

23rd Meeting of the GBEP Steering Committee

Online 13.30 – 14.30 CET time (UTC +1)

Wednesday, 28 October 2020

Co-Chairs Summary

The GBEP Steering Committee held its 23rd meeting on 28 October 2020 online due to the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Philippines, Spain, Sweden, United States of America, ECOWAS/ECREEE, EUBIA, European Commission, FAO, ICRAF, IEA Bioenergy, IRENA and UNECA participated in the meeting as Partners and Observers.

Italy and Brazil co-chaired the meeting. Min. Alex Giacomelli (GBEP Co-Chair) represented Brazil, whilst Mr. Giovanni Brunelli, Director of the Division of Sustainable Development at the Ministry for the Environment Land and Sea, represented Italy on behalf of Mr. Oliviero Montanaro (GBEP Co-Chair).

Opening and Welcome Speech

Mr. Giovanni Brunelli and Min. Alex Giacomelli 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 welcomed Togo as new Observer of GBEP.

Brazil has confirmed that they are pleased to continue with the co-chairmanship of GBEP for the next biennium (2021-2022). Italy has communicated that they are not in the position to continue the co-chairmanship, and in light of this the GBEP Secretariat will initiate bilateral discussions to identify a new GBEP co-chair. The GBEP Secretariat therefore welcomes nominees to take the position of co-chair for the coming biennium (2021-2022).

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 12th meeting of the WGCB was held on 27 October 2020. The conclusions from the meeting are as follows:

Activity Group 2 will continue to collect and disseminate information on the implementation of the GSI. However, the AG2 will also forge a stronger collaboration with the TFS under the new workstream on the facilitation of the implementation of the GSI through the data entry sheets and a dedicated tool.

Under **Activity Group 3**, the 8th Bioenergy Week, to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia has been postponed to March 2021 due to the global pandemic. The health situation will continue to be monitored by GBEP and the partner organisations (UNECA, FAO, AFREC and African Union Commission) and it will be decided in due advance whether the meeting will be held in person or online. The 9th Bioenergy Week is still planned to be held in Paraguay, with preparations to begin in due course.

Activity Group 4 will hold additional webinars on wood energy for FLR and sustainable livelihoods to complement the one already held in 2020. The scope of webinars will also be expanded to include biomass for landscape restoration other than forestry, including agroforestry, and the links with natural events exacerbated by climate change.

Activity Group 7 will hold web conferences on important aspects identified by the Stocktaking Paper, such as financial support and policy incentives.

Activity Group 8 will draw on the mini-webinar held during the WGCB meeting in order to finalise the collection of experiences in advanced liquid biofuels. The call for examples has therefore been renewed and Partners and Observers are invited to distribute the call widely in their networks and to send related inputs by 31 December 2020. Associated webinars will also be held.

In terms of the work on **youth**, the bioenergy supplement will be finalised and piloting will occur in collaboration with Partners and Observers and YUNGA. The Youth Award 2021 will be presented during the 8th Bioenergy Week to outstanding research conducted by young researchers from Africa. The deadline for the call for papers for the Youth Award is 31 December 2020, and Partners and Observers are invited to distribute the call widely in their networks.

For **capacity development materials**, Partners and Observers will disseminate the materials produced in 2020. Furthermore, as an in-kind contribution from FAO, there will be an update made to the 2010 report on financing of bioenergy projects and related online search tool.

Partners and Observers are encouraged to take an active role to facilitate the translation of the Bioenergy Supplement and of these capacity development materials into their national languages.

Events in 2021 for GBEP participation have been initially identified. Partners and Observers are invited to suggest further events where the participation of the GBEP Secretariat is advantageous by 31 December 2020.

Task Force on Sustainability (TFS)

The 18th meeting of the TFS was held on 28 October 2020. The conclusions from the meeting are as follows:

Tool to facilitate implementation of the GSI

It was decided that the current sub-group of the TFS formed to work on the data entry sheets would be expanded to include the rapid implementation tool. Partners and Observers are asked to express their wish to join this group by 30 November 2020. The GBEP Secretariat also welcomes nominees to lead the group together with Takashi Hayashi (Japan) by 30 November 2020. The first web conference of the group will be held in early December 2020.

In the meantime, the sub-group will also continue working on the finalization of the data entry sheets.

Bioenergy as part of the broader bioeconomy

It was decided to implement the work plan presented, including two working papers and one event, subject to confirmation of generous funds to allow the GBEP Secretariat to support the implementation of the agreed activities, expected to be carried out in partnership with the Biofuture Platform and the IEA Bioenergy TCP.

