

3rd GBEP Technical Working Group (TWG)
Radisson Edwardian Grafton Hotel, 130 Tottenham Court Road
London 9-10 April 2008

Chair Summary

On 9-10 April 2008 the United Kingdom hosted the third meeting of the GBEP Technical Working Group. The meeting was attended by: Austria, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, FAO, IEA, UNCTAD, UNEP and UN Foundation.

GBEP Report to the G8 Summit

The TWG had an initial discussion focused on the possible content of the GBEP Report to the 2008 G8 Summit. It was agreed that the Report should include an overview of the current programme of work and activities of the Global Bioenergy Partnership, in response both to the 2005 G8 mandate and to the renewed mandate received by the 2007 G8 Heiligendamm Summit. A key objective of the report would be to seek G8 endorsement of these activities, encouragement to continue to take forward efforts in pursuit of its earlier mandates with a view to receive a new mandate. The Report will also provide an overview of the critical issues related to bioenergy at international level toward formulating a global approach and identifying issues requiring further consideration taking into account different views and perspectives.

Partners and Observers were invited to send comments and views to be inserted in the GBEP Report to the G8, by 25 April 2008. On the basis of these comments, the GBEP Secretariat would develop a draft text to be circulated by the beginning of May with a view to final approval by the GBEP Steering Committee prior to its submission to the G8 in Japan (Hokkaido Toyako, 7-9 July 2008).

GBEP Programme of Work

1. Methodologies to measure GHG emission reductions

As leading Partner of the GBEP Task Force on GHG methodologies, the United States reported back on the two task force meetings held in Washington D.C. on 9-10 October 2007 and on 6-7 March 2008.

The main aim of the Task Force is to encompass the full well-to-wheel lifecycle of transport biofuels and solid biomass, and address all significant sources of GHG emissions. A preliminary checklist of parameters and inputs to be addressed when assessing the GHG impact has been developed in the first meeting.

The second task force decided that rather than developing a universal GHG methodology, the main deliverable of the GBEP Task Force, expected to be finalized by March 2009, will be a harmonized methodological framework to guide policy makers and institutions when calculating GHG emissions from biofuels. This framework is intended to contribute to climate change mitigation and energy security increase.

The US informed the TWG that the task force had decided that the methodological framework would consist of a series of ten questions derived from the checklist agreed to at the first meeting. The task force also recognized the need to develop more specific sub-questions and formed four sub-groups to address these questions and where possible identify where it is possible to dig deeper:

- Land use change and feedstock production (led by US);
- Biomass processing (led by the European Commission);
- Fuel transportation and use (led by Germany);
- Biofuel usage compared to fossil fuels (led by Brazil).

Although the answers may differ, the taskforce recognized that having a commonly agreed set of questions will increase transparency and facilitate comparison amongst methodologies

The four sub-groups will be starting work shortly in order to complete initial considerations of the sub-questions by 15 June 2008 and to provide a draft methodological framework available for public comment by late 2008.

2. Awareness Raising and Information Management

The Secretariat updated Partners on the launch of the “GBEP Bioenergy Database” posted on the GBEP website on 15 January 2008. It offers selected information and documentation related to bioenergy with a user-friendly interface and a multiple search system (by key words or by date). More than 200 documents are already available.

Partners were kindly invited to forward to the Secretariat relevant documents for posting on the GBEP online database.

Partners were also informed that the Secretariat is periodically developing “GBEP Newsletters”, posted on the partnership’s website, to facilitate awareness raising, increase understanding of pertinent issues related to bioenergy development and facilitate exchange of relevant information among Partners and between the Partnership and other technical and political actors.

The Secretariat informed Partners of several worldwide events in which the Partnership participated and updated on the GBEP events to be organized in the next future.

3. Sustainable development of bioenergy

As leading Partner, the UK presented a proposal to establish a GBEP Task Force to work towards the development of a voluntary international sustainability framework of principles for bioenergy. The TWG discussed the proposal at length and registered many expressions of support and endorsement as well as few concerns.

The TWG concluded that sustainable bioenergy provides an important opportunity to meet energy security and economic development goals as well as address climate change and other environmental issues. GBEP can play an important role in furthering international discussions and understanding on sustainable bioenergy and its work needs to be undertaken in a way that provides useful outputs and does not duplicate other efforts.

To facilitate this work, the TWG agreed that GBEP should establish a task force on sustainable bioenergy. The task force will be open to all GBEP Partners and Observers and will work in consultation with any interested stakeholders, engage interested developed and developing countries, and respect national circumstances and legislation. The Task Force will:

1. Develop an inventory of what is being done on bioenergy sustainability internationally;
2. Identify and discuss commonalities, differences and issues requiring further consideration;
3. Facilitate the sharing of information, data, experiences and best practices relating to sustainable bioenergy production and use;
4. Promote shared understanding with a view to developing a voluntary and flexible framework on sustainable bioenergy and ways to achieve it.

This work will provide a reference for all interested stakeholders and in the formulation of national policies and international cooperation programmes.

Brazil expressed concern regarding item 4 because they felt it prejudices the conclusions of the Task Force, and stressed that it is premature to anticipate a mandate for the Task Force to suggest the possible establishment of a framework. Brazil indicated they would welcome the opportunity to review wording of item 4 in the context of agreeing the Scope of Work for the Task Force.

The US delegation expressed interest in co-chairing the Task Force.

The UK agreed to prepare a paper setting out a revised work proposal to reflect the views of the TWG for consideration and agreement by the Steering Committee. The paper would include a draft Scope of Work and outline work programme for the Task Force.

4. Bioenergy field projects

Due to the length of discussion on the sustainability proposal, the TWG did not have the opportunity to discuss the separate UK proposal of work on GBEP facilitation of collaborative bioenergy field projects. It was agreed that the proposal of work will be submitted to the attention of the Steering Committee at its next meeting.

Next Steps

- **GBEP Report to the G8**
The Partnership will report to the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit 2008. Partners are invited to send their comments and views on the key issues to be inserted in the GBEP Report by 25 April 2008.
- **Sustainable development of bioenergy**
The UK will draft a paper setting out a revised work proposal, including a Scope of Work and outline work programme, for the sustainability Task Force for consideration

and agreement by the Steering Committee. The UK has kindly agreed to send a draft of the revised proposal to the Secretariat by 9 May for circulation to GBEP Partners and Observers for comments.

- **The 5th Steering Committee meeting** will be held on 18-19 June 2008 in Rio de Janeiro, kindly hosted by the Government of Brazil.

- **GBEP forthcoming side events**
 - GBEP is organizing a side event on 5 June 2008 during the FAO High-Level Conference on “World Food Security: the Challenge of Climate Change and Bioenergy”, that will be held in Rome 3-5 June 2008.
 - GBEP will organize a side event during UNFCCC COP14 (December 2008).