

13th Meeting of the GBEP Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy (WGCB)

Online - 12.00 – 14.30 CET time (UTC +1)

Monday, 15 November 2021

Co-Chairs Summary

The GBEP Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy (WGCB) held its 13th meeting on 15 November 2021 online due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Paraguay, Philippines, Spain, United States of America, Viet Nam, AFREC, ECLAC, ECOWAS/ECREEE, EUBIA, FAO, CIFOR-ICRAF, IEA Bioenergy, IRENA, UNDP and WBA participated in the meeting as Partners and Observers. External experts from Biofuture Campaign and Stockholm Environment Institute also joined the meeting.

The Co-Chairs, Miguel Almada (Argentina) and Bah Saho (ECREEE), welcomed Partners and Observers during their opening of the meeting, and the agenda of the meeting was formally adopted.

The meeting began with an overview of the work done under the various Activity Groups in 2021 and plans for 2022.

Activity Group 2 “Raising awareness and sharing of data and experiences from the implementation of the GBEP indicators”

Horst Fehrenbach (AG2 leader, Germany) gave an overview of the work that was conducted under AG2 in 2021 and introduced relevant speakers for updates:

- **Technical Assistance in Cuba** as part of the “Regional Observatory on Sustainable Energies – ROSE” project led by ECLAC, as a kind contribution to the GBEP Programme of Work.

In December 2020, the GBEP Secretariat produced a [Report and accompanying capacity building materials](#) provided to Cuba in lieu of the training that was due to take place in March 2020 but was cancelled due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and lack of capacity to carry out online trainings in Cuba.

- **Implementation of the GBEP Sustainability Indicators on the biodiesel value chain in Paraguay.**

[Stephania Spitale](#) (Centro de Estudio Ambientales y Sociales – CEAMSO, Paraguay) gave a presentation on the FAO project “Rapid sustainability assessment of the biodiesel sector from soy in Paraguay through the use of the GBEP indicators” – a rapid assessment of the soy-based biodiesel value chain in Paraguay. The project was implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of

Paraguay, in collaboration with FAO Paraguay, FAO/GBEP team and CEAMSO. It provides initial feedback on critical areas for further analysis and policy needs. She highlighted that the existing national capacity for biodiesel production is sufficient to meet the current mandate but there is a need for supporting policies to make the sector economically sustainable. Furthermore, additional investigation is required into the environmental sustainability of the feedstock production to ensure that the biodiesel production contributes to all environmental goals over and above climate mitigation targets.

- **Demo of the WebGIS tool developed by the BIOPLAT-EU project (Horizon 2020-funded project) on the basis of the GBEP Indicators.**

[Marco Colangeli](#) (FAO) gave a demo of the webGIS Tool of the BIOPLAT-EU project; it is a tool that allows users to search for MUC lands in Europe, to select a suitable crop and bioenergy pathway and conduct sustainability assessments including GHG emissions, water footprint, impacts on employment and much more. It has used the GBEP Sustainability Indicators as a basis.

There was then a discussion on the next steps for the AG2, which will include for 2022 to:

- Report back to WGCB on any GSI implementation during 2022; and
- Coordinate the piloting of the Rapid Implementation Framework developed as part of the FAO project in 2021.

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for activities in 2022 for AG2 by 17 January 2022.

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

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) gave an overview of the **2021 Bioenergy Week, hosted by Ethiopia** but held virtually online due to COVID-19 restrictions. It was organized by GBEP in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Energy Commission (AFREC), with the support of the US Grains Council. The [agenda](#) for the conference included thematic sessions of most interest to Africa: bioenergy reporting and statistic; sustainable bioenergy as a contribution to land conservation and restoration; bioeconomy opportunities; liquid biofuels in urban areas; and bankability of projects. The [2021 GBEP Youth Award](#) was also awarded and the winner presented her research. The event led to the development of an [Outcome Document](#), which was discussed during the conference itself, and included a short term action plan specifically focused on amplifying efforts to achieve SDG7 on the continent – by focusing on renewable energy and reducing dependency on fossil fuel supply chains.

