

**4th GBEP Technical Working Group
Heidelberg, 18 March 2009
Kongresshaus Stadthalle**

Chair Summary

On 18 March 2009 Germany hosted the fourth meeting of the GBEP Technical Working Group. Brazil, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA, European Commission, FAO, UN Foundation, UNEP, UNFCCC and UNIDO participated in the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Italy and co-chaired by Brazil.

Potential new work areas for GBEP

The aim of the meeting was to reach agreement on new areas for future GBEP work, including the possible establishment of one or more new task forces, as the basis for the preparation of a detailed scoping document for submission to the Steering Committee.

The Chair outlined the progress GBEP had made so far and the mandate from the Steering Committee to now consider how best to expand the GBEP programme of work. He then summarized the proposals received from Partners for new areas of work, which broadly fell into four categories: advanced biofuel technologies (ABTs), collection and dissemination of good practices, technology transfer and adaptation (TTA) and indirect effects of bioenergy. In particular, due to their high production potential, he suggested that the increased involvement of developing countries in GBEP work should be born in mind when deciding new work areas. He also suggested that the area of technology would lend itself to closed workshops with industry organized by GBEP in order to better understand the timeframe for the availability of advanced technologies in the market. He also addressed the point of how the current low oil prices could affect the biofuels market and pointed out the need for GBEP to help construct a suitable investment environment for future advanced biofuel technologies.

The chair invited all the TWG members to carefully consider the report “From 1st- to 2nd-Generation Biofuel Technologies” published by IEA in January 2009.

1. Advanced biofuel technologies

Some Partners stated that this was an important area that GBEP should work on, but concerns were raised about the practicality of such work given the proprietary nature of R&D in this area. It was also stressed that working towards 2nd generation biofuels must not be at the expense of an opportunity (in the form of sustainable 1st generation biofuels) for low income developing countries. Also, it was pointed out that the view that 2nd generation biofuels were automatically better was not right. Therefore working on resource efficiency (where some 1st

generation biofuels performed well) rather than distinguishing between generations was appropriate. One Partner commented that GBEP's new work should not focus only on advanced technologies, but rather on improving technologies in general. Problems associated with defining terminology such as 1st and 2nd generation biofuels were also noted. It was however suggested that a better understanding of the barriers to the development of 2nd generation biofuels and their impacts would be advantageous and GBEP should explore what role it could play in this regard such that it added value to the work of those such as IEA and IEA Bioenergy. An *ad hoc* agreement with IEA on this matter was proposed.

2. Collection and dissemination of good practices

The TWG agreed¹ that this work was necessary for GBEP, but there was ambivalence as to whether it should be done by the Task Force on Sustainability or a new Task Force. The balance of opinion fell on adding it to the work of a new Task Force, in which context the work would focus on identifying technologies suitable for deployment.

3. Technology transfer and adaptation

The TWG felt that this was the best option and the priority as GBEP should work more on the tools required to help developing countries, in line with its mandate from the G8. Some Partners thought that elements from options 1 and 2 should be included in work focusing on option 3. The TWG agreed¹ that GBEP should establish a new task force to undertake work on this option, though some Partners stated that this new work should not focus solely on developing countries.

Further examination of the elements proposed under this heading should include consideration of the work already being undertaken by FAO, UN-Energy, UNEP, UN Foundation and UNIDO so as to avoid duplication and build synergies. Subject to this consideration, there was broad support for all of the elements proposed in the background document under option 3.

4. Indirect effects

The TWG agreed¹ that the indirect effects of bioenergy (e.g. changes in commodity prices and land use due to displacement or market-transmitted effects) were an important area for GBEP to work on, and that whilst GBEP was not a technical forum, GBEP could still add value to international work on the subject, for example through joining up various ongoing processes, sharing scientific information in a form suitable for policy-makers and providing a forum for policy level discussion.

Conclusions

The TWG agreed¹ that a new Task Force should be established to work chiefly on the subject areas described under option 3 of the background document ("Technology transfer and

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adaptation”). “Collection and dissemination of good practices” (option 2) could also be added as part of the preliminary phase of this work. Elements of the work proposed under option 1 (“Advanced biofuel technologies”) should also be included. The TWG agreed that a better working title for the new Task Force would be “Deployment of technologies for sustainable bioenergy”. However, it was pointed out that such a title would only be appropriate if Partners committed funds for bioenergy projects, and that were this not the case, “facilitation of deployment...” would be a better form of words.

The new Task Force should build on work produced by the GBEP Task Forces on GHG Methodologies and Sustainability. The Secretariat would draft a proposal for its scope using the flow chart on work under option 3 displayed during the Chair’s presentation as a basis. The Secretariat will also ask all Partners’ availability for leading the new task force.

Together the TWG and Task Force on Sustainability meetings in Heidelberg resulted in agreement² to deal with indirect effects (option 4) through work to be led by Germany under the new environmental sub-group of the Task Force on Sustainability, whilst noting the cross-cutting nature of these effects. The scope and nature of this work would be set out in a document to be prepared by Germany for approval by Partners (see Chair conclusions of the 4th meeting of the GBEP Task Force on Sustainability).

As an additional recommendation for areas that GBEP activities should cover, one Partner suggested that GBEP should add discussion of bioenergy in the context of climate change adaptation to the agenda of the Task Force on Sustainability.

Next Steps

- **Revised proposal for scope of a new GBEP Task Force**
The Secretariat, on the basis of comments made during and after the TWG meeting in Heidelberg, will circulate a proposal for the scope of work of a new GBEP Task Force by 15 April 2009 for comments from Partners by 24 April and subsequent amendment and submission to the Steering Committee for approval. Expressions of interest in leading (or co-leading) the new Task Force are invited.
- **GBEP Report to the G8**
The Partnership will report to the G8 Summit 2009 in La Maddalena, Italy. The Secretariat will circulate a draft of the report, including a short section on proposed new work, to Partners by 15 April 2009 for comment by 24 April and subsequent amendment and submission to the Steering Committee for approval.
- **The 7th Steering Committee meeting** will be held on 14 May 2009 in New York (time and venue to be confirmed). At the meeting the proposal for a new task force will be discussed. The Secretariat will circulate further details in due course.

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