



AIDE-MÉMOIRE

THE FIRST HIGH-LEVEL BIOFUELS SEMINAR IN AFRICA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
30 July – 1 August 2007.

Organized by
African Union (AU) and the Government of Brazil and United Nations Industrial Development
Organization (UNIDO)

BACKGROUND

There has been renewed interest in biofuels, in particular liquid biofuels, in Africa and the rest of the world over the last 5 years or so, mainly as a response to the significant rise and volatility of oil prices. So far, a number of countries in Africa, the majority of whom are net oil importers, have taken various steps to develop biofuels so as to ensure stable, secure and environmentally friendly energy supplies. In parallel to these developments on liquid biofuels, experiences in other developing country regions also shows that other biofuels technologies like gasification and biogas are increasingly becoming reliable, cost effective and ready for the market. As such, biofuels are fast becoming one of the most dynamic and rapidly changing sectors of the African energy economy. Since Africa generally has vast land resources and conducive climates, there is no doubt that biofuels have the potential to provide the much-needed energy for industrialisation and poverty reduction efforts. However, biofuels development has associated risks and trade-offs and hence need for careful consideration. Given the potential role that biofuels can play in increasing access to energy in Africa and the concomitant challenges, it is vital to bring key stakeholders together in exploring the possibilities of biofuels in Africa and make use of experiences from countries inside and outside Africa in outlining a biofuels development program of action for the continent. The program of action will, among others, outline the roles of key stakeholders in facilitating sustainable biofuels development.

JUSTIFICATION

The development of all biofuels in Africa can bring about multiple benefits that include; increased energy supply security through diversification and progressive substitution of fossil fuels; relieve national accounts from high cost of importing oil; enhance agricultural productivity by using residues and waste in productive processes; create new employment opportunities in associated sectors i.e. agriculture, industry, infrastructure and research in both rural and urban areas; and reduced the emission of pollutants, including greenhouse gases, thus providing both local and global environmental benefits.

In the same vein, biofuels development can present a number of concomitant challenges. Therefore, given the potential of biofuels in addressing Africa's energy challenges and the associated risks and trade-offs of biofuels, it is critical that the biofuels development efforts are targeted at maximizing the benefits while minimizing the risks and tradeoffs.

It is therefore important to ensure that biofuels development in Africa will be sustainable and hence the need to bring together key stakeholders in mapping a common program of action.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the seminar is to explore the possibilities for developing biofuels in Africa while safeguarding the balance between the need for new energy resources and the trade-offs and risks of biofuels. More specifically, the seminar has the following key objectives:

- To brief policy makers, the private sector Raise the awareness of key stakeholders, especially policy makers, on the potential and risks and trade-offs of biofuels;
- Promote sharing of experiences and lessons from countries in Africa, Brazil and other regions;
- Explore the potential and challenges to the dissemination of priority biofuels technologies in Africa; and
- Develop a program of action on biofuels development

RELATED ACTIVITIES

As part of the seminar, plans are underway to hold an exhibition/poster session on various biofuels activities and industries in Africa. This exhibition will focus essentially on film projections, distribution of publications in the form of brochures, CDs, photos, etc on biofuels. The details of the exhibition are available in a stand-alone manual.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The seminar is expected to result in agreement on a common plan of action/strategy on developing biofuels in Africa and discussions on a framework of partnerships and collaboration in developing biofuels industry in Africa among different partners. A publication will be prepared summarizing discussions and presentations made during the EGM.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants at the EGM will include:

- Experts from AU Member States from the Government, the private sector, research and academic institutions and non-governmental organizations;
- Experts from Brazil and other countries outside Africa;
- Experts from the RECs and AU Specialized Agencies in energy, transport, agriculture, environment, etc;
- Regional and international organizations of the energy sector;
- Regional and international financial organizations;
- Representatives of the major development partners such as The African Development Bank, World Bank; The European Commission, REEEP, DFID, etc
- Representatives of the biofuels industry in Africa
- The Associations of Oil and Non-Oil Producing Countries (APPA & ANOPC);
- Experts representing energy consumers and the transport sector
- United Nations Agencies such as ECA, UNDP, UNCTAD and UNEP;
- Independent researchers and academic institutions
- The African Energy Commission;
- The NEPAD Secretariat;

DOCUMENTS

Technical documents, sub-regional and regional reports and draft action plan will be provided to the participants upon arrival in Addis Ababa for the EGM.

