

GBEP Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy

Activity Group 3

Study Tour for capacity building and training

29 September 2016

Background

In the context of the Working Group on Capacity Building, the Activity Group on "Study tour for capacity building and training", led by Brazil, was established in November 2011. The main objective is to help foster sustainable biomass and biofuels deployment, particularly in developing countries where biomass use is prevalent. It consists of short presentations with the specific themes of sustainable production and use of bioenergy, where effective policy frameworks may be discussed, taking into account the 24 indicators approved by GBEP. The presentations aim to foster exchange of information, skills and technologies through bilateral and multilateral collaboration. Practical information on bioenergy technology and know-how are also encouraged through field visits.

Under this Activity Group, the following successful events have been held:

The first Bioenergy Week was held in Brasilia (Brazil) in March 2013 and it consisted of short presentations analyzing technical and public policy aspects of bioenergy development, in line with GBEP 24 indicators of sustainability. This event was kindly hosted by the Government of Brazil in the premises of EMBRAPA Agroenergy (Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation), also supported by the Government of the United States of America and the Organization of American States (OAS).

Scientists and officials from Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Southeast Asia and Europe had the opportunity to learn from positive experiences in the sustainable production and use of bioenergy that could guide the design and implementation of bioenergy policies in their countries. They were invited to facilitate information sharing to improve overall agricultural productivity, yield, and infrastructure logistics such that more feedstock is available for food, feed, fibre, and fuel. Through exchange of technical information, models, and tools for identifying, measuring and reducing costs, and raising efficiency, countries may identify opportunities for improving feedstock productivity and logistics and areas for continued technical support.

The workshop contributed to enhancing the technical capacities of developing country officials and stakeholders on ways to improve agricultural productivity and yield, to enhance feedstock logistics, and to increase the use of modern conversion technologies in Bioenergy service delivery.

The second Bioenergy Week was held in Maputo (Mozambique) in May 2014. The event was hosted by the Government of Mozambique and organized by the GBEP Secretariat with the support of the Governments of Brazil and Italy, as well as of APLA Brazil and Vale S.A. The

event gathered around 120 participants from the Americas, Africa, Southeast Asia and Europe, including scientists and government officials, and also representatives from the private sector, in particular from Africa, to discuss specific sustainability themes that are of key interest for Africa, such as regulatory and policy frameworks for bioenergy, food security and bioenergy, family farmers integration in the bioenergy value chain, and sustainable modern biomass energy development.

The third Bioenergy Week was held in Medan (Indonesia) in May 2015. The event 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 of the International Energy Agency, the Asian Development Bank and GIZ. The event gathered around 120 participants from all over the world, including scientists, government officials and representatives from the private sector, in particular from Asia, to discuss specific sustainability themes that are of key interest for the region.

The fourth Bioenergy Week was held in Budapest (Hungary) in June 2016. The event was kindly hosted by the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in cooperation with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The event gathered around 80 scientists, government officials and also representatives from the private sector from the Americas, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and Western Europe to discuss specific sustainability themes that are of key interest for the region.

As a follow up to the previous Bioenergy Weeks, the Budapest event allowed the opportunity to learn from positive experiences in the sustainable production and use of bioenergy that could guide the design and implementation of bioenergy policies in the interested region (Eastern Europe and Central Asia). Furthermore, it provided the opportunity to continue a dialogue with the private sector and stakeholders on ways to improve mutual cooperation towards a more sustainable production and use of bioenergy.

GBEP Partners and Observers, as well as the international experts that were involved in the Bioenergy Weeks so far organized, stressed the enormous added value of this cycle of regional events in terms of capacity building and information sharing, and expressed the willingness and need to continue in the future.

In light of this, GBEP is very pleased to announce that the co-chairs of Working Group on Capacity Building, ECREEE/ECOWAS and Argentina, are delighted to initiate the second cycle of the Study Tour and have expressed their willingness to host the forthcoming Bioenergy Weeks. Therefore, the fifth Bioenergy Week will be held by the ECREEE/ECOWAS in Africa, in spring 2017, and the sixth Bioenergy Week will be hosted in Argentina in spring 2018.