



**African Union**



**United Nations Economic  
Commission for Africa**

**Draft Aide Memoire**

**Expert Group Meeting to Validate Reports on Bioenergy Policy and Technology Options in Africa**

**Organized by**

Department of Infrastructure and Energy of  
**The African Union Commission (AUC)**

And

The Food Security and Sustainable Development and Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Divisions of  
**The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**

**November 21-23, 2011  
UNCC, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

## **Background**

- 1 Energy is essential for the development of all the sectors of African economies. It is a proven engine for human development and economic growth as witnessed elsewhere (e.g. Brazil and Malaysia) in the transformation of agriculture-based economies into emerging industrialized nations. The development of infrastructure in potential clean energy sectors including bio-energy is one of the effective means to achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in general and, more specifically, in ensuring hunger reduction and environmental sustainability in decades to come. Yet, Africa, with about 14% of world's population, accounts for only 5.2% of 2006 global energy consumption, the lowest level in the world. Of the total energy consumed by the continent in 2006, traditional biomass accounts for 47% (contrasting with a global average of 10%), making Africa today the world's largest producer and consumer of traditional biomass, with 54 million more Africans expected to become traditional biomass dependent by 2015 (IEA 2006).
- 2 Recognizing the critical role that bio-energy play in promoting Africa's agricultural transformation, energy security and fostering broad-based economic growth, the AUC has recently undertaken a number of political impetus in advocating the need to vigorously promote a sustainable framework for bio-energy development in Africa through a number of political initiatives, among others: (1) Addis Ababa Declaration and Action Plan on Sustainable Bio-fuels Development in Africa, 2007; and (2) Dakar Renewable Energy Development Plan of Action, 2008. These initiatives recommended a number of supporting measures, including: 1) Developing an enabling policy and regulatory framework for biofuels development in Africa; and 2) Harmonizing national biofuels policies, strategies and standards through established African regional economic communities (RECs).
- 3 While a number of African countries are at various stages towards developing the bioenergy industry, there are, however, a number of challenges being experienced which relate to the unsupportive policy and regulatory environment, inadequate institutional arrangements, the unsustainability of the industry in relation to other competing socio-economic interests, lack of choice of technologies, ignorance on types of feedstock to use, inadequate financing of the bioenergy industry, lack of awareness by various players about the threat of energy security, and a general lack of knowledge of the threat to the environment posed by conventional fossil fuels. These challenges need to be addressed in order to maximize the contribution of bioenergy to national economies in Africa.
- 4 A global scan shows that active government involvement is important for developing successful programmes. Valuable lessons can be drawn from Germany, Brazil and the United States. Germany has become a world leader in high-technology biodiesel production because of strong government commitment, a viable policy framework and solid collaboration from the private sector. This positive environ-



ment has in turn unleashed innovation in biofuels development. Similarly, the United States and Brazil are global leaders in bioethanol production. These governments have provided robust support for bioethanol industry development in their respective countries.

- 5 To this end, the ECA in partnership with the AUC commissioned two complementary bioenergy studies, namely: (a) *“Sustainable Bioenergy Policy Framework and Guidelines: Toward Energy Security and Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa”*; and (b) *“Biofuels Development in Africa: Technology Options and Related Policy and Regulatory Issues”*.

### **The objective of the studies**

- 6 The *“Sustainable Development of Bioenergy in Africa”* study aims primarily to develop a draft bioenergy policy framework and guidelines for Africa drawn from a comprehensive assessment of opportunities, challenges and risks for bioenergy expansion in Africa. It *encompasses* the following:
  - A comprehensive overview of the underlying key drivers that will shape the bioenergy outlook for Africa; and
  - A proposed Africa bioenergy policy framework and guidelines for the promotion of sustainable development of bioenergy in Africa.
- 7 The *Biofuels Development in Africa* study analyses the biofuels value chain, especially in terms of available technologies and the policy and regulatory issues pertaining to developing the biofuels industry on the continent. The study augments national efforts in developing their biofuels sector. It addresses the following specific areas:
  - Actual and potential contribution of the biofuels industry to socio-economic development and poverty reduction in Africa.
  - Review major global and regional initiatives and trends in energy production, distribution and consumption that may have direct and indirect effects on the development of the biofuels sector in Africa.
  - Identify existing biofuels technologies and their associated major impediments to Africa’s full take-off and participation in biofuels development.
  - Review existing biofuels policy and regulatory regimes in Africa with a particular focus on policy provisions, institutional arrangements and effectiveness of implementation.
  - Identify existing needs and gaps in policies and regulations that need to be addressed at various levels in order to ensure the development of the biofuels sector on a sustainable basis and enhance its positive developmental impacts.

