



## NEWS RELEASE

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Press Contact: Matt Hartwig

202-289-3835

### **Simplistic View of Land Use Change Excludes Consequences of Continuing Petroleum Dependence**

Washington – Recently, increased attention is being paid to the environmental impacts of land use changes around the world. This is an extraordinarily complex issue and must ultimately include a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of interrelated international factors, including a growing world economy, surging demand for food, and the continued advance of development and urban sprawl.

Responding to the latest of these reports published today in *Science*, Renewable Fuels Association President Bob Dinneen issued the following statement:

“We all agree that we ought not be encouraging deforestation of environmentally sensitive lands. At the same time, we must also recognize that the growing demand for agricultural products for food, fiber, and energy is creating economic opportunity for those in impoverished regions of the world.”

“While it is important to analyze the climate change consequences of differing energy strategies, we must all remember where we are today, how world demand for liquid fuels is growing, and what the realistic alternatives are to meet those growing demands. Biofuels like ethanol are the only tool readily available that can begin to address the challenges of energy security and environmental protection.

“Understanding the land use changes occurring around the globe is important to developing strategies to combat the advance of climate change. However, like previous studies, those published in *Science* today fail to put the issue in context. Assigning the blame for rainforest deforestation and grassland conversion to agriculture production solely to the renewable fuels industry ignores key factors that play a greater role. The continued growth of the global population, surging global demand for food from expanding middle classes in China and India, and continued expansion of development and urban sprawl are all factors contributing to the increased demand for arable acres.

“In addition, without biofuels and some increase in fuel economy, more and more petroleum will be required to meet the increasingly ravenous demand for liquid fuels around the world. As the ‘easy’ sources of oil decline, development of exotic resources, like tar sands in Canada, are being pursued. Tar sands, by comparison, release some 300 percent more greenhouse gas emissions than traditional petroleum recovery.

“Biofuels alone are not the silver bullet to the energy or environmental challenges our planet faces. But they do offer a pathway forward. By adopting the use of biofuels today and encouraging the development of next generation technologies for the future, the road can be paved for the future fuels and technologies to come. The alternative is to continue to exploit increasingly costlier fossil fuels for which the environmental price tag will be great.”

Currently, 140 ethanol biorefineries nationwide have a capacity to produce more than 7.8 billion gallons annually. Additionally, 68 biorefineries are under construction or expanding that will add 5.4 billion gallons of new production capacity.

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*For more than 25 years, the Renewable Fuels Association has served as the “Voice of the U.S. Ethanol Industry.” The RFA is the national trade association for the U.S. ethanol industry representing ethanol producers, marketers, and service providers. More information can be found at [www.ethanolRFA.org](http://www.ethanolRFA.org)*