrock of the forest products industry's sustainability claims.
- Regulatory uncertainty around how or whether carbon emissions from biomass combustion will be counted threatens the viability of the forestry, forest products and bioenergy sectors.
- Well managed forestlands provide clean air, forest products, and bioenergy. This cycle is repeated through renewal of forestlands that are more abundant in the U.S. than in 1952.
- Carbon storage in the U.S. has increased annually over the last 30 years.

The concept of biomass carbon neutrality (net zero carbon emissions) is grounded in the fact that carbon emissions from biomass combustion are fully offset by working forest landscapes. These landscapes continually absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, release oxygen, and store carbon in the products manufactured from active forest management. A balance of young, intermediate, and mature forests is needed to address climate change effectively.

- Younger forests are more efficient at sequestering CO<sub>2</sub>, while older forests store more carbon.
- Through forest management operations, biomass is produced, which, when utilized, creates markets and provides economic activity for rural economies.
- Biomass is used for energy to heat homes and to generate electricity.
- Because of the ongoing efforts of the forest products sector, there are more trees in the U.S. today than there were in 1952 and more tons of carbon stored in forests.
- The forest industry's commitment to sustainability, growing and maintaining healthy forests will ensure that the cycle of tree growth, harvest, and replanting will maintain healthy, viable forests into the future.
- The carbon-neutral nature of biomass harvested from sustainably managed forests has been recognized repeatedly by studies, government agencies, institutions, legislation, and rules around the world, including guidance from the United Nations (UN) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the reporting protocols of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

## Request:

- ❖ Maintain existing statutory directive that federal agencies recognize the carbon neutrality of forest-based biomass in any final FY 2024 appropriations legislation.
- ❖ Include provisions in the 2023 Farm Bill reauthorization legislation that builds upon the appropriations rider by binding federal agencies and departments to embrace biomass carbon neutrality in any federal environmental or energy rulemaking.



FRA strongly supports a provision originally enacted as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 that directs the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Agriculture to implement a coordinated policy that fully reflects the carbon-neutral nature of forest-based biomass fuels and energy. Codifying the concept of biomass carbon neutrality was a significant victory for every link in the biomass value chain. However, since the biomass provision was included in an appropriations measure, the language is in jeopardy of expiring if it is not explicitly reauthorized. With this in mind, FRA respectfully requests support for legislative language reauthorizing the biomass provision for fiscal year 2024.

## About FRA:

The Forest Resources Association (FRA) represents the interests of over 330 organizations and businesses in the forest products industry. Our members include forest landowners, suppliers, consuming mills, associated businesses, and state forestry associations.

FRA promotes the interests of its members in the economic, efficient, and sustainable use of forest resources to meet the needs of the wood fiber supply chain through private enterprise. FRA members are represented in 49 states and 384 congressional districts.

For more information, please contact:

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