



ECOWAS Regional Bioenergy Strategy Framework

Theme: Transitioning from traditional to modern Bioenergy

Adopted at the
ECOWAS Regional Bioenergy Forum
Bamako, Mali

Date: 19 - 21 March 2012

On Wednesday 21 March 2012

Supported by:



Government
of Canada



Introduction

In the process to develop a Regional Bioenergy Strategy, the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) and the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) co-organized the ECOWAS Regional Bioenergy Forum held in Bamako, Mali, from March 19 to 21, 2012. This event was supported by the Governments of Brazil, Canada, Mali, the United States of America, the United Nations Development Programme Regional Energy Programme for Poverty Reduction (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Global Alliance of Clean Cookstoves, and the UN Foundation.

The Forum brought together representatives of the ministries Energy, Agriculture/Forestry, and Environment of ECOWAS member states, government agencies, Partners and Observers from the Global Bioenergy Partnership, regional and international organisations, academia, business and industry, civil society and financial institutions active in the field of Bioenergy. The delegates and partners discussed and adopted this Regional Bioenergy Strategy Framework at the end of the Forum.

The ECOWAS Regional Bioenergy Strategy Framework seeks to enable and promote domestic and foreign investments that help address energy poverty prevailing in the region both in rural and peri-urban populations, without compromising food security and environment. In the implementation of this Strategy Framework, consideration should be given to local production of components/devices and fuels to spur local socio-economic development through creation of added value, employment, alongside food and energy security.

The development of a Regional Strategy for the ECOWAS Region therefore would be based on the following key components:

1. Resource Assessment and Planning
2. Policies and Strategies
3. Knowledge sharing
4. Capacity building
5. Financing mechanisms and resource mobilization

1. Resource Assessment and Planning

For effective and efficient planning of bioenergy production and use in the region, resource assessments are critical. The resource assessments should cover natural resources such as land use, soil and water, environment and ecological systems, climate and weather characteristics. Also waste and residue streams should be assessed. In addition, this should be considered with other relevant information such as demographic distribution and infrastructure. The result should translate into agro-

ecological zoning indicating areas suitable and available for bioenergy development, indicating feedstock options. Components should include:

- a. Resources assessment and mapping, based on a methodological framework that covers:
 - resource inventory;
 - climatic and weather scenarios; and
 - resource availability and utilization such as land, water and other environment considerations;
- b. Catalogue experiences relating to:
 - Resource potential uses and threats, e.g. Climate Change Adaptation needs;
 - Socio-economic context evaluation; and
 - rapid assessment methodologies; and
- c. Complemented by assessment and sharing of experiences, and an inventory of existing maps.

2. Policies and Strategies

Policy and regulatory frameworks on Bioenergy have to be developed and adopted by the member states (including targets, regulations, codes and quality standards). This should include regional and national policies and legislations and national/regional targets for Bioenergy services penetration, incentives for their widespread adoption and implementation. In the development of this activity, the following key activities are important for consideration:

- Establish a vision (political will- bottom up is critical to sustain a long term vision) on Bioenergy as part of a sustainable development strategy;
- policy coherence with other sectoral policies (consultation through inter-ministerial task teams and regulatory processes);
- capitalize on experiences in region and rest of the world;
- Define political principles, based on subsidiarity between countries in the region; and
- Coordination of Implementation strategy and strengthening of related institutions.

3. Knowledge sharing

Information, education and communication are vital to the process of rolling out modern Bioenergy products and services to a different audience ranging from farmers, policy makers to bankers. All methods and means of communication should be

embraced to get the message and ideas across. In the process of implementing this activity, the following salient points are worthy of note:

- identify knowledge holders;
- knowledge management, sharing and transferring (communication tools), creation of an ECREE database and an observatory;
- knowledge monitoring; and
- put in place knowledge management system.

4. Capacity building

Education and training to improve knowledge and skills is a necessary pre-requisite for any successful programme in Bioenergy. This cuts across the entire industry for both institutional and human resources and across the different levels of society, including literate and illiterate individuals and farmers. It is essential that any capacity building activity gives serious consideration to gender balance. Capacity building activities should include but are not limited to:

- Increasing awareness among high-level actors in agriculture and energy;
- Reinforcing existing institutional and human structures;
- Providing professional and on the job training;
- Transferring knowledge and promoting innovation and technology across all levels of production; and
- development of job training and professional profiles, including on existing sustainable bioenergy tools.

5. Financing mechanisms and resource mobilization

Rolling out Bioenergy technologies and services requires innovative and tailored funding mechanisms and schemes, especially for rural and peri-urban applications. These include subsidies and subventions, financial guarantee funds, and participation of international and local financial institutions. Therefore, in the exploration of financing mechanisms and resource mobilization, due consideration should be given to:

- mapping of financing schemes for every step of the Bioenergy value chain;
- identifying barriers to accessing financing schemes;
- capitalizing on innovative financing mechanisms and experiences such as climate related financing mechanisms (incl. Use of NAMAs to access Green Fund), ranging from enterprise support to end user finance;
- mobilizing local finance institutions, particularly private sources of capital; and
- Coordination of donor.