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## Concept Note

### **Workshop on the Strategic Framework for the African Bioenergy Data Management**

**Lomé, Togo**

**24-26 April 2023**

#### **1. Background**

Bioenergy is directly related to SDG 12 (sustainable consumption and production patterns) and three indicators of SDG 7 (7.1.2, 7.2.1 and 7.3.1), of which UNSD acts as custodian of two. These are indicator 7.2.1 on renewable energy and 7.3.1 on energy efficiency. In addition, traditional bioenergy is the aspect of energy statistics with the most serious measurement gaps worldwide. In Africa, bioenergy data collection is generally marred by problems such as weak sectoral establishment and lack of financial, institutional and human capacity. Improving data collection and analysis is key to monitoring bioenergy sectoral trends over time, evaluating sustainability, and developing sound policies.

About half of Africa's energy demand in 2020 was met by traditional bioenergy, where many countries rely on it to fulfil a large part their household energy needs (more than 80% collectively in the continent), with the percentage of solid fuel (charcoal and fuelwood) used in the region being the highest in the world. Production and consumption of bioenergy has direct impacts on health (indoor pollution), biodiversity, water and soil quality, as well as on a number of social and economic aspects of primary relevance for developing countries. Improving the measurement of bioenergy in Africa is an imperative to tracking SDG 7 and its interlinkages to other SDGs.

Given the existence of international databases with bioenergy data (such as UNSD's, and those from FAO and the International Energy Agency), the lack of data does not receive the deserved attention. What happens is that bioenergy information for African countries in these databases are largely based on models and estimation, with huge discrepancies between them.

The way forward to improve these data is for African countries to develop means and capacity to measure bioenergy, to own the process and feed these databases with their own measurements. This way, the whole value chain of data can be considered, from collection to use, focusing on the ultimate goal of delivering tangible impact on policy and decision making for sustainable development.

Bioenergy is among African Energy Commission<sup>1</sup>'s key thematic programmes approved by the African Union Specialised Technical Committee (STC) on Transport, Transcontinental and Inter-

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<sup>1</sup> The African Energy Commission (AFREC) is a specialized agency of the African Union, created by Decision AHG/Dec.167 (XXXVII) of the 37th Summit of the OAU African Heads of States and Governments which was held in

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regional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIIET) in Cairo, Egypt in April 2019. Furthermore, UNECA's African Statistical Yearbook quotes at its sources for energy data AFREC and ourselves at UNSD.

The activity consists of a three-day workshop in response to request from African countries, relayed to UNSD by AFREC. It followed up from the June 2021 “International Workshop on Improving Bioenergy Monitoring and Reporting in Africa” held virtually by UNSD, AFREC and the International Energy Agency. The 2021 workshop consolidated the Strategic Framework for the African Bioenergy Data Management<sup>2</sup> (AFBIDM), whose roadmap/action plan called for this validation workshop. The AFBIDM aims at providing guidelines to improve coverage, quality, timeliness and comprehensiveness of data required by policy makers in their bioenergy and energy decision-making process. The roadmap set in the Framework includes a capacity-building aspect to help countries delineate their own national action plans. This joint activity is a synergetic opportunity to improve SDG 7 data and contribute to the AFREC programme Bioenergy Monitoring and Reporting in Africa, both of which aim to promote sustainable development by enabling informed decision making. Afterwards, the action plan includes follow-up implementation through national workshops and coaching, mostly under AFREC's responsibility, but in cooperation with UNSD. Given the above-mentioned synergy, UNSD's occasional participation in a few of these activities is possible.

## **2. Main objectives**

This workshop aims to give participants an opportunity to learn, discuss and explore the best ways to:

1. Raise awareness of the importance of bioenergy in Africa, including its interlinkages with Sustainable Development Goals and other socioeconomic issues;
2. Strengthen capacities of stakeholders on bioenergy data collection, on developing good methodologies and exploring best practices;
3. Develop a strategy for the creation of a viable bioenergy database in Africa and promoting sustainable cooperation among the main stakeholders to improve reporting, monitoring and sustainability of bioenergy resources in Africa.

## **3. Expected outcomes:**

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Lusaka, Zambia, on 11 July 2001 and was launched by the African Union Ministers in charge of Energy in the meeting held on 15 – 17 February 2008 in Algiers, Algeria through the Algiers Declaration AU/EXP/EN/Decl (III).

<sup>2</sup> The Strategic Framework for the African Bioenergy Data Management (AFBIDM) is an AFREC initiative whose inception was motivated by the inclusion of the programme Bioenergy Monitoring and Reporting in Africa, among other relevant programmes (Such as African Energy Transition) in AFREC's approved strategic pillars.

The workshop is expected to deliver:

EA1: Increased knowledge of participants on successful practices in the production and use of statistics on bioenergy.

The indicator of achievement for EA1 is that at least 80% of the participants' countries will have shared their experiences during the workshop.

EA2: Improved capability of participants to help their countries to establish a bioenergy data collection system integrated with national policy and priorities.

The indicator of achievement for EA2 is that at least 60% of the participants' countries will have outlined the steps to establish such bioenergy data collection system in their country during the last brainstorming session of the workshop.

#### **4. Target groups**

The target group consists of 22 country participants from 11 countries (one from the National Statistical Office and one from the Energy Authority) involved in the collection of official bioenergy data. The representatives from National Statistical Offices (NSOs) will be appointed by the Head of the NSO, while the participants from Energy Authorities will be selected from energy-statistics focal points of the countries or appointed by the Energy Authority.

The 11 countries are as follows: Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo (host country), Tunisia, and Uganda.

#### **5. Venue and period**

Lomé, Togo from 24 to 26 April 2023.

#### **6. Program Languages**

Presentations during the workshop will be in English or French with simultaneous interpretation provided in English or French.

#### **7. Main activities**

The activity is the realization of a workshop contained in the roadmap that resulted from the 2021 AFREC/UNSD/IEA virtual workshop on bioenergy. The present workshop is organized as a mix of activities such as presentations from the resource persons, sharing of country practices and

brainstorming sessions. It starts with an introductory session that discusses: a) the scope and coverage of bioenergy (biomass energy), b) what is the importance and role of biofuels in Africa, and c) impacts in other sectors such as health, environment and economy. The next session focuses on improving bioenergy data quality and coverage, followed by another session focusing on improving data quality and coverage on interlinkages of bioenergy and other areas. The last session will be organized around messaging, with a part dedicated to discussing good practices for releasing the data to identified target groups (outreach and dissemination), and another focused on extracting the right messages to the target groups (advocacy). The former deals with the use of available data, whereas the latter relates to convincing policy makers to allocate more resources and attention to data on biomass energy.