It was confirmed that the **Bioenergy Week 2022 will be held in Paraguay**. The date is yet to be set, with the hope that an in-person/hybrid event will be possible. The 2022 Bioenergy Week will focus on themes of most interest to the Americas. Some current suggestions for sessions include: an AG4 session on wood energy and forest landscape restoration; an AG7 session on biogas, in collaboration with regional initiatives; an AG8 session on advanced biofuels; and the

presentation of the GBEP Youth Award 2022. Partners and Observers also stressed the importance of cross-cutting sessions that transcend specific bioenergy pathways and feedstocks but instead tackle broader issues.

It was also announced that the **Bioenergy Week 2023 is planned to be held in Viet Nam**. The announcement by the relevant country representative was very well received by the GBEP members.

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for thematic sessions and appropriate speakers for the agenda of the Bioenergy Week by 17 January 2022.

Activity Group 4 – Woody biomass for forest landscape restoration and sustainable livelihoods

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) gave an overview of the 2021 activities and planned activities for 2022:

- [GBEP Side Event](#) at EUBCE 2021 “Biomass for landscape restoration: how can the bioeconomy contribute to the UN Decade on ecosystem restoration?”
- GBEP contribution to the conference Sustainable Wood fuel Value Chains in Africa: Governance, Social, Economic and Ecological Dimensions to be held 23-25 November 2021 in Ghana.
- GBEP is co-organizing a Special Event on Sustainable Forests and Green Energy in collaboration with FAO/NFO and IRENA during the World Forestry Congress 2022 (4 May 2022).

There was then an interesting presentation from [Prof. Franco Cotana](#) (University of Perugia, Italy) on “**Biohydrogen from lignocellulosic biomass**”. Prof. Cotana gave an overview of the various technologies for the production of hydrogen and the process for producing biohydrogen from woody biomass. He noted that this biomass could be readily available in Europe, whilst forests also provide multiple co-benefits. The current price of biohydrogen from large-scale commercial facilities is also competitive with hydrogen produced from other mechanisms.

After the presentation, the Partners and Observers discussed potential activities to be conducted under AG4 in 2022. Some current suggestions are to:

- Hold a session during 2022 Bioenergy Week to include issues related to landscape governance for forest management and product utilization;
- Update the 2020 collection “Positive linkages between wood energy and forest landscape restoration” with the best practices presented during the Bioenergy Week;
- Create short brief (two pages) based on the discussions during the Bioenergy Week session; and
- Organize events/webinars on biohydrogen.

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for activities in 2022 for AG4 by 17 January 2022.

Activity Group 7 “Biogas”

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) gave an overview of the 2021 activities of the AG7, which involve a series of very successful [regional webinars on biogas](#).

Partners and Observers discussed potential activities to be conducted under AG7 in 2022. Some current suggestions are to:

- Hold a session during 2022 Bioenergy Week on biogas (in collaboration with regional initiatives such as LEDS LAC Bioenergy Community of Practice and RedBioLAC); and
- Host further webinars to include organizations who have not yet had the opportunity to present, or as a follow up to the session at the Bioenergy Week.

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for activities in 2022 for AG7 by 17 January 2022.

Activity Group 8 “Advanced Liquid Biofuels”

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) gave an overview of the 2021 activities of AG8:

- **“Collection of experiences in Advanced Liquid Biofuels”**

In 2021, AG8 finalised the “Collection of experiences in Advanced Liquid Biofuels”. The Collection takes a deep-dive into a selection of different experiences in the sector to detail their variety not only in terms of technology and development phase but also in their benefits, drivers and barriers. It includes experiences from pilot to commercial-scale facilities over four continents. Each experience incorporates information on: enabling factors, main drivers, benefits and challenges, technology transfer, potential for scale up and replicability, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Collection was officially approved by the WGCB and has been [published online](#).

- **Webinar “Advanced liquid biofuels for net zero transport – from experiences to action”**

The [webinar](#), held on 2 November 2021, included some of the private sector experiences included in the aforementioned Collection. The roundtable discussion with leading companies in the field of advanced liquid biofuels from around the world – Lanzatech, Neste, UPM Biofuels and Versalis – was moderated by Gerard Ostheimer, the co-manager of the Clean Energy Ministerial Biofuture Campaign.

