

## Land grabs for biofuels

### Driven by EU biofuels policies

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Several organisations have expressed their concern that the demand for feedstock for biofuels in the EU would cause land grabbing – large scale land acquisitions with negative socioeconomic impacts – in countries all over the world. In fact, this concern plays a prominent role in a heated debate on the sustainability of biofuels. However, the evidence has hardly been quantified.

Commissioned by ePURE, Ecofys assessed in much detail over 50 individual claims about land grabbing. The analysis was based on one of the best informed global databases on this topic: the Land Matrix of the International Land Coalition. The study concludes that the acreage of land possibly subject to land grabbing caused by EU biofuels demand is far less than often presented in the debate. At best, only 0.5% of all deals in the Land Matrix concern land grabs for EU biofuels. The alluring EU market may have been responsible for maximally 180,000 hectares of land grabs or may have other related concerns. Virtually no biofuels on the EU market come from grabbed land.

New biofuels projects developed for the EU market are giving much more attention to socio-economic aspects. And several developing countries that were taken by surprise in the land rush period several years ago are now developing better legislative and regulatory frameworks to deal with this increased interest for land. Effectively, the EU biofuels market raises the bar for land governance.



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