

7th meeting of the GBEP Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy

FAO Headquarters, Lebanon Room D-209 Bis

Rome, 11 November 2015

Co-Chair Conclusions

The GBEP Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy (WGCB) held its 7th meeting on 11 November 2015 at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

Argentina, Brazil, Cambodia, Egypt, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Paraguay, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, United States of America, ECOWAS, FAO, IEA Bioenergy, SE4ALL and UNEP participated in the meeting as Partners and Observers.

Opening of the WGCB

The co-chairs, Mr. Bah Saho from ECOWAS and Mr. Miguel Almada from Argentina, welcomed participants to the 7th meeting of the WGCB and officially adopted the meeting's agenda. Discussions on Activity Groups 2, 3, 4 and 6 were held during the 7th meeting of the GBEP WGCB.

Activity Group 2 – “Raising awareness, and sharing of data and experience on the implementation of the GBEP indicators”

The co-leaders of Activity Group 2, Mr. Horst Fehrenbach from Germany and Mr. Edi Wibowo from Indonesia, moderated this session.

Mr. Miguel Almada and Ms. Martina Chidiak, via a voice recording, presented on “Implementing GBEP Indicators in Argentina: Summary of Results and Lessons,” and then Ms. Betsy Bandy from Jamaica gave a presentation on “Implementing the GBEP indicators in Jamaica”.

Following these presentations, the GBEP Secretariat gave an overview of the countries that have implemented, are implementing and are planning to implement the GBEP indicators. Given the wealth of experience that has been gained, a template to facilitate the compilation of lessons learned was presented, together with a supporting example. During the discussion, a few revisions and integrations to the template were suggested. The revised template will be circulated to the Partners and Observers that have already implemented the indicators, with a deadline for completion of March 2016. The finished templates will then be compiled into a living document to be housed on the GBEP website. As more countries complete implementation of the indicators, the document will be updated. This document will also be used to inform the work of the Task Force for Sustainability on the development of the Implementation Guide.

In the discussion that followed, participants positively commented on the practicality of the GBEP indicators as they can be implemented in a variety of contexts from national to local to plant level. They can also be used to raise awareness and stimulate discussions that go beyond bioenergy issues. It was also reported that, to date, there has been a significant uptake in the use of the indicators by the GBEP community and beyond.

Activity Group 3 – “Study Tour for capacity building and training”

Ms. Roberta Lima Ferreira from Brazil gave a report on the 3rd Bioenergy Week, which was hosted by the Government of Indonesia in cooperation with the GBEP Secretariat and the support of the Governments of Brazil and Italy as well as IEA, Asian Development Bank and GIZ. The event took place in Medan from 25 to 29 of May 2015.

In continuation of these efforts it was proposed and agreed upon that the 4th Bioenergy Week will be held in June 2016 with a focus on themes of direct interest to Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Initial proposals concerning the host country for the next Bioenergy Week included Hungary, where FAO has its Regional Office and could provide logistical and in kind support to the event.

Bioenergy is an important component of the energy mix of countries in this region and the organization of the Bioenergy Week would be a way to involve countries outside the current GBEP membership. In addition, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development had expressed its willingness to contribute to facilitating the participation of government officials of its affiliated countries in the region to engage them in GBEP’s work. Initial themes for the event could be: solid biomass, agricultural residues and biogas opportunities from manure and biodigesters. A zero draft of the agenda and list of potential speakers will be circulated in December for Partners and Observers to populate with further suggestions by mid-February 2016.

Participants expressed their support for the next Bioenergy Week to be focused on themes of direct interest to Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Several representatives provided suggestions for additional agenda items and offered to send experts. It was suggested that GBEP align its activities with those of various international bodies to include aspects concerning advanced bioenergy developments in the agenda of the Bioenergy Week.

Some Partners expressed their willingness to host future Bioenergy Weeks in their Country/Region and these proposals were welcomed and supported by the Working Group. Further discussions on Bioenergy Weeks beyond 2016 will follow in due time.

Activity Group 4 - “Towards sustainable modern wood energy development”

Mr. Olivier Dubois from FAO led and moderated the session on Activity Group 4. He began by presenting the key outcomes from the webinar “Towards sustainable modern wood energy development” held in June 2015.

