

Assembling the scalar politics of sustainability of bioenergy in Europe

In 2009, the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) of European Union opened up discussion on sustainability criteria for energy from biomass. Especially in the case of solid biomass (e.g. forest industrial waste and logging residues) the proposal raised fierce opposition from Nordic nation states, where forest management practices, industrial value-chains and systems of energy production carry certain definitions of sustainability. On other words, the international attempts to govern climate change intertwine together with national policies of energy security, regional networks of biomass production, local constellations of livelihoods and shifting perspectives on sustainability.

This paper examines the debate over the common sustainability criteria for biomass in the EU from the perspective of knowledge production behind different definitions of sustainability. The conceptual attention is paid to the assembling of geographical scales of sustainability, where actors utilize various institutional, social and environmental capacities to stabilize the knowledge frameworks.

Keywords: renewable energy, sustainability, political geography, scale