

Energy, Bio Fuels and Development

Comparing Brazil and the United States

Edited by

**Edmund Amann, Werner Baer and
Donald V. Coes**



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Energy, Bio Fuels and Development

This collection examines the important and topical issue of the economic, social and environmental implications of concerted attempts to diversify energy sources away from fossil fuels. The book expertly examines this issue by focusing on the contrasting experiences of two major economies: one developed, and the other a rapidly expanding, emerging market.

Energy, Bio Fuels and Development evaluates the experience of Brazil, with elements of that of the United States highlighted for the purpose of comparison. A key area of concern surrounds the causes and consequences of the contrasting routes to bio fuel production represented by sugar cane (in Brazil) and corn (in the United States). The book also places the recent bio fuels drive in perspective by discussing the broader energy policy context. The book shows the complexity and interdependence of the issues involved in moving a society reliant on non-renewable energy sources to one based on alternative sources of energy.

The key conclusion to emerge is that Brazil, in pursuing a flexible mix of fossil fuels and bio fuels, has greatly diminished its exposure to exogenous energy shocks. The US experience – in particular its development of corn-based ethanol – has been more problematic, though by no means without successes. It is argued that bio fuels should not be seen as a panacea. There are clear limits to the efficiency and cost effectiveness of current bio fuel production technologies while there remain concerns surrounding potentially adverse effects on food production and rural livelihoods.

This book should be an excellent resource for students focusing on economic development, particularly in the areas of energy, bio fuels, rural development and food supply.

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