

Description Workshop 6.2

WS 6.2: Merging the unmergeable ?!?- Pathways towards a sustainable co-production of food and bioenergy (in developing countries).

Convenor:

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Abstract:

Bioenergy development has gained widespread momentum in the last decade. Although it has been severely contested as a challenge for climate change and food security, bioenergy systems are still a factor in global agriculture. This workshop will focus on systemic approaches which hold the capacity to synchronically allow sustainable food production and open up opportunities for bioenergy development or vice versa. The question we want to answer is: Can, and if how, both production pathways be harmonised to meet the globally rising demand for food and energy? Contributions focusing on both developing and developed countries are welcomed.

Description:

Bioenergy research and development projects mushroomed mainly since the beginning of the last decade in numerous settings, locations and disciplines. Once being characterised as key element for rural development as well as decarbonisation of the energy system, various systemic approaches and implementation projects were initiated. These include especially solid and liquid biofuel, and biogas projects, which were analysed according to e.g. their respective value chains (including cascade effects) or their effects on logistic systems in rural communities.

A major obstacle, especially for biofuels, are highly problematic implementation frameworks as well as doubts about the overall GHG performance or unfinished discussions about the impact of bioenergy production on rising food prices (e.g. Mitchell (2008)). One target of the workshop is therefore to address the question on how global biofuel policies impact on food prices. Secondly, depending on the agricultural structure, trade balances of agricultural and energy goods, as well as the share of rural and urban population, changes in food prices have contradicting impacts on an economy and people.

This workshop aims especially at those researchers/participants, which are analysing the relationship between sustainable food and sustainable energy production systems.

Focus will be, in accordance to the symposium title, to identify new or modified organisational as well as production frameworks which hold the potential to combine food and energy production in a sustainable manner, be it in small-scale farming or in large-scale investments. Furthermore, the changing role of agriculture via the respective developments will be focus of the workshop as these issues do, especially in developed countries, determine

the acceptance of bioenergy feedstock production. Due to the specific organisers' area of expertise, projects analysing the economic performance of bioenergy systems are especially welcome.

The convenours will gather scientists from a broad variety of disciplines and research approaches to discuss suitable options for further development and to identify related research gaps.

Workshop method and organisation:

Oral presentations. Depending on the number and research objectives of the participants will the sessions either be split in two modules (e.g. developing countries and developed countries) or only one module will be realised. Initially, one slot should be reserved for general remarks about what to aim for and which questions do discuss as well as a last slot for general discussions about the topic. Hypothetically the overarching results might be combined in a peer-reviewed article.

What can the participant expect?

In the context of this workshop, (systemic) approaches both from developed and developing countries as well as examples from small- and large-scale projects will be presented. Based on on-the-ground research in Europe, Africa, Brazil, the two leading institutions (ZALF & IfW) will use their extensive networks to gather high-ranking researchers working on food as well as energy issues. Generally, good practice examples as well as promising system approaches should be focussed upon.