

FAO Technical Cooperation Project - TCP/RAS/3402

Bioenergy and food security in ASEAN

Background

Many ASEAN Member States (AMS) have implemented policies to encourage development of green renewable energy including bioenergy to achieve a range of national development objectives, including energy security, improved environmental performance and rural employment and development. In response to these policies, bioenergy developments are expanding at a fast pace; particularly in the biofuel sector. These developments are forging ahead often without coordinated assessment of the potential impact on the region's natural resource base, the environment and food security.

In support of the ASEAN Heads of State/Government Cha-am/Hua Hin Statement on ASEAN plus Three Cooperation on Food Security and Bioenergy Development, the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) has been tasked, amongst other measures, to develop a comprehensive strategy on sustainable and integrated food and biofuels production and consumption and to enhance partnership with regional and international organizations to promote collaborative research and development and technology transfer in food security and bioenergy.

FAO has developed the Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS) Approach to assist policy makers manage the trade-offs associated with bioenergy development and avoid competition between bioenergy and food security. ASEC has requested the technical support of FAO to use the BEFS Analytical Framework to address the critical regional gap in understanding regarding the impact of AMS bioenergy policies and regional bioenergy development on food systems and food security at the national and regional levels.

FAO Action

FAO aims to meet this request by formulating regional and national BEFS mainstreaming strategies in ASEAN to ensure that bioenergy provides more effective energy services in AMS with minimal or no impact on food security and the environment. In developing these strategies a range of supplementary activities will be implemented including capacity building with the FAO BEFS Approach, measures to promote sustainable, food secure and climate friendly bioenergy systems and technologies and the establishment of national bioenergy policy bodies. The ultimate intended impact of the project is that sustainable, food secure, climate-friendly bioenergy contributes to economic development in AMS.

Stakeholders and Target Beneficiaries

Four primary sets of stakeholders are intended to benefit from the project activities:

- (i) **ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)** – ASEC will benefit from specialized technical assistance to assess regional trade-offs between bioenergy development and food security and develop a regional BEFS strategy.
- (ii) **Policy-makers in ASEAN member states (AMS)** - Policy-makers in AMS will benefit from specialized technical assistance to assess national trade-offs between bioenergy development and food security and mainstream BEFS approaches into national bioenergy policies.
- (iii) **Bioenergy technology developers and investors from the public and private sectors** – These groups will benefit from clearer guidance from AMS regarding the types and characteristics of sustainable bioenergy technologies

and systems that will be targeted for promotion and development in ASEAN. Because BEFS activities will be implemented at the national and regional levels, technology developers and investors will also benefit from a common policy environment to guide investment decisions regarding bioenergy projects.

(iv) **Rural communities** - Over the medium-term rural communities will benefit from measures to encourage the wider availability of sustainable, food secure,

climate-friendly bioenergy. Measures to better integrate smallholder farmers into national bioenergy policies and production chains can work to strengthen their resilience to higher food and energy prices. Small-scale bioenergy systems will also be encouraged as a supplementary investment in the food security, health and productive capacity of rural communities. Rural communities and households in AMS will also benefit broadly from the greater availability of clean and reliable energy.

Project Framework – TCP/RAS/3402

The project will be implemented over two years in four phases:

Project Phase	June – December 2012	January – June 2013	June – December 2013	January – June 2014
Phase 1: The status and progress of bioenergy development in AMS and establishment of the ASEAN framework for BEFS is assessed.				
Phase 2: Sustainable, food secure and climate friendly bioenergy systems and technologies are promoted for adoption in AMS.				
Phase 3: AMS capacity to assess trade-offs between bioenergy development and food security is strengthened.				
Phase 4: National and regional mainstreaming strategies for managing trade-offs between BEFS in AMS are developed.				

Contact:

Beau Damen, Bioenergy Officer, Natural Resources & Environment Group
Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
T: +662 697 4313 E: Beau.Damen@fao.org