

Regional Caribbean Roundtable for Sustainable Biofuels
March 11th and 12th
Hotel Occidental el Embajador, Dominican Republic



Background

The previous surge in world energy prices, interest in energy security, and a growing international focus on climate change is sparking interest in biofuels. Governments throughout the world are increasingly concerned with how to meet growing energy needs while confronting global climate change. However, biofuels are increasingly blamed for rising food prices and recent studies showed that certain biofuels have questionable socio-economic implications, adverse environmental impacts, negative energy balances and do actually exacerbate instead of mitigate climate change. These concerns must be taken into consideration to motivate increased investment and endeavors to ensure that only the most sustainable biofuels projects are implemented.

To address these issues, the IDB and the RSB have collaborated on the elaboration of sustainability principles and criteria for biofuel projects in the LAC region. In August 2008, the RSB released their "Version Zero" of sustainability principles and criteria¹; beginning of September 2008 the IDB launched its web-based interactive "Biofuel Sustainability Scorecard"².

During the Inter-American Development Bank's Annual Meeting in Miami in April 2007, the Bank established a partnership with the Roundtable for Sustainable Biofuels (RSB). The RSB is the worldwide multi-stakeholder initiative comprising non-governmental organizations, companies, governments, academics and inter-governmental groups seeking to develop draft global standards for sustainable biofuels production and processing. As part of this Partnership, the IDB and RSB agreed on organizing and co-hosting several regional workshops before the IDB's 2009 Annual Meeting.

The overall objective of these regional workshops is to build capacity in the region, both with external stakeholders and clients, and in the Bank's country offices, in assessing the sustainability of biofuels production, in using and validating the IDB Biofuels Sustainability Scorecard. At the same time, the IDB has been working on a technical cooperation with various Caribbean Governments on advancing a domestic biofuels industry. Part of this technical cooperation includes a biofuels workshop to increase collaboration and develop an action plan by all relevant stakeholders within the Caribbean region.

Activity

The RSB and IDB propose to co-host a regional workshop in the Dominican Republic. During this regional workshop both RSB's "Version Zero" and IDB's "Biofuel Sustainability Scorecard" will be presented and discussed and feedback will be gathered from regional stakeholders, authorities, practitioners and the biofuel community at large in order to contribute to the elaboration of sustainability standards and build capacity in the region.

¹ <http://cgse.epfl.ch/Jahia/site/cgse/op/edit/lang/en/pid/70341>

² <http://www.iadb.org/scorecard>

Objective

The underpinning objective of this regional workshop is to raise awareness, enrich knowledge and foster programs to increase the sustainability of biofuels projects in the Caribbean region. Some of the issues to be addressed include:

- a. Efforts to implement sustainability standards in the biofuel sector
- b. Tackling specific issues such as food security, land use change and land ownership
- c. Identifying potential solutions and further recommendations to increase the sustainability level of biofuel projects.

Participants

The target participants are a balanced involvement at executive level of one third industry, one third Non-Governmental Organization and small farm cooperatives, and one third governments, academics and other experts. The objective of the regional workshop is to bring together private- and public sector, practitioner, regulators, policymakers, civil society and other key stakeholders of the Caribbean in order to facilitate a transfer of knowledge and to increase the sustainability of cultivation, processing and distribution of biofuels. This Caribbean regional workshop will be attended by approximately 40 people.

Agenda

The workshop will be two days in duration with the following proposed draft agenda:

<i>First Day</i> REGIONAL CARIBBEAN ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE BIOFUELS

9:00 – 10:30 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

- Keynote welcome (IDB DR Country Rep, Manuel Labrado)
- Brief overview of IDB activities in the biofuel sector
- Round of presentation of participants
- Bioenergy in context: lessons learned from the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nation on environmental sustainability and food security (FAO, Erika Felix)
 - Showcase on Bioenergy Sustainability
 - Assessing Food Security in the context of bioenergy

