biofuture platform

Kickstarting a global, advanced bioeconomy

Information Document and
Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: November 2, 2016

- **There is an urgent need for a sustainable, immediately scalable solution to reduce carbon emissions in the transport sector.** Transportation is the sector that has so far been one of the most challenging for mitigation, and it accounts for around 23% of the world's energy-related greenhouse gas emissions according to the IPCC.
- **Recent industrial and technological advancements have offered viable, diverse, sustainable pathways for both low carbon transport fuels and advanced bioproducts and green chemistry.** In several countries, projects based on some of those pathways, such as cellulosic, or second generation, ethanol, have recently reached or are about to reach commercial scale. Green diesel, drop-in fuels, algae and advanced aviation biofuels are among several other promising technologies that are leaving the lab and beginning to take the roads and skies.
- **Cellulosic and other advanced low carbon fuels are an excellent way to reduce carbon emissions.** Several independent assessments have indicated an up to 90% reduction in CO2 emissions for cellulosic biofuels, when compared to those of gasoline.
- **Since they can be blended with gasoline in significant proportions without any engine or infrastructure changes**, advanced low carbon fuels can provide a scalable and immediate low-carbon solution for a world in urgent need of them.
- **Cellulosic and other advanced low carbon fuels can be produced with no additional land and water resources,** because they use agricultural residues and waste as feedstock, and greatly increase productivity per hectare of any crop. Advanced biofuels can increase income in rural areas and bring down the cost of food by increasing productivity in the field.

- **We need to move towards implementing a vision for a modern, sustainable bioeconomy.** Future bio-refineries will be able to convert residues and waste into fuels, electricity, chemicals and pharmaceutical ingredients – like today's petrochemical refineries, but smaller, greener and more sustainable.
- **Realizing the full potential of this new bioeconomy and scaling up 2nd generation and other low carbon advanced fuels will, however, require perseverance and appropriate policies.** Creating an enabling policy environment will be critical to attract sufficient investments.
- **An International Platform for Advanced Low-carbon Fuels and Biorefining can promote international collaboration and dialogue** between policy makers, industry, academia and other stakeholders. The initiative would discuss and share lessons on the piloting and implementation of consistent and stable policies and investment facilitation for an advanced bioeconomy at national and global levels.
- **Under clear, national ownership by the governments of leading countries, this Biofuture Platform** could help to fulfill the social and economic potential of cellulosic and other advanced biofuels and the new bioeconomy, and promote the recognition of their unique climate and environmental benefits.
- **Operating on a voluntary basis and with no need for binding international commitments,** countries collaborating within a flexible, dynamic Biofuture Platform can:
    - **Promote international collaboration, dialogue and share best practices** between policy makers, industry, academia and other stakeholders.
    - **Help to facilitate an enabling environment for advanced low-carbon fuel and bioeconomy-related investments.**
    - **Raise awareness and share analysis** about research and development activities and needs, as well as about the current status, potential, and advantages of low-carbon fuels and other advanced bioeconomy developments.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Biofuture Platform?

- **What is the Biofuture Platform?** The Biofuture Platform aims to be an action-oriented, country-led, multistakeholder mechanism for policy dialogue and collaboration among leading countries, organizations, academia and the private sector conscious of the need to accelerate development and scale up deployment of modern sustainable low carbon alternatives to fossil based solutions in transport, chemicals, plastics and other sectors.
- **What drives the Biofuture Platform?** The ultimate purpose of the Biofuture Platform is to help in the global fight against climate change, nurturing solutions in low carbon transport and the bioeconomy that can aid countries to reach their Nationally Determined Contribution targets (NDCs), as well as to contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDGs 7 (sustainable energy), and 13 (action against climate change), while also contributing to SDGs 8 (economic growth and decent work), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 2 (sustainable agriculture and zero hunger) and 15 (forests and ecosystems).
- **When will it be launched?** The Biofuture Platform will be launched during a special event in November 16th, in Marrakesh, Morocco, as part of the Global Climate Action Agenda of the 22nd Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP-22).
- **Who is driving the Biofuture platform proposal?** The Biofuture Platform has been proposed by the government of Brazil to several leading countries in all five continents. Since its inception, however, the Biofuture Platform will be driven and implemented according to simple and commonly agreed procedures and principles to be defined by all of its members together.
- **Is it to be a new organization?** Definitely NOT. The Biofuture Platform is to be a country-led, country-driven mechanism, and as such will be conducted mainly by its member countries, which shall agree on and implement a focused work plan by means of light and simple procedures. It will NOT have a headquarters, a director-general, or a large staff driving its own agenda.
- **Which countries are participating?** The initiative aims to bring together a relatively limited but strong group of like-minded countries which are either already leaders in the new advanced bioeconomy or interested in its development. Among the countries which have already stated their intention to participate as founding members are Brazil, China,