As a follow up of the webinar it was proposed and agreed to organize a workshop on wood energy development in Africa. The workshop is tentatively set to take place in Benin, in April 2016, and to be co-hosted by ECREEE. Additional expression of support by GIZ was raised, subject to further confirmation. The aim of the workshop is to share success stories from countries in the ECOWAS region and beyond, and to mainstream the results and approaches so that they could be applied in other similar contexts. This event would bring together policymakers, experts on wood energy and representatives from both public and private financial institutions, and it would allow for the exchange of successful strategies between neighbouring countries and facilitate the creation of business plans for sustainable wood energy value chains.

During the discussion, there were a number of proposals for themes and suggestions for case studies to be included in the event planning. To this end, templates on good practices for wood energy development have already been compiled by the GBEP Secretariat and more are anticipated for collection and then sharing during the agreed workshop.

A zero draft of the agenda will be circulated in order to get GBEP Partners and Observers' immediate feedback – by no later than 31 January 2016 - on potential themes, speakers and countries from outside the ECOWAS region that should be involved.

Activity Group 6 - “Bioenergy and Water”

Mr. Uwe Fritsche, on behalf of Mr. Göran Berndes from IEA/IEA Bioenergy (as AG6 Leader), provided participants with an update of the work that Activity Group 6 has done thus far. The presentation began with a recap of the “Examples of Positive Bioenergy and Water Relationships” workshop that GBEP and IEA Bioenergy held from 25 to 26 August 2015 in Stockholm, Sweden.

The Working Group agreed that an AG6 electronic document will be developed and circulated before finalization by the end of this year as a collection of the submissions received in response to the call for good examples on positive bioenergy and water relationship launched in April 2015.

It was also agreed that in 2016 Activity Group 6 will:

- Host two webinars: one possibly by end of February/beginning of March 2016 involving mainly experts from Europe, Africa and Asia; and another one possibly by May 2016 involving mostly experts from the Americas (the regional focus will facilitate participation of experts from all over the world in light of the time zones);
- Create a LinkedIn group for further electronic discussions;
- Contribute to the agenda of the 2016 Bioenergy Week; and
- Extend collaboration with other relevant institutions like ICRAF, IWMI, and UNCCD by re-opening the roster of expert as AG6 members.

Further proposals for 2016 AG6 activities were also mentioned: linking AG6 activities to that of groups like IEA Bioenergy Tasks 40 and 43; organizing an event at FAO in Rome, possibly back-to-back with IEA Bioenergy ExCo77 in Rome so that interested members of both IEA Bioenergy ExCo77 and GBEP can participate; and preparing a report on how the attractive water-bioenergy solutions can help with implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It was agreed that AG6 will develop a work plan related to these additional proposals to be approved by AG6 members by February 2016 with a view to be submitted to IEA Bioenergy ExCo in March 2016 for support and related funding allocation.

The importance of the connection between the GBEP indicators in general and the SDGs was stressed by participants and it was also suggested that GBEP consider approaching other organizations, such as the Global Soil Partnership for collaboration.

Conclusions and next steps

The next steps that were discussed and agreed upon are:

- **Activity Group 2 to circulate, through the GBEP Secretariat, the revised template** to compile experiences of Partners and Observers that have implemented the GBEP indicators. Responses, which should be received by 31 March 2016, will be compiled into a document that will be posted onto the GBEP website.

- **Activity Group 3 to organize the 2016 Bioenergy Week focused on themes of direct interest to Eastern Europe and Central Asia in June 2016** (exact date and location will follow in due time). A zero draft of the agenda and list of potential participants will be circulated by the GBEP Secretariat by the end of the year for Partners and Observers to provide their feedback and inputs by 15 February 2016.
- **Activity Group 4 to organize a workshop in Benin (April 2016)**. A collection of best practices on wood energy development will be compiled and posted on the GBEP website. Partners and Observers are asked to send any additional examples for consideration no later than 31 January 2016.
Furthermore, a zero draft agenda of the proposed workshop will be circulated by the GBEP Secretariat in order to get GBEP Partners and Observers' immediate feedback – by no later than 31 January 2016 - on potential themes, speakers and countries from outside the ECOWAS region that should be involved.
- **Activity Group 6 to go ahead** with the electronic publication to be finalized by the end of 2015 and with the additional activities agreed for 2016. In particular, the roster of experts for this Activity Group will be reopened, and Partners and Observers are asked to send any proposed additions by 31 December 2015.
The leaders of AG6 will develop a draft work plan for additional 2016 activities with a view to get it approved by AG6 members by February 2016 in order to be submitted to IEA Bioenergy ExCo in March 2016 for support and related funding allocation.