



European Parliament

Mr. Antonio Tajani, President
Bât. Altiero Spinelli
60 rue Wiertz / Wiertzstraat 60
B-1047 Brussels
Belgium

EU Council

Mr. Donald Tusk, President
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175
B-1048 Brussels

Dear Sirs:

Ref.: ***The Renewable Energy Directive (RED), and the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD) of the European Commission***

The Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), a Liberian non-governmental organization, urges the European Parliament and the EU Council to reject the Commission's policy proposals on biofuel published on November 30, 2016. We believe the proposal, in its current form, will not only do more harm to the environment but will also contribute significantly to land conflicts, human rights abuses and reinforcing poverty in fragile and poor countries in the tropics, especially in Africa.

The rapid growth of the oil palm sector in Liberia and the related surge in land conflicts, violence and human rights abuses is testament to the threats it poses to human rights and peace in the country. The growing deforestation footprint of the oil palm industry in Liberia also highlights the potential negative environmental impacts of the EU biofuel policy. Considering that Crude Palm Oil is a major ingredient of biofuel, there is a real possibility that the policy will attract new investments in the oil palm sector thus exacerbating an already dire situation.

Land conflicts between communities and oil palm companies, and the related human rights abuses, in Liberia have been well documented and reported.¹ The threat it poses to forest in

¹ See: 'The New Snake Oil?' & 'Temples and Guns' published by Global Witness in 2015 and 2016 respectively; and 'Hallow Promises' published by Forest Peoples Programme in 2015.

Liberia is also documented² and highlighted.³ The local communities and populations that are being forced to live with the consequences of oil palm plantation expansion in Liberia and other parts of Africa are among the world's poorest and most disadvantaged peoples.

Once again, we call on the EU Council and Parliament to reject the European Commission's proposal.

Sincerely yours



James G. Otto

Campaign Coordinator

Community Rights and Corporate Governance



² See 'Forest Under Threat' published by Sustainable Development Institute in 2016

³ See 'Sime Darby: Liberian Crossroads' published by Chain Reaction Research in 2016