Denmark, Egypt, Finland, India, Italy, Morocco, Paraguay, Sweden, and Uruguay. Other countries which have considered the proposal and communicated their positive reception to it are Argentina, France, Indonesia, Mozambique, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Thailand, among others.

- **What is expected of participating countries?** Since the Biofuture Platform is to be a mechanism for international collaboration, and not a new organization, no binding commitments, financial or otherwise, are required from member countries and partners, and no signing of any instruments. Requirements are just the will to participate and engage, according to the broad vision outline in the Biofuture launch statement.
- **Will the initiative be open to the participation of other countries?** The Biofuture Platform aims to be a dynamic, action-oriented platform for collaboration among parties interested in scaling up low carbon transport fuels, biorefining and the advanced bioeconomy. As such, there are advantages to keeping the initiative limited to a dynamic group of like-minded countries. Naturally, the Biofuture Platform would be open to the participation of additional countries committed to contribute to its goals, subject to the approval of its founding members.
- **What is the role of the private sector?** As the main drivers of innovation and investments in the emerging advanced bioeconomy, the private sector will be key to the success of the Biofuture Platform and is to be heavily involved in its activities. A number of important industry associations and corporations related to low carbon transport fuels, biotechnology and the bioeconomy are already involved in preliminary discussions about the launch of the Biofuture Platform and are strongly supporting it (see question below about partner organizations).
- **What organizations are currently backing the Biofuture Platform?** No formal support by any organization is being sought until after the launch event. With that said, representatives and officials from several international governmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector have already expressed their interest in contributing to the concrete activities of the Biofuture Platform (see question on potential partners).
- **What kind of actions and initiatives are envisaged under the Biofuture Platform?** The Biofuture Platform work plan must be built and agreed upon by all members, post-launch, based on the goals put forward in the launch statement. The platform itself will serve as an instrument of cooperation and facilitation, and will be technology-neutral. So this page cannot be prescriptive in that regard. With that said, the Biofuture Platform may promote policy dialogue and policy cooperation, awareness raising, and

investment facilitation by means of topic-focused workshops, seminars, webinars, policy roundtables, government-private-academia sector meetings, summary briefings and communiqués, calls to action, business roundtables, and high-profile governmental meetings to highlight important messages, among other actions and tools to be decided by members.

- **How will the Biofuture Platform be financed?** The Biofuture Platform is to be initially driven mainly by the direct efforts and in-kind contributions of willing member governments and partner institutions among international organizations, academia, and the private sector. Any future financing mechanisms would have to be agreed upon jointly by all its country members. In any case, the expectation is that any and all present and future financing shall be exclusively of a voluntary nature.

Why a Biofuture Platform?

- **Why is such a new international platform needed?** While lots of international attention, investment and collaboration have been taking place in the renewable energy field, most of that recent action has been directed to the power sector. While that is welcome and critical, the world needs also to do more for scaling up alternatives to fossil fuels in the transport sector and industry, taking advantage of new, sustainable technologies already in place (see main information brief).

