



NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

# newsletter

BIOENERGY

## 2012 The International Year of Energy for All

### And FAO's Energy-Smart Food for People and Climate



ACCESS TO ENERGY – particularly affordable clean and efficient energy – transforms the lives of the most vulnerable populations in developing countries. Today, one person out of five worldwide lacks access to modern electricity. Three billion people around the globe still rely on wood, coal, charcoal or animal waste for cooking and heating.

On the other end of the spectrum, industrialized countries are increasingly reliant on energy sources that underpin the global economy and technological advances. Yet these countries confront a very different danger: energy waste due to inefficient energy use and an excessive reliance on fossil-fuel based energy, which is a key factor in the ongoing climate change debate.

The decision of the United Nations to declare 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All was viewed as an opportunity to concentrate global attention on the challenges facing both developing and developed countries when it comes to access to and efficient use of sustainable energy sources.

This initiative aims to bring together a wide range of stakeholders into the discussion, particularly governments, regional administrations, businesses, investors, community groups, international organizations, and academia. The objective is to foster dialogue within and among these various groups to support three interlinked objectives by 2030: Ensure universal access to modern energy services; Double the rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and Double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix

Speaking at the keynote address at the World Future Energy Summit on 16

January 2012, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative and urged the engagement of governments, the private sector, and civil society. "This is the right time for this Initiative. Across the world we see momentum building for concrete action that reduces energy poverty, catalyzes sustainable economic growth, and mitigates the risks of climate change. Achieving sustainable energy for all is both feasible and necessary. My Initiative will help us meet these objectives simultaneously. It can be a triple win for all."

FAO's Senior Energy Officer, Olivier Dubois, supports this initiative as it will help address FAO and others call for an integrated approach to simultaneously address climate, energy and food security along the whole agri-food chain, for several reasons: "According to FAO most of the 70% additional food production needed to feed the world will have to come from agricultural intensification. However, the conventional intensification pathway - improved varieties, a lot of external inputs, mechanization - makes it highly dependent on fossil fuel. We need to gradually decouple agricultural yield and modernization of the agrifood chain from the use of fossil fuel by becoming more "Energy-Smart" through: better energy efficiency; more use of renewable energy and; better access to modern energy services along the food chain. Integrated food-energy systems are a great example of what one could do to become more "Energy Smart" and we look forward to expanding our work in this area."

To learn more:  
[International Year of Energy for All web site](#)  
[Bioenergy web site](#)  
[Integrated food-energy systems](#)

NATURAL RESOURCES

### The Natural Resources and Environment Newsletter



WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE of the Natural Resources and Environment Newsletter.

In this issue of the NR Newsletter, we welcome 2012 as the UN-declared International Year of Energy for All, an opportunity to concentrate global attention on the challenges facing both developed and developing countries when addressing access to and efficient use of sustainable energy sources.

We also take a look at an interesting land tenure project that aims to bring advanced technology land registration systems to developing countries, through low-cost open-source software.

And finally, we review lessons learned and major achievements of a successful transboundary water management project in the Nile Basin.

To learn more:

Natural Resources Management and Environment Department  
 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[www.fao.org/nr](http://www.fao.org/nr)

LAND TENURE

## Improving land tenure in developing countries through better cadastre systems

CADASTRE SYSTEMS - or land registration systems - are used throughout the world to record details of land ownership. The diffusion of modern Information Technology (IT) land registration systems have played an important role in diminishing corrupt and non-transparent land management practices. Such systems also improve the structure and accessibility of records, facilitate knowledge-based decision making and promote a wider data dissemination.



However, proprietary software for land registration systems can be costly, making their adoption in developing countries less likely. Yet many of these countries are eager for the benefits they can derive from implementation of appropriate IT systems. The Solutions for Open Land Administration (SOLA) project has been designed with these concerns in mind. This three-year trust fund project, financed by the Government of Finland, was launched in June 2012 with the objective of providing affordable IT systems to developing countries that will enable them to improve transparency and governance related to land registration.

The project is using open-source software. Unlike proprietary software, open-source



software does not require costly licensing. Moreover, open-source software can be freely modified and adjusted by developers, who have access to the software's "engine". Another advantage with open-source software is that it is often more flexible and adaptable to local cadastre and registration practices and languages than proprietary software.

Three countries – Samoa, Nepal and Ghana - are participating in the project's pilot phase, implementing the software for their own land registration systems. Initial work on the project has been promising, according to SOLA Project coordinator, Neil Pullar, "The SOLA project is at exciting stage. The initial generic SOLA software developed in Rome is now largely completed and software customization work begins in the 3 pilot countries in March. The Rome software developers are now busy preparing for the training of the local software development teams in each of the pilot countries."

To learn more:

- [Solutions for Open land Administration](#)
- [FLOSS in cadastre and land registration: Opportunities and risks](#)
- [Land tenure web site](#)

WATER RESOURCES



### Collaboration between FAO, the Government of Italy and the Nile Basin countries

#### Managing transboundary water

THIS 'ISSUES IN THE SPOTLIGHT' takes a look at a recently completed project financed by the Government of Italy and managed by FAO managing water resources collaboratively across ten Nile Basin countries. As this fifteen-year project comes to a close, the Italian Foreign Ministry, FAO technical officers and the Director of the Nile Basin Initiative discuss what has been achieved and how the Nile Basin countries will continue their collaboration.

To learn more:  
[Issues in the spotlight – February 2012](#)