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The Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources Alliance and the Southern Alliance for the Utilization of Biomass Resources join under one organization.

Two regional bioenergy alliances leverage their resources by merging

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC –The Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources Alliance (SAFER) and the Southern Alliance for the Utilization of Biomass Resources (SAUBR) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that joins the two organizations. With the common goal of advancing the use of biomass resources in the South, the leadership of both SAFER and SAUBR agreed to leverage their resources through a unified alliance. As of March 1, 2008 SAUBR officially folded into SAFER.

To help facilitate the merger, current SAUBR members will automatically become SAFER Associate Members. In addition, SAUBR chairman Dr. Liam Leightley joins Dr. Leonard Bull as co-chair of SAFER.

Formed in May 2004, SAUBR's mission was to create an industry to use the renewable biomass resources in the South to enhance energy security, provide a cleaner environment, help revitalize the South's rural economies, maintain healthy forests, and sustain forests and farms. Some of SAUBR's accomplishments include hosting the conference *Biomass Utilization: The South's Industry of the Future*; creating awareness of the possibilities for the development of a sustainable industry converting renewable feedstocks into bio-energy and bio-products; and giving presentations encouraging people to contribute to the emerging renewables market. SAUBR provided the communications and networking link among landowners; researchers; local, state, and federal governments; loggers, wood using industries; farmers; foresters; universities; NGO's; and equipment manufacturers.

SAFER is a regional alliance focused on providing strategic leadership to the agriculture and forestry sectors in advancing and leveraging renewable energy initiatives in the South. SAFER pursues this vision with strategies to improve policy, influence research, and advance commercialization and communication with all stakeholders.

SAFER's current projects include the development of the Southern Bioenergy Roadmap, which will provide an inventory of bioenergy assets in the South. The Roadmap's recommendations will come from the asset inventory and regional stakeholder meetings. Another SAFER activity is renewSOUTH, a searchable database of renewable energy news and information in the South that can be found at <http://www.saferalliance.net/renewsouth/>.

SAFER is managed by the Southern Growth Policies Board. More information about SAFER can be found at www.saferalliance.net.

About the Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources Alliance

The Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources Alliance was formed in 2006 through an initiative of the Energy Foundation in conjunction with the national 25x'25 committee with the purpose of bringing together representation from across the renewable energy landscape including landowners, farmers, businesses, non-profits, and government entities. States in the SAFER region are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Southern Growth Policies Board is the management and fiscal agent of SAFER.

About Southern Growth Policies Board

Southern Growth Policies Board is a public policy think tank based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Formed by the region's governors in 1971, Southern Growth Policies Board researches and develops economic development policies by providing a forum for collaboration among a diverse cross-section of the region's governors, legislators, business and academic leaders and the economic and community development sectors. Southern Growth provides its members, and the region, with authoritative research, discussion forums and pilot projects in the areas of technology and innovation, globalization, workforce development, community development, civic engagement and leadership. To learn more about Southern Growth Policies Board, visit www.southern.org.