  In light of the fact that low carbon transport fuels are the fastest alternative to reduce the carbon intensity of the transport sector without waiting for fleet and infrastructure changes, the Biofuture Platform aims to help filling that attention gap, promoting policy coordination and raising the issue in the global agenda.

- **Aren't there other organizations and initiatives out there developing work in this space? Why do we need a new mechanism?** Today, there are several associations, initiatives and fora sharing the Biofuture Platform´s goals, sometimes as part of a broader clean energy and climate mandate (see next question). Far from duplicating anything, the Biofuture Platform will provide the best "hub" to bring together the work of those initiatives and bring it to the attention of the policy-makers, drivers and investors from those countries best poised to lead the development of the advanced bioeconomy and ultimately implement the needed policies.

  The Biofuture Platform´s unique added-values are clear country-ownership and a solid, holistic focus on the cross-sectorial nature and needs of the modern bioeconomy, from agriculture to industry, technology, distribution, transport, markets and the environment.

- **What would be those partner organizations of Biofuture?** Biofuture, as a lean, country-led, multistakeholder mechanism, will strive and need to bring together and leverage the work of many partners. Examples follow:
    - development organizations, financial institutions, institutional investors, and international organizations with a mandate relating to energy or biotechnology, such as IRENA, SE4ALL, IEA, IEA Bioenergy, World Bank, IADB, BRICS Development Bank, CAF, UNCTAD, FAO/GBEP, UNDP, UNIDO.
    - private sector and industry representatives acting in the low carbon transport fuels, biotechnology, and bioeconomy-related sectors representing the different links in the value chain, such as the WBCSD, below50, Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB), World Bioenergy Association, ABBI, UNICA, European Biofuels Technology Platform, ePURE, Europabio, ABFA, ABBC.
    - universities, institutes, laboratories and other institutions engaged in R&D, innovation, capacity-building, analysis, industry mapping and related activities in the cellulosic and other advanced low carbon fuels and bioeconomy fields. Examples of core candidates include: CTBE, CTC (Brazil); Tsinghua University (China); EFI (Finland), DBT-ICT (India); ENEA (Italy); UPLB (Philippines), NREL, NBC (US); and countless others.
    - Finally, links and synergies can and should be established between the Biofuture Platform and relevant country-led initiatives with work in clean energy, namely CEM, Mission Innovation, the G-20 ESWG, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and others.

Launch event and participation

- **When and where will be the Biofuture Platform launch event?** The launch event will happen at November the 16th, from 5pm to 6h30pm, in the Morocco Pavilion in the UNFCCC Blue Zone in Marrakesh, Morocco (see programme).
- **Who can participate?** The launch event will be open to the representatives of the founding member countries, as well as select invitees from international organizations, the private sector, civil society and academia. The event will also be attended by the registered press and media.

- **What level of representation is expected?** Brazil will be represented at Ministerial level. Other countries can choose their own level of representation, mindful that the chosen date for the event, during the high-level segment of the COP-22, may facilitate Ministerial or other high-level participation. Ministers will be accorded speaking time at the event if they so wish.
- **What is expected of the launch event?** The Biofuture Platform launch event aims to obtain a clear political mandate from national authorities for them to join efforts in building the initiative together over 2017 and beyond, according to the broad vision outlined in the Biofuture launch statement, to be publicized on the occasion. As previously said, no documents shall be signed during the event, and no binding commitments, financial or otherwise, are required.
- **What about travel logistics?** Each country is expected provide for the cost and logistics of their own participation at the high level launch event for the Biofuture Platform.

Next steps

- **What will be the next steps after the launch event?** After the launch, the next steps shall be agreed among the founding members by means of their designated focal points. The Biofuture Platform shall strive to be lean, fast and efficient, and as such is expected to adopt electronic means of coordination and governance, using the web, e-mail, teleconferences, videoconferences, webinars, and electronic collaboration tools. Physical meetings may also take place from time to time, preferably back-to-back with other international climate and clean-energy related meetings and events that bring together the appropriate stakeholders.