

SkyNRG reaction to AirportWatch/Biofuelwatch statement

Air travel has become an integral part of everyday life. There will be air travel, now and in the future, as it fulfills an important social function in today's global society. The aviation industry acknowledges the urgency for emission reduction and they also know there is a need to switch to alternative, renewable resources as fossil fuels are depleting. Demand side reduction is a very effective way to reduce fuel consumption and related green house gas emissions. But it does not offer a complete solution to aviation related emissions, let alone energy security. In addressing the challenge to replace fossil kerosene in a sustainable way, aviation has no alternative but liquid hydrocarbons from bio-based (waste) sources.

We share the concerns of NGOs (and other stakeholders) when it comes to bio-energy resources. We believe in the notion that *the impact of bioenergy on social and environmental issues may be positive or negative depending on local conditions and the design and implementation of specific projects* (SRREN, 2011). When done in the wrong way biomass and biofuel production systems can have a variety of negative impacts on eco- and social systems. Greenhouse gas emissions are just part of the problem. On the other side, well managed projects can have a profoundly positive effect on ecosystems and social systems alike and can include: enhanced biodiversity, soil carbon increases and improved soil productivity, significant greenhouse reductions, less dependency on fossil energy sources, reduced erosion (top soil and nutrient run off) effects, stimulation of local employment and strengthening of local, regional and national economies.

SkyNRG focuses on this positive side of biofuel development. To make the right decisions now and in the future, SkyNRG is advised by an independent Sustainability Board, consisting of the Dutch wing of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-NL), Solidaridad, and the Copernicus Institute of the University of Utrecht. SkyNRG recognizes to be in a transition; the best choices today are likely to be replaced by improved choices in the near future. We have chosen to start with Used Cooking Oil, a waste stream, as main feedstock. We know the available volumes are limited and that it can never replace total fossil kerosene consumption. And neither can vegetable oils. We see current options as a first step in the right direction and we are exploring and supporting future alternatives both in feedstock and technology.

"First steps are critical to get things going. The first launching flights, made by carriers that are stepping up to make the difference, are essential to engage industry, governments, customers and other stakeholders. We welcome Thomson Airways to join us on the road towards a sustainable future for aviation" – Dirk Kronemeijer, MD SkyNRG

On SkyNRG

SkyNRG is a joint venture of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, North Sea Group and Spring Associates. SkyNRG's mission is to help create a sustainable future for aviation through actively developing a sustainable production chain for alternative aviation fuels. Today the market for these fuels is just emerging; SkyNRG is taking the first steps to make it a reality. Doing nothing is not an option.

Note: Some of the claims made by AirportWatch and BiofuelsWatch are inaccurate. The article wrongly states that: "The company that is refining Thomson's Biofuels states on their website that they are looking for Palm and Soya as suitable feedstock. This is not the case, the plant merely has the technical capability to process different types vegetable oils, hence the statement. Today the plant is running on waste oils only and has no intention to switch.