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PRESS STATEMENT

A MIXED BAG: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTE ON THE RED REVISION

Yesterday the European Parliament voted its position on the Renewable Energy Directive (RED).

MEPs rejected CEFS' call for a new Annex IX part Ba for stationary installations. This new sub-annex would facilitate the use of biomass residues for the decarbonisation of factory processes in the sugar industry. The amendment failed to pass despite being approved by the ENVI Committee (albeit with reference to Annex VI rather than Annex IX).

MEPs also voted to make the sustainability criteria under the RED subject to the waste hierarchy and cascading use principle. Depending on how the cascading principle is applied, this could severely impede the use of beet pulp for energetic self-use in sugar factories (e.g. to produce biomethane).

More positively, MEPs struck down the European Commission's proposal to modify Annex VI to assign field emissions to non-Annex IX residues and wastes. This is a step forward, improving on the position of both the Commission and Member States.

MEPs also voted to make the greenhouse gas emission reduction criteria under Art. 29(10) non-retroactive. This would safeguard existing investments in biomass installations, including in the sugar sector. It would recognise the contribution such installations play in decarbonising the EU economy and reducing the EU's dependence on fossil fuels.

CEFS Director General Marie-Christine Ribera said: "It is essential that the sugar sector can use residues and wastes from sugar production to produce green energy to decarbonise factory processes. This is particularly the case in rural areas, where an absence of high-voltage grid connections doesn't allow for direct electrification. We will push hard to get our position recognised during the trilogues. The EU's food sovereignty depends on it."

Finally, MEPs rightly rejected proposals to tighten the Commission's proposal on the use of sustainable biofuels in transport. During the trilogue negotiations Member States should ensure that the 7% cap on biofuels in transport applies at EU rather than Member State level.

 Avenue de Tervuren 268, B-1150, Brussels, Belgium