

Report to the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit 2008

This report provides an overview of the work of the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP). In response to the 2005 G8 mandate, GBEP initiated a global dialogue on the issues related to bioenergy, taking into account different views and perspectives. Two years after its establishment and at a time of intense international discussions on bioenergy, GBEP is actively engaged in tackling the fundamental barriers surrounding one of the most promising forms of renewable energy.

GBEP was established to implement the commitments taken by the G8 in the 2005 Gleneagles Plan of Action to support "biomass and biofuels deployment, particularly in developing countries where biomass use is prevalent" and it was invited by the 2007 G8 Heiligendamm Summit "to continue its work on biofuel best practices and take forward the successful and sustainable development of bioenergy".

The GBEP's Partners now comprise the following countries and organizations: all G8 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, U.S.A.), Brazil, China, Mexico, The Netherlands, Sudan, Tanzania, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Energy Agency (IEA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations Foundation, World Council of Renewable Energy (WCRE) and European Biomass Industry Association (EUBIA).

A further 10 countries are participating as observers (Austria, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Sweden, Tunisia) along with the European Commission, the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the World Bank. GBEP welcomes new Partners who wish to actively contribute to its programme of work and is working to facilitate the engagement of more developing countries.

Italy has been confirmed chair of the Partnership while the co-chairmanship has been assigned to Brazil. They are supported by the GBEP Secretariat hosted at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

GBEP's role in the international context

The Global Bioenergy Partnership is a forum where voluntary cooperation is leading to facilitate effective policy frameworks to suggest rules and tools to promote sustainable bioenergy development; to identify ways and means to support investments; to contribute to remove barriers to collaborative project development and implementation; and to foster bioenergy related R,D&D activities and commercial bioenergy activities.

The main objectives of the Global Bioenergy Partnership are to:

- promote global high-level policy dialogue on bioenergy and facilitate international cooperation;
- support national and regional bioenergy policy-making and market development;
- favour the transformation of biomass use towards more efficient and sustainable practices;
- foster exchange of information, skills and technologies through bilateral and multilateral collaboration;
- facilitate bioenergy integration into energy markets by tackling barriers in the supply chain.

GBEP Programme of Work

GBEP, which builds its activities upon three strategic pillars – energy security, food security and sustainable development - is currently focusing on the following priority areas:

- 1) facilitate the sustainable development of bioenergy and collaborate activities in bioenergy field projects;
- 2) formulate a harmonized methodological framework on GHG emission reduction measurement from the use of biofuels for transportation and from the use of solid biomass;
- 3) raise awareness and facilitate information exchange on bioenergy.

1. Facilitate the sustainable development of bioenergy and collaborate activities in bioenergy field projects

GBEP has made sustainability a priority issue, leading to the establishment of a Task Force on Sustainability, under the leadership of the United Kingdom.

Working within the consideration that sustainability includes environmental and economic performance as well as social considerations, the Task Force is working to develop a set of global science-based criteria and indicators as well as examples of experiences and best practices including benchmarks regarding the sustainability of bioenergy.

The main deliverable of this GBEP Task Force, expected to be finalized by April 2009, will provide a useful platform for stakeholders interested in bioenergy sustainability, to facilitate sharing of information, data, experiences and best practices. A further aim of this activity is to identify synergies between the various current initiatives and encourage closer joint working and integration where possible to promote greater consistency and reduce unnecessary duplication.

This activity will also contribute to better understand whether bioenergy production and use has any impact on food prices, taking into consideration different feedstocks, production methods and country specific realities.

2. Formulate a harmonized methodological framework on GHG emission reduction measurement from the use of biofuels for transportation and from the use of solid biomass

A GBEP Task Force on GHG methodologies has been established under the leadership of the United States to analyse the full well-to-wheel lifecycle of transport biofuels and solid biomass, and to develop a harmonized methodological framework for the use of policy makers and stakeholders when assessing GHG impacts by which the results of GHG lifecycle assessments could be compared on an equivalent and consistent basis.

The main deliverable of this GBEP Task Force, expected to be finalized by March 2009, will be a methodological framework for international and domestic policies to help assess the reduction of GHG emissions, contributing to climate change mitigation and energy security increase.

3. Raise awareness and facilitate information exchange on bioenergy

GBEP's awareness-raising and information management activities have focused on the following areas:

- a. Development of the GBEP Report "A review of the current state of bioenergy development in G8 +5 Countries" (released on November 2007), which was instrumental in preparing for the GBEP's current work towards the sustainable development of bioenergy.
Developed under the guidance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Report provides an overview of current bioenergy development in G8 +5 Countries with a view to help identify common ground in policy priorities and opportunities for international cooperation, as well as provide guidance on what still needs to be done for sustainable development of bioenergy.
- b. Development of GBEP's information material, including management of the GBEP website (www.globalbioenergy.org) so as to promote information sharing on bioenergy and on GBEP's activities and programme of work. Since February 2008 the GBEP website has been enriched with an online bioenergy database containing selected information and documentation related to bioenergy at international level.
- c. Participation in relevant international conferences and meetings focused on bioenergy as well as organization specific GBEP events to provide an overview of its activities and programme of work;
- d. Organization of an international media campaign to promote GBEP activities, which has led to extensive media coverage of the GBEP's activities both in print and online formats.

Next steps

GBEP is planning to finalize the **Harmonized methodological framework on GHG emission reductions** by March 2009 and the **Reference work on criteria and indicators for sustainable development of bioenergy** by April 2009.

In light of this work, GBEP will prepare a substantial report to be presented to the 2009 G8 Summit in Italy.