

Statement of the Co-Chairs
Conference on Bioenergy and Development
19 – 20 October 2015, Berlin, Germany

Less than a month after the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the United Nations General Assembly and in view of COP 21 of UNFCCC, the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and the Institute for Advances Sustainability Studies (IASS) held a conference on **bioenergy and development**. The conference brought together a unique high-level group of experts, including representatives of governments, the research community, civil society and the private sector. The conference discussed the role of bioenergy in the energy-mix that is required to satisfy growing energy demands while at the same time contributing to decarbonizing the global economy and ensuring sustainable development.

It was concluded that, under the right conditions, various forms of bioenergy have the potential to contribute to the energy-mix required for achieving sustainable development and contributing to overcoming poverty, especially in rural areas. However, experience has shown that there are good and bad ways of exploiting biological sources of energy, and the participants in the conference identified the critical factors for the successful development of bioenergy.

Critical Success Factors for Sustainable Bioenergy

1. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide direction for the global development agenda to 2030. Sustainable energy, including bioenergy, can contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal number 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and also several other SDGs. Governments and other stakeholders therefore need to ensure that sustainable energy policies are aligned with the SDGs in order for bioenergy to be an effective contributor to Agenda 2030. To that end, inclusive and effective participatory approaches are key.
2. There are promising pathways and technologies to develop bioenergy, the sustainability of which depends on national and local contexts. Careful consideration of the various options is necessary to identify the optimal bioenergy solutions under different circumstances.
3. It is important to manage any trade-offs that may occur when developing bioenergy. The following essential requirements for good governance need to be met:
 - a. Right to adequate food
 - b. Responsible land governance as described by the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forest, Fisheries in the Context of National Food Security
 - c. Explicit considerations of the impact on all SDGs and on ecosystems and their functions
4. Bioenergy policies must be integrated into national sustainable development policies and plans. Impacts of elements of policies and plans should not be considered in isolation: it is important to anticipate cumulative impacts.
5. Opportunities for scaling up sustainable bioenergy should be taken to contribute to the global fight against climate change.

6. Effective monitoring, research and information sharing are needed to support sustainable bioenergy policies.
7. Bioenergy use should contribute to improved livelihoods and increased incomes and support the eradication of poverty, especially for vulnerable groups facing the twin challenges of energy insecurity and poverty.
8. Bioenergy use should contribute to national energy security and development.

Bearing in mind the urgent need to replace fossil fuels with sustainable alternatives, the participants in the conference urged governments and the private sector to invest in renewable energy. They also encouraged greater investment in research to increase our knowledge of bioenergy options that live up to the critical success factors listed above.

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