

## Prevention and Mitigation of Health Impacts of Biomass Power Plants

*The Fifth National Health Assembly*

*Having considered* the report on prevention and mitigation of health impacts of biomass power plants,<sup>1</sup>

*Anxious and concerned* that even though the policy advocating the use of biomass energy is a good choice, in practice the promotion of biomass power plants still lacks practical guidelines and measures for prevention and control of health impacts, particularly regarding small power plants, that as a result, the development of biomass power plant has not been sustainable, and that currently many operators take advantage of legal loopholes regarding the establishment of biomass power plants of less than 10 megawatts to avoid preparing EIA/HEIA,

*Recognizing* community rights to participate in studies of potential impacts and decision making at all levels and to have surveillance and oversight mechanisms, as well as appropriate rehabilitation and remedies for those affected by biomass power plants,

*Commending* the Alternative Energy Development Plan that attaches importance to the utilization of agricultural leftovers as well as the Constitution and relevant laws that bestow the rights to the people and initiate the health impact assessment process,

Has, therefore, adopted the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the National Health Commission to submit the resolutions adopted by the National Health Assembly regarding prevention and mitigation of health impacts from biomass power plants to the cabinet for consideration and approval and for the cabinet to assign relevant agencies to do the followings:

1.1 Requesting the Ministry of Energy, by way of the Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency, the Office of Energy Regulatory Commission, and local government organizations, in collaboration with concerned agencies, to study overall provincial capacities to accommodate the development of biomass power plants and to develop an energy development plan and a biomass energy master plan of each province, involving public participation, in order to adopt them as a framework for development and approval of power plant projects in each area;

1.2 Requesting the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning to act as a principal agency, in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Works, the Office of Energy Regulatory Commission, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, local government organizations, and concerned agencies to improve standards and guidelines for land use in town planning so that they can be adopted as guidelines for development of a land use provision for biomass power plant;

1.3 Requesting the Department of Industrial Works to act as a principal agency, in collaboration with the Office of Energy Regulatory Commission, Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, and concerned agencies to revise the power plant industry classification list to include

---

<sup>1</sup> Health Assembly 5/ Main 6

sub-categories in order to ensure coherence in the stipulation of measures aimed at controlling and preventing impacts of biomass power plants;

1.4 Requesting the Office of Energy Regulatory Commission to act as a principal agency, in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Works, Department of Health, Office of National Health Commission, local government organizations, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, the Department of Pollution Control, and concerned agencies to review and revise the criteria, methods and conditions for license issuance notification that include the following:

1. Stipulating a clear and suitable location and distance between power plants with various production capacities and the communities, public facilities, water sources, natural resource conservation sites, and other biomass power plant projects, to ensure that there is no impact on public health of the community;
2. Revising operational standards of biomass power plants pertaining to quality of emission from power plant stacks, quality of fuels, efficiency of incinerators, and dust traps, including equipments for protection and impact mitigation;
3. Developing a plan that encourages development and utilization of modern, low-pollution technology and equipment of international standard;
4. Developing additional guidelines on fuel and ash storage in a closed system and measures for transporting fuels and ashes that can prevent dust particles from being blown away;
5. Putting in place civil and criminal penalty measures, including revoking permits of operators that have been disqualified or failed to comply with the regulations, and disclosing the information to the general public;
6. Establishing a compensation fund for those affected by biomass power plants, the fund being designed to provide assistance and remedies to those affected by biomass power plants, including resorting to the judicial process;
7. Disclosing information on the implementation of plans and measures to prevent and mitigate impacts of the biomass power plans on an annual basis to the general public;
8. Prohibiting the use of coal as fuel in biomass power plant projects;
9. Ensure quality hearing and participation from the public sector at every stage in compliance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2550 (2007), Articles 56, 57, 58, 59, 66, and 67.

1.5 Requesting the National Health Commission Office, in collaboration with the Office of Natural Resources and Environment Policy and Planning, Office of Energy Regulatory Commission and concerned agencies, to develop a handbook and study guidelines on health impacts of biomass power plants, to disseminate and enhance the understanding of public participation in health impact assessment at community level in pre-licensing, monitoring and surveillance processes;

1.6 Requesting the Department of Health under the Ministry of Public Health, in the capacity of the Secretary-General of the Public Health Commission as mandated by the Public Health Act B.E. 2535 (1992), the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning and local government organizations, to collaborate with concerned agencies to undertake the following:

(1) Studying and developing a practical guideline for control and prevention of health impacts from operation of biomass power plant.

(2) Proposing to the health minister to issue an announcement under the mandate of the Enterprises with Health Hazards Chapter of the Public Health Act B.E. 2535 (1992) requiring the operations of biomass power plant that are harmful to public health, as well as construction and operations of all sizes of biomass power plants, to have a health impact prevention and mitigation plan;

(3) Encouraging local government organizations to issue local ordinances to control the operations of biomass power plants, including their monitoring and evaluation, in collaboration with agencies concerned and the people sector.

2. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission to present a progress report to the Seventh National Health Assembly.