

## 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the GBEP Task Force on Sustainability

*Online – 12.00 - 13.30 CET time (UTC +1)*

Tuesday, 16 November 2021

### Co-Chairs Summary

The GBEP Task Force on Sustainability (TFS) held its 18th meeting on 28 October 2020 online due to the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Philippines, Spain, Sweden, United States of America, Viet Nam, CIFOR-ICRAF, ECOWAS/ECREEE, EUBIA, FAO, IEA, IEA Bioenergy, IRENA, UNDP, UNECE and WBA participated in the meeting as Partners and Observers.

Mr. Takashi Hayashi (Japan) and Ms. Annalisa Zezza (Italy), co-chairs of the TFS, opened the 19th TFS meeting.

### Work of the TFS in 2021

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat) gave an overview of the work of the TFS in 2021 under the two workstreams:

- a) Facilitating the implementation of the GBEP Sustainability Indicators (GSI); and
- b) Bioenergy in the context of the broader bioeconomy.

#### a) **Facilitating the implementation of the GSI**

Since the publication of the Implementation Guide in 2020, it was agreed that the Task Force could do even more to facilitate the uptake of the GSI. Under this workstream, there were three main activities developed in 2021 that were discussed:

- ***Data entry sheets*** for the collection of data for the measurement of the GBEP indicators using the methodology described in the indicator report. The first version of these data entry sheets for bioenergy pathways from dedicated agricultural crops was finalized in excel, was approved by P&Os and is available on the [GBEP website](#).
- ***Project proposal for the development of a Rapid Implementation Framework (RIF), supported by an online platform*** that would also include the developed data entry sheets. This online platform would facilitate the measurement of the indicators when resources are not available (either financial, time or capacity), as well as to speed up both data collection and calculation. The writing process of this project proposal has been ongoing in 2021 and clarified the concept of a rapid implementation of the GBEP indicators. A full project proposal is expected to be finalized and submitted for funding in 2022.
- ***FAO mini-project to develop handbook for Rapid Implementation Framework*** for all bioenergy pathways.

In this context, [Federica Matteoli, Andrea Rossi and Constance Miller](#) (FAO) presented the preliminary outputs for initial feedback from Partners and Observers. The mini-project has been funded by FAO/CSA team and implemented by the GBEP team, as a contribution to the workstream.

The output of this 6-month project, which finishes in early December 2021, is a description of how to carry out a rapid implementation of the GBEP Sustainability Indicators for Bioenergy and the accompanying handbook for practitioners. The aim is to guide users through a rapid measurement of critical GBEP indicators and obtain a preliminary indication of likely impacts on sustainability from the most relevant bioenergy pathways in the country/region considered.

It was recognized that the mini-project represents not only a useful standalone resource for facilitating the rapid implementation of the GSI, but will also provide a good basis for the larger project proposal on the RIF. No major concerns were raised during the meeting regarding the RIF concept and the related handbook. *Partners and Observers were requested to provide written feedback on the RIF report by 19 November 2021* so that the report can be finalized in due advance to the end of the project at the early beginning of December 2021.

It was highlighted the need to *pilot the RIF* to perfect the methodology and ensure its applicability and functionality in different contexts. Some expressions of interest on piloting were raised during the discussion. *Partners and Observers wishing to contribute to this effort are encouraged to contact the GBEP Secretariat by 17 January 2021.*

The possibility and usefulness to *develop a web-based tool* on the GBEP website was also highlighted, to facilitate the use of the RIF concept and handbook by automating responses to questionnaires and outputs. This activity will be developed subject to availability of relevant funds.

#### **b) ‘Bioenergy as part of the broader bioeconomy’**

[Uwe Fritsche](#) (IEA Bioenergy/Germany) presented the main output of this workstream in 2021, which was the joint GBEP and IEA Bioenergy Task 45 Technical paper prepared by IINAS on ‘[Sustainability Governance of Bioenergy and the Broader Bioeconomy](#)’. This paper provides a very comprehensive overview of the governance landscape around bioenergy and the bioeconomy, and also provides some perspectives on what is needed moving forward in terms of bioeconomy governance.

GBEP was recognized as representing a core component in the bioeconomy governance space, specifically in terms of agenda setting. It was therefore suggested that GBEP continues to actively contribute in this sphere, in collaboration with other active initiatives, such as IEA Bioenergy Task 45 and the Biofuture Platform.

The proposed workplan is as follows:

- **Working paper** on “GBEP Indicators for sustainable bioenergy and indicators for a sustainable bioeconomy: Commonalities, Differences and Perspectives for Convergence”, and respective online workshops.
- **Joint workshop** GBEP/Biofuture Platform/IEA/IEA Bioenergy/OECD on “Sustainability Governance of the Bioeconomy” in late 2022 (tentative).

Still in the context of the bioeconomy thematic area, [Paolo Frankl](#) (IEA) presented the **Biofuture Platform (BfP) workstream on ‘Biomass Quantification and Sustainability Governance’**. The intention of the BfP workstream is to convene governments (national and local), industry, academia, financing institutions, and civil society (including skeptics) to develop an evidence-based, joint understanding of bio-feedstock availability and sustainability. In this context, the GBEP Secretariat has been asked to join the BfP workstream discussions as part of the Working Group, with a view to contribute with its expertise on bioenergy sustainability and related governance settings. This contribution of the GBEP Secretariat was supported by GBEP Partners and Observers, with the understanding that it is subject to available human and financial resources of the GBEP Secretariat.

### **Conclusions on next steps of the TFS**

#### **Facilitating the implementation of the GSI**

- The FAO mini-project on the Rapid Implementation Framework will be finalized on 8 December 2021. Partners and Observers were requested to provide written feedback on the draft of the RIF presented during the TFS meeting by 19 November 2021.

It is intended that the RIF will be piloted in 2022. Partners and Observers wishing to contribute to this effort are encouraged to contact the GBEP Secretariat by 17 January 2021.

With appropriate resources for an information technology expert, the RIF could then be further transformed into an accessible and convenient web-based tool.

- The full project proposal for the development of a Rapid Implementation Framework (RIF), supported by an online platform to facilitate the implementation of the GSI will be finalized and submitted for potential financial opportunities in 2022.

#### **Bioenergy as part of the broader bioeconomy**

- It was decided to implement the 2022 work plan presented, including the working paper and respective online workshops, as well as one joint workshop. Partners and Observers will be involved by the workstream leader in due time.
- It was agreed that the GBEP Secretariat would contribute to the BfP work on ‘Biomass Quantification and Sustainability Governance’, with the understanding that it is subject to available human and financial resources of the GBEP Secretariat.