

# Systemic Diagnosis and Intervention Concerning Stakeholders' Acceptance of Bio-fuels in Germany

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## Introduction

Bio-fuels are – not least due to the debate on E10 – a widely discussed topic in Germany. The amendment and implementation of Germany's biomass strategy raises the question of how sustainable biomass production and use can be realized. Following a systemic approach and the assumption of interdependency between stakeholders' and users' systems, knowledge about stakeholders' networks is crucial for the sustainable integration of bio-fuels market access. In the research project "Acceptance of Bio-fuels" the Research Group Environmental Psychology investigated the variety of perspectives and acceptance positions in the most varying bio-fuels stakeholder systems to analyse relationships and constellations and to derive room for improvement. The approach attempts to integrate systemic intervention methods, often used in the fields of counseling and team-building, to the research and practice of environmental psychology.

## Methodology

An interview guideline, based on the Systemic Frame Model of Perception and Action (Schweizer-Ries, 2008, 2011, Kaufmann-Hayoz & Gutscher, 2001), allowing for a broad investigation of experts' perspectives on the overall system, was developed to address perceptions and positions concerning framing conditions, stakeholder constellations and aspects of acceptance. In the first step, central institutions and stakeholders were determined via stakeholder analysis (Zimmermann, 2006). Interviews were then conducted with fourteen key stakeholders from the most varying sectors involved with bio-fuels (politics, economy, NGOs). The

interviews were analysed using qualitative content analysis and reviewed for optimisation potential.

## Results

The results of the expert interviews demonstrated a wide spectrum of positions regarding bio-fuels. A major result was the fact that communication within defined sectors is described as quite successful, while the exchange of information between different sectors is characterised by communication barriers and dead-ends. The origin of stagnant communication processes seems to be the disagreement as to the "objective" framing conditions of bio-fuels, as well as their delineation – pointing to a very emotional dialogue. Based on these results, a workshop concept was developed, that integrates components of mediation and solution-focused systemic interventions. The workshop, which will be evaluated for stakeholders of all interest groups should help to identify potentials of an optimised communication structure and plan the first steps in realising those potentials.

## References

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