GBEP funding arrangements

Maria Michela Morese (GBEP Executive Secretary) presented the “2020 Financial Report” and the “2021 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 2020 possible.

The work of the GBEP Secretariat in 2021 is expected to be mainly covered by the Italian Trust Fund, on which Mr. Brunelli officially confirmed the approval of Italy to the no-cost extension up to 31 December 2021 and in general up to the availability of the remaining funds. On that same occasion Italy announced not to be able to fund GBEP activities in the future.

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. 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

GBEP co-chairmanship

- The GBEP Secretariat will be exploring with interested Partners and Observers for the co-chairmanship of GBEP for the coming biennium 2021-22. The new nominee will be circulated for approval by Partners and Observers, at due time.

Working Group on Capacity Building

- **Activity Group 2** will continue to collect and disseminate information on the implementation of the GSI. It will also forge a stronger collaboration with the TFS under the new workstream on facilitation of the implementation of the GSI through the data entry sheets and a dedicated tool.
- **Activity Group 3** – GBEP will continue to monitor the health situation to determine whether the 8th Bioenergy Week, to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in March 2021 will be held in person or online. The 9th Bioenergy Week is still planned to be held in Paraguay, with preparations to begin in due course.
- **Activity Group 4** will hold additional webinars on wood energy for FLR and sustainable livelihoods. The scope of webinars will also be expanded to include biomass for landscape restoration other than forestry, including agroforestry, and the links with natural events exacerbated by climate change.
- **Activity Group 7** will hold web conferences on important aspects identified by the Stocktaking Paper, such as financial support and policy incentives.
- **Activity Group 8** will draw on the mini-webinar held during the WGCB meeting in order to finalise the collection of experiences in advanced liquid biofuels. The call for examples has therefore been renewed and Partners and Observers are invited to distribute the call widely in their networks and to send related inputs by 31 December 2020. Associated webinars will also be held to discuss these examples and potential policy implications.
- **Youth** – the Bioenergy Supplement will be finalised and piloting will occur in collaboration with Partners and Observers and YUNGA. The Youth Award 2021 will be presented during the 8th Bioenergy Week to outstanding research conducted by young researchers from Africa. The deadline for the call for papers for the Youth Award is 31 December 2020, and Partners and Observers are invited to distribute the call widely in their networks.
- **Capacity development materials** – Partners and Observers will disseminate the materials produced in 2020. There will be an update made to the 2010 report on financing of bioenergy projects and related online search tool, as an in-kind contribution from FAO. Partners and Observers are encouraged to take an active role to facilitate the translation of the Bioenergy Supplement and of the capacity development materials into their national languages.

- ***Events in 2021*** – the GBEP Secretariat already plans to attend a number of conferences in 2021. Partners and Observers are invited to suggest further events where the participation of the GBEP Secretariat is advantageous by 31 December 2020.

Task Force on Sustainability

- ***Tool to facilitate implementation of the GSI*** - The current sub-group of the TFS formed to work on the data entry sheets will be expanded to include the rapid implementation tool. Partners and Observers are asked to express their inclination to join this group by 30 November 2020. The GBEP Secretariat also welcomes nominees to lead the group together with Takashi Hayashi (Japan) by 30 November 2020.
- ***Bioenergy within the broader bioeconomy*** - The work plan presented, including two working papers and one event, will be implemented subject to confirmation of generous funds to allow the GBEP Secretariat to support the implementation of the agreed activities, expected to be carried out in partnership with the Biofuture Platform and the IEA Bioenergy TCP.

Funding arrangements

- Current raising of voluntary funds by GBEP Partners and Observers for the GBEP Secretariat will further continue, with a view to implement the GBEP programme of work in the future. 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.
- GBEP Partners and Observers also 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.

2021 GBEP Governing Bodies meetings

- ***24th GBEP Steering Committee meeting to take place in Rome (FAO Headquarters), tentatively towards the end of November 2021.*** The exact dates and venue will be circulated as soon as possible. It will be preceded by the 13th Working Group on Capacity Building for Sustainable Bioenergy and 19th Task Force on Sustainability. The GBEP Secretariat will circulate further details in due time.

Written approval of the GBEP Steering Committee conclusions

- Considering the exceptional online edition of the GBEP Steering Committee, it was proposed and decided that the meeting conclusions will be circulated via email to allow for a written/email approval process. Partners and Observers will be invited by the GBEP Secretariat to approve the conclusions: if no concerns are raised within the indicated deadline, the conclusions will be considered approved.