

24th Meeting of the GBEP Steering Committee

Online 13.30 – 14.30 CET time (UTC +1)

Tuesday, 16 November 2021

Co-Chairs Summary

The GBEP Steering Committee held its 24th meeting on 16 November 2021 online due to the ongoing 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.

Amb. Alex Giacomelli (GBEP Co-Chair, Brazil) and Ms Emily Marthaler (GBEP Co-Chair, USA) co-chaired the meeting.

Opening and Welcome Speech

Eduardo Mansur (Director, Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO) gave a welcome speech. He congratulated Ms Emily Marthaler from USDA as the newly nominated Co-Chair, and also welcomed and thanked all GBEP Partners and Observers for their valuable contributions and support. He emphasised that FAO continues to be highly committed to the work of GBEP, especially in light of the recent G20 Declaration and COP26 Decisions, which both highlight the role of bioenergy in low-carbon sustainable development. He wished GBEP a successful Steering Committee meeting for a stimulating discussion on the important work to be done in the coming year.

Amb. Alex Giacomelli and Ms Emily Marthaler thanked Partners and Observers for their continued work and officially adopted the meeting's agenda.

GBEP Membership and GBEP Chairmanship 2021-22

The Steering Committee officially welcomed Ms Emily Marthaler (USA) as new co-chair of GBEP for the biennium 2021-2022.

The Steering Committee welcomed Ukraine, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and World Bioenergy Association (WBA) as new Observers of GBEP. Bharadwaj Kummamuru (WBA) intervened to thank GBEP for collaborations together in 2021 and expressed interest to further close collaboration in the coming year and beyond.

GBEP Programme of Work

[Maria Michela Morese](#), GBEP Executive Secretary, gave an overview of the conclusions of the technical discussions held, on behalf of the co-chairs of the Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy (WGCB) and the Task Force on Sustainability (TFS).

- **Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy (WGCB)**

The 13th meeting of the WGCB was held on 15 November 2021. The next steps for the WGCB in 2022 were decided as follows. Partners and Observers are invited to suggest further activities for the 2022 Programme of Work for the specific Activity Groups by 17 January 2022.

Activity Group 2 “Raising awareness and sharing of data and experiences from the implementation of the GBEP indicators” will continue to collect and disseminate information on the implementation of the GSI. The AG2 will also continue the strong collaboration with the TFS under the new workstream on facilitation of the implementation of the GSI by coordinating and disseminating the outcomes of the piloting of the Rapid Implementation Framework.

Under ***Activity Group 3 “Study Tour for capacity building and training”***, the 9th Bioenergy Week to be held in 2022 (date to be confirmed), will be hosted by Paraguay and will focus on the Americas. The health situation will continue to be monitored by the GBEP Secretariat and it will be decided in due advance whether the meeting will be held as an online or hybrid event. The 10th Bioenergy Week is planned to be held in Viet Nam in 2023.

Activity Group 4 “Towards sustainable modern wood energy development” will hold a session during the 2022 Bioenergy Week to include issues related to landscape governance for forest management and product utilization. The 2020 collection “Positive linkages between wood energy and forest landscape restoration” will also be updated with the best practices presented during the Bioenergy Week. A short brief (two pages) will be created based on the discussions during the Bioenergy Week session. Webinars will also be hosted on biohydrogen.

Activity Group 7 “Biogas” will host a further series of webinars in 2022, as well as organising a session during the 2022 Bioenergy Week in collaboration with regional initiatives such as REDBioLAC and LEDSLAC BioCoP.

Activity Group 8 “Advanced Liquid Biofuels” will hold a series of webinars (and a session at the GBEP Bioenergy Week 2022) on critical thematic areas related to advanced liquid biofuels, in collaboration with other initiatives also working in these areas. Short news articles will be prepared on each webinar, to be published on the GBEP website, which include the main discussions and conclusions. On the basis of new experiences and contributions from the above webinars, the “Collection of experiences in Advanced Liquid Biofuels” will be updated.

In terms of the work on ***Youth***, the GBEP Secretariat will hold the World Food Forum YUNGA Energy Lab on 16 December 2021. Partners and Observers are encouraged to express their interest to be involved in this or further Energy Labs. The GBEP Youth Award 2022 will be presented during the 9th Bioenergy Week to outstanding research conducted by young researchers from the Americas; the call for papers will open in early 2022.

