

## Biofuel from GMO trees could cut global oil use, but EU biotech rules slow development

The looming threat of climate change is increasing the pressure to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. New technologies to produce fuel from plants provide an alternative, but the shifting climate could also disrupt crop growth, compounding the problem. SweTree Technologies aims to tackle the issue by engineering trees to have higher yields of biomass and to resist temperature changes.

*“Genetic engineering is one powerful tool in solving the challenge to grow more biomass,”* Christofer Rhén, SweTree’s CEO, told me.

To find out which genes they want to target, SweTree first makes mutant strains of trees that lack a specific gene and observe the effect this has on traits such as wood formation and speed of growth. Since its founding in 1999, the company has .... selected 25 candidate genes to modify in tree species such as spruce.

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Boosting the performance of tree crops could help to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and encourage a changeover to more sustainable sources .... For companies developing genetically engineered plants like SweTree, strict EU regulations also make it hard to develop the technology compared to other parts of the world.

**Read full, original article:** [This Biotech Genetically Engineers Trees to Produce Biofuels](#)