- Make specific recommendations that need to be taken up at the regional, sub-regional and national (sectoral) levels with a particular focus on the shift from a reactive to a more proactive biofuels industry development regime.

### **Objectives of the Expert Group Meeting**

- 8 The broad objectives of the EGM are to discuss the two documents, and validate their main findings with the view of refining the study recommendations and developing a revised draft Africa Policy Framework and Guidelines for Sustainable Bioenergy. Particularly, the EGM will deliberate on the following six key themes:
  - Bioenergy: potential, drivers, benefits and risks;
  - Biofuels technology options;
  - Economics of biofuels;
  - Development in Africa: review of initiatives, lessons Learned and gaps;
  - Institutional and strategic frameworks for bioenergy sustainable development and
  - Progress, challenges and means of implementation.

### **Expected Results**

- 9 The ultimate results of the EGM deliberation are (a) a revised draft Africa Bioenergy Policy Framework and Guidelines; (b) refined reports that are better informed by the member states as well as international experts; and (c) a consensus on actions and sequential activities of a roadmap needed to develop bioenergy in Africa in a sustainable manner, the roles of stakeholders and partners, and strategies for resource mobilization.
- 10 Together with related initiatives taking place elsewhere (for example, PIDA), this will contribute to increase share of bioenergy technologies and options to African countries energy balance, as well as a consideration of bioenergy options as key energy choices (not marginal) for Africans. Some of the immediate outcomes include:
  - Better understanding of the currently undertaken bioenergy and biofuels activities, as well as supporting policy and regulatory environment.
  - African member States and other stakeholders better informed on the emerging challenges, opportunities risks and related policy options of relevance to the sustainable development of bioenergy or biofuels

### **Participants**

- 11 In addition to national experts from AU member states, the meeting will bring together representatives from different organisations that are involved in bioen-

ergy/biofuels value chain, as technology developers, policy experts, funders, development agencies. Also invited will be recognised international experts in the field of renewables, with particular focus on bioenergy. Invited organisations and institutions include UN concerned agencies, RECs; development partners, AfDB, specialized technical organizations and experts, and concerned NGOs.

### **Organisation of the Meeting**

- 12 The EGM will be conducted over five sessions. Sessions 1 will be an opening address by AUC and ECA, adoption of agenda, as well as the introduction and objectives of the meeting. Session 2 will be Plenary A, which will be a presentation of the two studies and discussions. Session 3 will be a breakout group which will deliberate on (a) bioenergy potential, drivers, benefits and risks; (b) biofuels technology options; (c) economics of biofuel; (d) a review of initiatives, lessons Learned and gap; (e) institutional and strategic frameworks for bioenergy sustainable development; and (g) progress, challenges and means of implementation. Two sessions are to be held parallel at a time. Session 4 will be Plenary B to discuss the deliberations of the focus groups as well as deliberation on the way forward. Session 5 will be the closing session and remarks from the representative of the invited international experts as well as from AUC and UNECA.

### **Working Documents**

- 13 This Aide Memoire on “Bioenergy Policy and Technology Options in Africa” will be sent to invited participants. The background documents (the two draft reports), an extended summary of the two documents and a provisional agenda will be sent to participants in advance of the meeting.

### **Date, Duration and Venue of the Meeting**

- 14 The meeting will take over two and a half days, from 21 to 23 November, 2011. It will take place in at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

### **Administrative arrangements**

- 15 AUC and UNECA will provide round-trip economy class air-tickets and a Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) at the Addis Ababa rate to sponsored participants. All non-sponsored participants are kindly requested to provide their flight itineraries so as to facilitate airport pick-up and drop-off. Hotel reservations will be made for all participants. Transportation will be provided to take participants to/from the venue of the meeting.
- 16 An entry visa into Ethiopia is absolutely required. The visa can be obtained from the Ethiopian embassy in the country where the participant resides if there is an

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Ethiopian embassy in the country. A business visa can also be obtained upon arrival at the Addis Ababa airport upon presentation of the letter of invitation. Participants are expected to pay for their visa fee.

### **Language**

- 17 The language of the meeting will be mainly English (but there will be simultaneous translation (English and French) during the plenary sessions.

### **Contacts for Further Information**

- 18 Additional information could be obtained from the following (please CC everyone in your enquiry to ensure prompt response in case one is not immediately available):

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