Bioenergy in displacement settings - It was agreed that this is an important topic for GBEP to be involved in and to advocate for the sustainable use of bioenergy in these settings in relevant fora. It was agreed that the GBEP Secretariat would reach out to relevant platforms, such as the

Global Platform for Action (GPA), to investigate how GBEP can best contribute to these processes with its expertise and the expertise of Partners and Observers, thus strengthening the role of bioenergy in the GPA discussions.

Linking Bioenergy with Food security and Nutrition - An informal electronic group will be set up under the leadership of FAO/ESN to be able to develop a literature review on the bioenergy-nutrition nexus, taking advantage and including inputs of Partners and Observers. Discussions will be held in 2022 on the most interesting themes from the literature review with a view to decide on how these might best be pursued and disseminated in the future.

Events in 2022 – The GBEP Secretariat already plans to attend as speaker and organize side events in a number of conferences in the end of 2021 and 2022; it is worth mentioning in particular the EUBCE (Marseille, 9-12 May 2022), and a Special Event on Sustainable Forests and Green Energy, in collaboration with FAO/NFO and IRENA, during the World Forestry Congress 2022 (Seoul, Korea, 4 May 2022). Partners and Observers are invited to suggest further events where the participation of the GBEP Secretariat is advantageous.

- **Task Force on Sustainability (TFS)**

The 19th meeting of the TFS was held on 16 November 2021. The conclusions from the meeting are as follows:

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 on “GBEP Indicators for sustainable bioenergy and indicators for a sustainable bioeconomy: Commonalities, Differences and Perspectives for Convergence” and respective online workshops, as well as one joint workshop GBEP/Biofuture Platform/IEA/IEA Bioenergy/OECD. Partners and Observers will be involved by the workstream leader in due time.

It was agreed that the GBEP Secretariat would contribute to the Biofuture Platform work on ‘Biomass Quantification and Sustainability Governance’, with the understanding that it is subject to available human and financial resources of the GBEP Secretariat.

GBEP and the G20

Partners and Observers were informed about the GBEP Reporting to the 2021 G20 and about the specific mention into the G20 Communiqué (para. 28) of “sustainable bioenergy” amongst the low carbon emission and renewable technologies; this was possible thanks to the regular coordination between the GBEP Secretariat and relevant GBEP member countries in the G20.

GBEP funding arrangements

Maria Michela Morese (GBEP Executive Secretary) presented the “2021 Financial Report” and the “2022 Budget Estimation” for the implementation of the agreed GBEP activities. Partners and Observers were prized for their contributions, both financially and in kind, that made the activities of 2021 possible.

The work of the GBEP Secretariat in 2022 is expected to be mainly covered by the Italian Trust Fund. This Fund will only cover the minimum costs of the Secretariat until the end of 2022 and new funds will need to be identified for GBEP to continue after that time.

It was agreed to continue strengthening the current raising of voluntary funds by GBEP Partners and Observers for the GBEP Secretariat’s coordination role. In light of this, Partners and Observers were invited to contribute, both financially and in-kind, to the GBEP Secretariat and to GBEP’s future activities. Bilateral discussions will follow up to discuss this important issue. In addition, GBEP Partners and Observers committed to join forces with the GBEP Secretariat to develop joint project proposals to facilitate fund raising opportunities to further develop the GBEP programme of work in the future.

Conclusions and Next steps

Working Group on Capacity Building

In light of the Programme of Work presented above and endorsed by the Steering Committee, Partners and Observers are invited to:

- suggest further activities for 2022 for the specific Activity Groups and thematic areas by 17 January 2022;
- express interest to be involved in the Youth Energy Labs; and
- encouraged to suggest further 2022 events where the participation of the GBEP Secretariat is advantageous.

Task Force on Sustainability

In light of the Programme of Work presented above and endorsed by the Steering Committee, Partners and Observers are invited to:

- provide written feedback on the draft of the RIF report by 19 November 2021; and
- contact the GBEP Secretariat if members are wishing to contribute to the RIF piloting by 17 January 2021.

Funding arrangements

GBEP Partners and Observers were invited to make extra efforts to financially contribute to the GBEP Secretariat, with a view to implement the GBEP programme of work beyond 2022.

Bilateral discussions will follow up to discuss this important issue.

2022 GBEP Governing Bodies meetings

- *25th GBEP Steering Committee meeting to take place end of November 2022, possibly in person, in Rome (FAO Headquarters).* It will be preceded by the 14th Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy and 20th Task Force on Sustainability. The GBEP Secretariat will circulate further details in due time.