

HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE USAGE OF BIOENERGY IN THE BALKANS REGION

joint solution for sustainable future

Belgrade, Hotel Radisson Blu , 24/25th November 2015

Report on Regional Workshop: *“How to Strengthen the Usage of Bioenergy in Balkans Region”*

1. Concept and background

The Regional Workshop was designed to bring together relevant stakeholders from the Balkan countries to jointly address common challenges and deploy possible solutions in bioenergy utilization, especially taking into account that energy security, environmental impact and growing demands in restructuring of the energy sector have regional dimension (the Workshop’s Agenda is given in Attachment 1).

The purpose of the Regional Workshop was to enable to regional policy makers and professionals to identify regional advantages for bioenergy utilization in Balkans, to elaborate on common challenges and propose necessary activities and/or measures for the improvement of the framework conditions for the usage of bioenergy within the region.

The workshop was accompanied with Comparative study on overall political and institutional framework for the efficient usage of the bioenergy in the Balkans region¹. The Workshop’ methodology enabled sufficient time for stakeholders from participating countries to reflect upon regional challenges within bioenergy policies and projects and to exchange their ideas and experiences. Besides, the Workshop provided practical examples and lessons learnt from participating countries and Germany/Baden-Württemberg.

2. Realization of the Workshop

The Workshop was held in hotel Radisson blu in Belgrade on 24/25th November 2015 with participation of 55 representatives from 4 Balkan countries (the full list of participants has been given in the Attachment 2). Representatives were stakeholders from public institutions, academia, NGO’s, public and research institutes, international organizations and private companies.

The Workshop started with introductory remarks given by State Secretary of the Ministry for Agriculture and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, Ms. Stana Božović, followed by Mr. Goran Zubic, Assistant Minister from Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of

¹ Balkan region in this context includes countries: Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Serbia and Montenegro



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Republika Srpska and Dr Thomas Michel, Programme Leader of GIZ DKT1 program in Serbia. The introductory part was followed by serial of presentations on best practices and lessons learned in utilization of biomass and implementation of the bioenergy projects from Germany, Croatia, BIH and Serbia.

The Workshop was continued in the afternoon with the presentation of the key findings and common issues from *Comparative analysis on framework conditions for bioenergy utilization in Balkans region* (the full Comparative analysis is given in Attachment 5). During the presentation, issues and open questions that could be further elaborated and discussed in the Working groups were raised. The participants were then divided into the five Working groups, each with the task to reflect on the lessons learned and open issues raised during the morning session and to provide insight based on personal experiences and knowledge on the common issues for the utilization of bioenergy throughout the region. Participants, thus, gained chance to exchange on both bilateral and regional level in a structured, facilitated group discussions.

The discussions within the working groups have been continued during the next morning and the key findings, including joint regional issues and recommendation for future actions were presented at the closing session of the workshop on Wednesday 25th November (the structure of the Working groups and key findings and recommendations are given in the Attachment 3).

3. Workshop evaluation

The evaluation form has been fulfilled by 25 participants. Based on the summary results, the overall participants' estimation is that the workshop proved the necessity for regional approach and collaboration on bioenergy related topics and in particular demonstrated the necessity of regional networking and joint approaches in advocating for policy changes among decision makers.

The organization and methodology of the Workshop was estimated as excellent. Also, participants assessed that the Workshop represented an excellent starting point for the further regional initiatives and networking events related to the bioenergy, and that those should be continued (the detailed results of Workshop's evaluation are given in the Attachment 4).

4. Workshop conclusions

Based on the facilitated discussions in the small working groups, the participants agreed on the following key conclusions and recommendations (the detailed Working group's conclusions are given in attachment 3):

- There is a clear **need for regional cooperation and networking in the field of bioenergy** among the Balkans countries that particularly derived from the joint past from ex



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Yugoslavia's inherited practices and experiences and common development paths and dynamics of the region, especially in the context of the full EU membership;

- The Balkan region countries recognizes the importance of the joint regional activities in the field of bioenergy as tool for **mobilization of political decision makers** and advocating mechanisms for necessary changes in bioenergy markets that will enable better utilization of the resources among the region;
- The policy makers, professionals and representatives of Balkan countries jointly acknowledge that **regional collaboration is necessary for removal of regulatory barriers** for improvement of forest policy, for development of national and regional energy markets (resource, knowledge, technology) and for education and raising of awareness of citizens and, in particular, decision makers at all levels.
- The **different perspectives** of the users, industry (foresters, energy supply, and technology providers), market and regional approach should be taken into account when considering utilization of the bioenergy in the Balkans region.

5. The next steps (GIZ DKTI + other actors)

The Workshop's conclusion will be **conceptualized in a form of a joint document - A Framework for Action** (preferably with involvement of all interested actors from the region) to be presented at the Regional Conference on Bioenergy announced and planned to be organized with GIZ DKTI support in September 2016.

Following the key Workshop's conclusions and recommendation, GIZ DKTI Program will **initiate serial of bilateral meetings** starting from January 2016 with involved actors in order to define their interest and possible contribution to the establishment of permanent regional dialogue on bioenergy in a form of a Regional Task Force (goals, tasks and structure of task force will be elaborated jointly and more concrete actions proposed accordingly).

Belgrade, December 2015.