DATE AND VENUE

The Expert Group Meeting will be held on 30 July – 1st August 2007, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the African Union headquarters.

African Union Headquarters

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W21K19, Addis Ababa

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FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

For the 30 participants that UNIDO will invite to the EGM, financial and administrative arrangements will be made in accordance with UNIDO's rules and regulations.

a) AIRTICKET

Round-trip air economy transportation between the airport of departure in the participant's home country and site of activity (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), by the shortest, most direct and economical route.

The procedure is as follows and needs to be strictly adhered to by the participant:

1. The participant makes a reservation at her/his own travel agency.
2. The reservation indicating the flight itinerary and cost amount of the ticket is communicated to Ms. Jade Patterson (J.Patterson@unido.org) by latest 4 July 2007.
3. Ms. Patterson will seek UNIDO travel unit's approval of your booking and authorize the UNDP Office in your country to issue your ticket.
4. In case of non-acceptance of your booking, UNIDO will make appropriate travel arrangements for you and communicate the changes to you.
5. In case of non-existence of a UNDP Office in your country, UNIDO will arrange for a pre-paid ticket and advise you on the procedures of collecting your ticket in your country.

Please note that no tickets should be purchased without a written authorization from UNIDO. The participants shall cover any additional costs incurred upon deviations from the authorized route.

b) DSA

A daily subsistence allowance at the prevailing UN rate for Addis Ababa will be paid at the venue of the meeting to cover board, lodging, and incidentals for the period of attendance at the meeting.

An additional DSA (1 night) will be paid as contribution toward the expenses incidental to travel abroad, such as expenditure for passport, visa, medical examination, inoculations and other such miscellaneous items, as well as travel to and from the airports.

Participants are requested to leave their home countries in time to arrive in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia no later than the evening of 29 July 2007 and to depart on 2 August 2007 or as close to that date as airline schedule permits. UNIDO cannot assume financial responsibilities for earlier arrivals / later departures for personal reasons.

UNIDO will not assume responsibility for the following expenditures:

- a) Cost incurred by the participants with respect to travel insurance, accidental insurance, medical bills and hospitalization fees in connection with their attendance of the meeting.
- b) Compensation in the event of death, disability or illness of the participants in connection with their attendance of the meeting.

- c) Loss or damage of personal property of the participants while attending the meeting.
- d) Purchase of personal belongings and compensations in the event of damage caused by them by climatic or other conditions;
- e) Travel and any other costs incurred by dependents who might accompany the participants.
- f) Incidental costs incurred in home country in connection with travel abroad, such as costs of passport, visas, inoculations or travel to and from the airport in the home country.

VISA ARRANGEMENTS

Before leaving the home country, participants should complete all formalities regarding entry and transit visas, which they may require for the trip to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

HOTEL RESERVATION:

A block booking for the participants was made at the Ghion Hotel in Addis Ababa for the period of 29 July to 2 of August 2007. Participants are kindly requested to inform us as soon as possible for the confirmation of the reservations in order to guarantee the availability of the rooms. (Arrival date/time and Departure date/time for Addis Ababa should also be communicated in order to inform the hotel of early/late arrival/departure.

Ghion Hotel
Ras desta Damtew Avenue,
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E-mail: ghion@telecom.net.et
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ENQUIRIES AND CORRESPONDENCE

All enquiries and correspondence prior to the Conference should be addressed to:

Ms. Jade Patterson

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