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee break

10:45 – 13:00 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE BIOFUELS

- Food security and biofuels: the case of Haiti (Haitian Food Security Organization, Gary Mathieu)
 - Assessment of the factors triggering food insecurity
 - Links between food insecurity and biofuels
 - Recommendations for Haiti based on different scenarios
- Jatropha curcas value chain and how, improved and more productive non toxic varieties can increase small holders' incomes and the overall profitability along the market chain (CHIBAS, Gael Pressoir)
 - Major limitations and strategies to maximize Jatropha curcas value as a bioenergy crop.
 - Improved, high yielding, high oil content, nontoxic and disease resistant/tolerant varieties for sub-humid and semi-arid regions
 - Establishing a pro-poor & environmentally friendly economic model around biofuels contributing to food and energy security.
- Enhancing Regional Cooperation under the CBI: Challenges and Opportunities of the U.S. Ethanol Policy (US ITC, Douglas Newman)
 - U.S. market overview (ethanol)
 - U.S. policy fact and fiction (ethanol)
 - Challenges facing the region's biofuel development
 - Opportunities which may facilitate the region's biofuel development
- Implementing sustainability standards in the private sectors (LACFIN, John Hessling)
 - Lessons learnt from the private sector on implementing sustainability criteria
 - Opportunities for the private sector for biofuel development in the Caribbean

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

Afternoon IDB SUSTAINABLE BIOFUEL SCORECARD

14:00 – 14:45 Presentation of the IDB's Biofuels Sustainability Scorecard (IDB SECCI, Gregor Meerganz von Medeazza)

14:45 – 15:00 Coffee break

15:00 – 17:30 Working Groups to discuss and improve IDB's Scorecard in 3 break-outs focusing on social aspects (including food security), production aspects and environmental aspects

17:30 – 18:30 Plenary summary of Working Groups and next steps for Scorecard

Day Two - ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE BIOFUELS CARRIBEAN REGION OUTREACH

Objective

The second day of the conference will be dedicated to reviewing 'Version Zero' of the draft Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Biofuels as they have been developed by the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (RSB). In August 2008 the RSB published *Version Zero* with the help of hundreds of stakeholders who participated via expert working groups and online discussion. The RSB is currently in a period of public consultation regarding the draft principles until the end of March 2009, when they will begin to integrate the comments they have received into *Version One*, which is to be published in June 2009. This will be one of the final opportunities for interested stakeholders to participate in the development of the principles before the RSB begins this next phase.

Format

During the morning session a representative of the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels will give a presentation on the history of the RSB and an overview of the draft principles as they have been developed in Version Zero. After the presentation participants will be divided into working groups where they will review and offer comments on the draft principles and criteria. The first working group session will be devoted to those principles with potential environmental impacts, and the second to those principles with potential social impacts. Both sessions will follow the same format, during which participants will review the principles and their underlying criteria with the help of an expert facilitator, and then report back for discussion with the entire group in a plenary session. All comments will be written up into a report that will be shared with the meeting participants.

It is requested that all attendees to this session read Version Zero prior to the meeting, paying particular attention to the principles that will be covered during the meeting (see below).

Version Zero can be found on the RSB website at: <http://EnergyCenter.epfl.ch/Biofuels>

9:00 – 9:45 RSB's VERSION ZERO

- Overview of RSB's process (RSB, Matt Rudolf)
- Presentation of RSB's Version Zero: Principles and Criteria

9:45 – 10:00 Coffee break

10:00 – 12:00 WORK GROUPS: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Groups of 10-15 individuals will review Version Zero draft criteria related to environmental impacts. Principles to be covered include: Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas (3), Conservation of Biodiversity (7), Soil (8), Water (9) and Air (10)

12:00 – 12:15 Coffee Break

12:15 – 13:00 Plenary Session – Summary of Findings and Group Discussion
(Environmental Impacts)

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 17:00 WORK GROUPS: SOCIAL IMPACT

Groups of 10-15 individuals will review Version Zero draft criteria related to social impacts. Principles to be covered include: Human and Labor Rights (4), Rural and Social Development (5), Food Security (6), Land Rights (12)

17:00 – 17:15 Coffee Break

17:15 – 18:00 Plenary Session – Summary of Findings and Group Discussion
(Social Impacts)

18:00 – 18:20 Closing