Partners and Observers discussed potential activities to be conducted under AG8 in 2022. Some current suggestions are to:

- 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;
- Write short news articles on each webinar, to be published on the GBEP website, which include the main discussions and conclusions; and

- Update the “Collection of experiences in Advanced Liquid Biofuels” to include further contributions from the above webinars.

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for activities in 2022 for AG8 by 17 January 2022.

Youth involvement

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) gave an overview of the main activities on youth in 2021:

- GBEP Youth Award. The [GBEP Youth Award 2021](#) was awarded to Lilian Motongori Jamunga, from Kenya, for her research on “Mechanically (pedal) driven village-level reactor for production of biodiesel from non-edible oils”. She presented her research and was awarded with a certificate during a special session at the 8th GBEP Bioenergy Week held in Ethiopia.
- Lecture on “Sustainable bioenergy in national and international contexts”, 7 June 2021. The GBEP Secretariat gave a [lecture](#) on the GBEP programme of work and experiences on the measurement of the GBEP indicators at the University course on Energy Economics, Department of Energy, at the Polytechnic University of Turin.
- The GBEP Secretariat, with inputs from FAO, has finalized the first draft of the [Bioenergy Supplement for the YUNGA Energy Challenge Badge](#), which has been piloted and will be published in 2022.

There was then a presentation from [Julius Nkansah-Nyarko](#) (Energy Commission, Ghana), who gave an example from Ghana of education and awareness on renewable energy and energy efficiency, through the Energy Commission’s Senior High Schools’ Renewable Energy Challenge. The challenge has the aims to: develop the research skills and promote technological innovation in renewable energy and energy efficiency; instill in students a passion for solving renewable energy, energy efficiency and climate change challenges through innovative research; develop presentation skills; and promote self-confidence and encourage hard work.

After the presentation, Partners and Observers were informed on the planned/ongoing GBEP activities on youth for 2022:

- The World Food Forum (WFF).
The GBEP Secretariat is contributing to the [Education Track](#) of the WFF with a ‘lab’ for middle school students (aged 10-13) dedicated to bioenergy and its links with agri-food systems. It will be held on Thursday 16 December 2021.

Partners and Observers who are interested in either spreading information on the lab to youth groups in their country or hosting a lab in their language are encouraged to contact the GBEP Secretariat.

- GBEP Youth Award 2022.
The [GBEP Youth Award 2022](#) will be associated with the 9th GBEP Bioenergy Week to be held in Paraguay. The call for papers will be open in early 2022 to university students studying in research institutions in the Americas.

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for youth activities in 2022 by 17 January 2022.

Proposals for work on new thematic areas

Two new thematic areas were discussed for consideration under the WGCB: i) Bioenergy in displacement settings; and ii) Linking bioenergy with food security and nutrition.

Bioenergy in displacement settings

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) gave an overview of the thematic area and underlined that there are specific energy problems in displacement settings that lead to a limited access to modern, clean, reliable energy. In these situations, bioenergy (along with but also over and above other renewable energy options) can bring an integrated approach with multiple co-benefits beyond energy (such as green jobs, by-products, waste management), whilst also providing options for clean, reliable and more affordable energy both at household, community and landscape level.

Sola Phosiso (CIFOR-ICRAF) outlined some of the potential activities that GBEP could have in this sphere of work, noting also that there are already many platforms the work on this topic with which GBEP would have to work in synergy with. It was discussed whether a new Activity Group was the correct institutional setting for GBEP to contribute to the dialogue. Considering the presence of several recognized platforms discussing this theme at the global level, *it was given mandate to the GBEP Secretariat to interact with the main platforms (e.g. Global Platform for Action - GPA) and contribute to their discussions by providing the expertise of the GBEP community, with the objective to strengthen the role of bioenergy in these arenas.*

Linking Bioenergy with Food security and nutrition

[Constance Miller](#) (GBEP Secretariat/FAO) outlined the focus of the work, which is intended to be on the bioenergy-nutrition nexus. Nutrition security includes not only the four dimension of food security – availability, access, utilization and stability, but also includes the dimension of ‘quality’, or more precisely, how these dimensions, along with other social and environmental factors (such as sanitation and health, care and feeding practices), affect our nutritional status. Bioenergy and nutrition links have tended to focus on the potentially negative impacts of the production of conventional biofuels on human health and nutrition in the classic food vs. fuel discourse related to food availability and access (through price effects). Although this important aspect should by no means be overlooked, it should also be recognized that these are complex interactions and there may be many places where bioenergy and nutrition could interact across value chains, both directly and indirectly.

