



**Friends of  
the Earth  
United States**

October 17, 2017

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### **Countries reject plans for the expansion of aviation biofuels**

*Biofuels are not the solution to airlines' growing CO2 emissions*

Oakland, CA: On October 13, 25 countries convened by the UN International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) rejected the 2050 Vision on Sustainable Aviation Fuels that included volume-based targets for biofuels proposed by the ICAO Secretariat.

The ICAO Secretariat's proposal intended to see 128 million tons of biofuels a year being burned in plane engines by 2040, going up to 285 million tons (half of all aviation fuel) by 2050. By comparison, some 82 million tons of biofuels are currently used every year in transport worldwide. The proposal would have led to an unprecedented expansion in biofuel production, more than likely in poorer countries. It would have accelerated the expansion of industrial palm oil which is major driver of land grabbing across the tropics, threatening the lives and livelihoods of millions in the developing world.

“ICAO Member States took the right decision by rejecting the 2050 ICAO Vision on Sustainable Aviation Fuels proposed by the ICAO Secretariat, which was based on poor analysis, and grossly overestimated environmental benefits and potential emissions reductions,” said Anuradha Mittal, Executive Director of the Oakland Institute. “Our research warns that given the mind-boggling land requirements needed to meet the industry's CO2 target, aviation biofuel has a price tag that neither people nor the planet should have to pay,” Mittal continued.

Airlines are caught between economic constraints and environmental problems with fossil fuels and CO2 emissions. Airlines would like to see biofuels as the answer to both challenges, but such expansion would lead to hundreds of millions of hectares of land to be either deforested or shifted from food to biofuel production.

“We firmly oppose the promotion of biofuels for aviation,” said Jeff Conant, International Forests Campaigner at Friends of the Earth, U.S.. “The climate and human rights impacts of industrial demand for palm oil are already grave. Instead of driving greater demand, Governments must take urgent measures to reduce the climate impact of aviation by stemming and ultimately reversing its growth,” he continued.. “This will require ending subsidies – including tax exemptions - for aviation, ending airport expansion, and investing in alternatives, including rail transport.”

#### **Read more:**

ICAO Secretariat's [2050 Vision on Sustainable Aviation Fuels](#)

[Call by 96 civil society organizations from around the world](#) for ICAO's Member States to reject the proposal

The Oakland Institute's report [Eco-Skies: The Global Rush for Aviation Biofuel](#)

Friends of the Earth: [How the Palm Oil Industry is a Major Driver of Climate Change](#)

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Friends of the Earth fights to create a more healthy and just world. Our current campaigns focus on promoting clean energy and solutions to climate change, ensuring the food we eat and products we use are safe and sustainable, and protecting marine ecosystems and the people who live and work near them. [www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org)