



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release

AUC Charts the Way Forward for Bioenergy Development in Africa

Nairobi, Kenya – 15th December, 2016: African bioenergy stakeholders and experts met at a 3-day Stakeholders' Dialogue from 13 – 15 December, 2016 to review the progress and chart a way forward for the implementation of the continental programme on "Bioenergy Development in Africa".

The Dialogue was organized by the Department of Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission (AUC) and was attended by high-level experts and representatives from African Member States as well as experts from continental and regional organizations including United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA), and the Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE).

The African Union Commission (AUC) established the programme on "Bioenergy Development in Africa", in order to address a range of issues that are hampering the development of a sustainable, more efficient and modern bioenergy systems and markets in Africa. This initiative aims to promote modern and sustainable energy access in Africa, which will contribute towards achieving a "prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development" as envisioned in the AU Agenda 2063. This initiative will also contribute to the goal of achieving environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities in Africa by modernising the bioenergy sector.

Since the inception of the programme, the AUC in collaboration with UNECA and the NPCA are implementing the recommendations of the "African Bioenergy Policy Framework and Guidelines", which was adopted by the AU Conference of Energy Ministers of Africa (CEMA) in 2012 and also carried out a series of activities aimed at promoting and unlocking modern bioenergy markets in Africa including capacity building on projects and policy development.

In his opening remarks, the Acting Head of Energy Division, Mr. Rashid Ali Abdallah noted the continuing importance of bioenergy in African energy sector in the short, medium and long-term, and the need to enhance the efficiencies and convert biomass into more efficient fuels for meeting our basic needs as well as fuelling productive activities. Mr. Abdallah also said "developing the bioenergy sector in Africa provides huge opportunities for economic, environmental and social transformation, which could contribute towards enhancing food security, modern energy access, rural development and transformation, jobs creation, women empowerment, market and income opportunities as well as improvements in health, amongst others".

The stakeholders and experts noted the need for the AUC to mobilize resources and establish a dedicated Facility for bioenergy development in Africa, which will accelerate the promotion of bioenergy in various key areas including policy harmonisation, capacity building and skills development, awareness creation, project preparation and sharing of lessons and experiences in bioenergy development amongst Member States.

The outcomes of the Dialogue will be used to continue the implementation of the “Bioenergy Development in Africa” Programme.

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