



The Social Sustainability of a Poplar Bioeconomy

Advanced Hardwood Biofuels Northwest (AHB) is building the foundation of a biofuel and bioproduct industry with environmental, economic, and social sustainability in mind. In most cases, social sustainability is the least understood of these three aspects. A socially sustainable industry contributes to healthy, prosperous, and equitable communities without taking opportunities away from future generations.

AHB incorporates social sustainability by communicating with a wide variety of stakeholders and making sure we understand how their values and needs interact with the whole system. AHB researchers have conducted focus group discussions and surveys with the general public and relevant groups throughout the Pacific Northwest.



The inclusion of social sustainability research in AHB helps us be proactive about designing a biofuels system that is accepted by a diverse population and fulfills multiple goals. Social acceptance is critical for a successful biofuels industry. We have learned what issues need to be addressed and the benefits that should be emphasized.

Supportive environmental and industry policies are vital for the widespread adoption of alternative fuels and bioenergy.

Policy makers can play an important role in connecting the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability to foster a thriving and just bioeconomy.

We have learned about:

- What **stakeholders** view as the benefits and constraints of a biofuels industry
- How **community members** living near potential biorefinery sites perceive the impacts of a biofuels industry
- The communication preferences of **policy makers**
- **Landowner** decision-making and interest in growing poplar for bioenergy
- The information needs of **Extension professionals**
- The concerns and perspectives of **environmental professionals**
- The best methods for educating **youth** and **community members** about bioenergy

For more information visit our website:
hardwoodbiofuels.org/policy-makers-sustainability-resources