**Task Force on Sustainability**

**Addendum to the Scope of Work**

***GBEP Sustainability Indicators – Tool for rapid implementation***

**Background**

At the 18th meeting of the Task Force on Sustainability (TFS) held online on 28 October 2020, a discussion was held on the potential development of a ‘tool’ to aid in the rapid implementation of the GBEP Sustainability Indicators (GSI). It was agreed that a dedicated tool could be useful to provide a means to carry out a first, rapid implementation of the GSI that could give a preliminary assessment of the sustainability performances of the bioenergy sector or a given bioenergy value chain in a short time frame.

This work stream is linked with the work stream on the data entry sheets, which both fall under the TFS sub-group on facilitating the rapid implementation of the GSI.

**Scope**

The overall objective is to develop an automated tool for the purpose of allowing implementation of the GSI in cases where time and/or financial resources are limited. However, the tool will be useful in all cases where an expedite implementation of the GSI is desired.

**Deliverables**

Given the nature of the development of the tool, it will require external financial resources. Therefore, the primary deliverable of the sub-group stream will be to develop a project proposal for the production of such a tool, which can be shared with funding agencies or adapted for relevant calls for funding.

This will be developed on the basis of the concept note already shared at the GBEP Meeting in October 2020 (and attached as an Annex to this Scope of Work). It will be expanded to include indicative timeframe and budget, key activities, and primary outputs. It will also include information on interested Partners who could represent users of the tool and express formal interest in (and potential contribution to) its development.

**Work modalities and time frame**

GBEP Partners and Observers that have already implemented the GSI will contribute to this work, as well as any other Partners who have expressed interest in contributing.

The co-leaders of this sub-group is Olivier Dubois (FAO) and Maria Murmis (Argentina).

The work will be carried out virtually, through email exchanges and teleconferences. It was agreed that the sub-group would work through the collaborative platform MS Teams for an initial trial period.

The work of the sub-group stream to develop a project proposal for the tool is proposed to be finalized by November 2021.

**Annex – Information note presented at GBEP Annual Meetings 2020**

**Developing a format for a ‘rapid implementation’ of the GBEP Sustainability Indicators**

**Rationale:**

The methodology of the GBEP Sustainability Indicators for Bioenergy (GSI) was developed as a thorough assessment of the national bioenergy sector, in order to provide a basis for informed decision making. Given this objective, and therefore the nature of the methodologies for the 24 indicators, the measurement of the GSI is sophisticated and has large requirements in terms of resources (both humans and financial), capacity and data.

Since the development of the GSI in 2011, the aim of the Task Force on Sustainability has been to facilitate the use of the indicators through the development of an Implementation Guide. The completion of the Implementation Guide in January 2020 represents an important step in aiding countries with the implementation of the GSI, providing, e.g. important information on the development of an implementation project and on attributing impacts to bioenergy. However, as mentioned in the Implementation Guide itself, data and capacity requirements are still high, and can be a barrier in some national circumstances. To advance the uptake of the implementation of the GSI, it could be important to further facilitate GSI measurement, concurrently with the development of the data entry sheets that are in progress.

**Proposal for discussion:**

Building on the above mentioned rational, the proposal is to provide a means to carry out a first expedite implementation of the GSI that could provide a preliminary assessment of the sustainability performances of a given bioenergy value chain in a short time frame (e.g. to be completed in maximum six months).

The overall goal of the rapid implementation approach of the GSIs would to obtain rapid yet robust indications on the sustainability situation of bioenergy at national/sub-national levels within six months, with the possibility to undertake more detailed analysis if deemed appropriate by national stakeholders.

The results of the rapid implementation of the GSI could be visualized using three criteria, showing for each indicator:

1. The ‘criticality’, i.e. the importance of the indicator within the national priorities;
2. The availability of information/capacity for measurement, which could be indicated using a traffic light analogy; and
3. Where possible, the quantitative outcome of a rapid indicator measurement using existing available data.

Please see Table 1 below for an example of the visualization of these criteria.

When viewed together, the three criteria of the rapid implementation could provide valuable information for the country. Not only would it inform on the preliminary results of the GSI, but it would also highlight potentially critical aspects/needs that require further resources to research a specific sustainability indicator in depth. This exercise could serve as a means to prioritize resources for a more efficient and targeted assessment of the sector. Therefore, through a rapid preliminary implementation of the GSI, countries could, in a relatively short amount of time and with reasonable financial resources, gain i) a quick understanding of major trends in terms of sustainability performances of bioenergy at country level, and ii) an indication of the needs for further research and how to optimize a further in-depth assessment, where required, in terms of financial and time requirements.

The eventual data entry sheets for the GSI could facilitate the rapid implementation; if the two were used in combination, it could allow for an even quicker and standardized means for identifying data requirements and availability. Further to this, a dedicated tool could also be developed for the rapid implementation; this may expedite not only the data collection (for example, where it could be automatically inserted from available databases) but also the calculation. Such a tool could build on the tools developed under the FORBIO and BIOPLAT-EU projects, with a view to adapt it to measurements at national/sub-national level.

*Table 1: Example of possible visualization of the results of a rapid implementation of the GSI*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Indicator* | *Criticality of indicator* | *Existing data and capacity sufficient?* | *Indicator measurement quantitative result* |
| 1 |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |
| … |  |  |  |
| 24 |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Legend:* | | |
| *Criticality of indicator* | This could be measured on a scale of 0 to 5 based on a national multi-stakeholder evaluation (0 being not applicable and 5 being most critical). | |
| *Existing data and capacity sufficient?* | Traffic light analogy for measurement process (not measurement result of sustainability): | |
|  | Good existing data, methodology and capacity to carry out an accurate measurement of this indicator; provides a preliminary value that is estimated to be close enough to the one obtainable with a full in-depth sustainability assessment. |
|  | A preliminary value can be obtained (e.g. through a proxy approach or with estimated data values) but further data/capacity is required to measure the indicator using the comprehensive methodology and to a sufficient accuracy. |
|  | No preliminary value can be obtained; an in-depth measurement is needed. |