Patrizia Fracassi (FAO/ESN Division) intervened to discuss the intended scope of the work and introduced the literature review that FAO is currently conducting to investigate these linkages. *After a discussion, it was decided to establish an electronic group led by FAO/ESN, to develop the literature review including inputs from Partners and Observers. It was also decided to leave the decision to establish a new Activity Group on this topic open for the future, on the basis of the results of the literature review.*

Other activities and capacity development events

Towards the end of the meeting, the GBEP Secretariat gave an overview of the activities and capacity development events that have occurred in 2021 that are not specific to any Activity Group:

- **Financing options for Bioenergy Projects and Programmes.**
The report “**Financing options for Bioenergy Projects and Programmes**” and the accompanying online search tool were updated in March 2021 as a kind contribution from FAO. Both the report and the search tool are available on the [GBEP Website](#).
- **World Bioenergy Association webinar - Lessons so far: the role of sustainable bioenergy in displacing fossil fuels**, 30 June 2021. GBEP contributed as speaker to this WBA webinar, which discussed globally applicable lessons from the use of industrial bioenergy in displacing fossil fuels ([more information](#)).
- **UNIDO Expert Group Meeting - Clean Cooking: Potential for bioethanol Industries in High impact Countries**, 23-25 June 2021. UNIDO and Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA), in partnership with UN-ESCAP, AU and GBEP organized an Expert Group Meeting of key policy and decision makers from high impact countries and all other relevant stakeholders in the clean cooking space to deliberate and identify strategies to achieve universal access to clean energy for cooking and create an impact by 2030 ([more information](#)).
- **AFREC International Workshop on Bioenergy Monitoring and Reporting in Africa**, 22-24 June 2021. This workshop focused on better understanding the bioenergy situation in Africa and follows up on the recommendations from the Outcome Document of the GBEP 8th Bioenergy Week held in March 2021. The GBEP Secretariat contributed with a presentation in a dedicated session on “Translating Data and their Analysis into Actions, Measures and Policies” ([more information](#)).
- **Webinar in collaboration with LEDSLAC Bioenergy Community of Practice**, 22 June 2021. The GBEP Secretariat contributed to one webinar in a series hosted by LEDSLAC Community of Practice on Bioenergy (BioE-CoP), presenting the experiences of the measurement of the GSI in Paraguay. Recording available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). More information on the LEDSLAC BioE-CoP can be found [here](#).
- **Joint workshop IEA Bioenergy Strategic Inter-Task Project on Bioenergy and GBEP**, 15-16 June 2021. The GBEP Secretariat supported the organization of this workshop, entitled “How can biomass supply for bioenergy deliver multiple benefits and contribute to sustainable development goals?” [Agenda is available on the GBEP Website](#).
- **BBEST 2021/Biofuture Summit II Virtual Conference**, 24-26 May 2021. The GBEP Secretariat contributed to the “Webinar Live 1 – Biomass quantification and Sustainability Governance: How to achieve consensus”. Agenda and recording of the BBEST/Biofuture 2021 event can be found [here](#).

Furthermore, there is upcoming participation of the GBEP Secretariat in the **IEA Bioenergy Conference**, 29 Nov – 9 Dec 2021. GBEP Secretariat will intervene as speaker in two sessions: Realising sustainable bioenergy pathways towards climate goals – 30 November 2021; and Green Gas perspectives – 2 December 2021. More information and registration [here](#).

Given time constraints, there was not enough time for discussion on potential capacity building activities for 2022, although some initial proposals could be to:

- Organize a side event with Biofuture Platform in the context of CEM 2022; and
- EUBCE 2022 (Marseille, France, 9-12 May 2022).

Partners and Observers were requested to send further suggestions for capacity building activities and/or events in 2022 by 17 January 2022.

Conclusions on next steps of the WGCB

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 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**, 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 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 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 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 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 therefore 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 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 and how these might best be pursued and disseminated in the future.

Events in 2022 – The GBEP Secretariat already plans to attend a number of conferences in 2022, including 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.