

FOLLOW-UP ACTION PLAN ON THE GREEN AFRICA INITIATIVE

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Background:

A study tour was made to Japan to expose AfDB-funded forestry projects coordinators to GM eucalyptus and other forestry innovations promoted by Prof. Dr. Kazuo Watanabe and Dr. Akira Kikuchi, University of Tsukuba, for combating deforestation and land degradation. This is the all Japan effort together with Japanese partners such as Nippon Paper Co., LTD. and Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology supported by various sponsors such as NEDO under METI and JSPS Grant-In-Aid & RFTF under MEXT.

This initiative is the outcome of consultations between OSAN (Agriculture and Agro-industry Department) and ORRU (Partnerships Unit) at the African Development Bank and Tsukuba University which commenced in June 2009. A short write up on the Bank's forestry portfolio was then prepared and subsequently used to guide further discussions. More information on the GM eucalyptus developed by Tsukuba University was also received and a way forward was agreed upon.

The government of Japan launched the Green Africa Initiative (GAI) in Lecce (Italy) on 13th June 2009. This activity is anchored on this initiative and focuses on addressing desertification and land degradation issues especially in the dry and degraded areas of Africa. The Bank and Tsukuba University signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote partnerships in higher education, science and technology at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in May 2008, and the proposed activity also fits within this framework

Within the Bank's sectoral areas, the improved technology targets agriculture, rural development and environment where forestry is a key

pillar in addressing sustainable development needs in Regional Member Countries (RMCs).

Rationale:

The main technology being considered for transfer to RMCs in this initiative is eucalyptus trees that are drought and salinity resistant. Countries interested in the technology will be facilitated to undertake pilot plantation programmes to address various environmental and biomass needs. The trees are fast growing and can be used for a variety of wood products such as firewood, charcoal, and pulp among others. These products are in great demand in many of the countries. The Tsukuba University laboratories have also produced elite non-GM eucalyptus and other species that the RMCs can consider for use. The study tour sought to enhance the participants' understanding of the technology.

II. OBJECTIVE, ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The primary objective of the tour was to expose senior forestry officers who are already working on Bank funded forestry projects to cutting edge technology that may potentially be of great environmental and economic value to their countries.

It is however appreciated that various issues surrounding genetically modified plant materials are still generating debate in many countries especially due to limited access to information and lack of appropriate policies, guidelines and safeguards. In this regard, representatives of RMCs were exposed to the technology and this has initiated dialogue that will lead to more comprehensive feasibility assessments by individual countries with support from Japan.

Feasibility studies will be prepared by Tsukuba University staff who have significant experience in GM forestry technology in partnership with the interested countries. The specific activities proposed are as follows:

- (i) Forestry projects coordinators visit Tsukuba University and its partners to learn from the laboratories and get further information on the nature of the GM eucalyptus and other plant materials
- (ii) With the inputs of participants, 2-3 potential candidates for feasibility studies will be identified
- (iii) Tsukuba University staff will visit the identified candidates to undertake feasibility studies for up to 3 months
- (iv) Start pilot planting in the identified project sites after consultations with the interested RMCs
- (v) Tsukuba University consultants come to the Bank to help make a GM policy, guidelines and safeguards.
- (vi) Tsukuba University staff sensitize Bank staff on the technology

Expected outcomes from this activity include: (i) Enhanced environmental and economic benefits in the RMCs arising from the adoption of the improved technology, (ii) Enhanced institutional capacities in RMC forestry institutions to analyze and implement the new technology, and (iii) Global environmental benefits including carbon sequestration, reduced desertification, and soil conservation among others.

III. BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries from the proposed activity include the following:

- Forestry management agencies considering using improved eucalyptus for afforestation and reforestation especially in the drylands of Africa
- Policy makers will better understand how to take advantage of new technology while also ensuring there are sufficient safeguards against any unintended consequences
- The Bank's capacities in programmes where this technology is applicable will be enhanced through the development of a GM policy, guidelines and safeguards.

- Local communities that participate in the planting will benefit from increased wood products and land rehabilitation.
- The society at large will benefit from environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, soil conservation, and reduced desertification.

IV. FOLLOW-UP PLANS AFTER AFDB DELEGATION VISIT TO TSUKUBA

The following items were agreed on by the delegation:

1. The Japanese delegation will make three trips to Africa for a Feasibility Study (FS)

- First visit: Kenya and Rwanda: January, 2010
- Second visit: Benin • Ghana: Feb-Mar, 2010
- Third visit: • Tunis(AfDB):May or June, 2010

2. Points to consider for FS field trips include:

(i) Environmental Problems

- Coastal salt (increasing salinization of coastal soils), arable land decrease
- Inland Desertification
- Natural forest loss/afforestation needs

(ii) Forestry status

- Agroforestry
- Commercial planting for international industry
- Public – private interactions and governance

(iii) Plant genetic resources

- Genetic resources conservation at ex situ conservation
- Collaboration with Genebanks/botanical gardens -> such as Bioversity International and ICRAF
- Halophytes (salt tolerant plants-> drought tolerant

(iv) Ecology/Biodiversity

- Domestic/traditional species status
- Invasive species: identification and evaluation

(v) Incidences/ forest protection challenges

- Fires
- Termites

(vi) Technology availability

- Biotechnology applicability (tissue culture, GM etc)
- Forestry-agricultural waste/biomass recycling
- Energy
 - Basic fuelwood
 - Biofuel
- Basic regulatory frame work of technology application especially on safety issues

(vii) Research

- Human resources
- Biotechnology including biosafety
- Forestry research support

(viii) Extension

- Extension capacity (including human resources/manpower)

(ix) Community

- Income generation / community chain development

(x) Human resources development

- Grassroot education
- Formal education
- Environmental education /education for sustainable development
- Graduate level education
- Specialized training for scientists

(xi) Awareness raising

- Advice to policy makers

(xii) Partnerships

- Networking within Africa and over different regions (e.g. south-south)
- Partnerships among African institutions and Japanese ones

3. AfDB delegation members : Immediately after return from Japan

- (i) AfDB letter to Japan, copy to projects/countries
- (ii) Support letters (for the initiative) from the countries
(Minister of Finance, copy to Minister of Environment and /or Forestry, Project Coordinators)
- (iii) Draft agenda and program for Japanese delegation
- (iv) Local coordination to meet with stakeholders for Japanese visitors.
- (v) Project Coordinators to identify JICA/Japan embassy contacts in their countries
- (vi) A concept note to be prepared by each country ahead of the visits by Japanese delegation for FS field trips (detailing what they would like to do)
- (vii) Joint decision on the way forward to be made after completion of the feasibility study.

V. INDICATORS FOR MEASURING RESULTS

The key results indicators include the following:

- (i) Eight (8) Forestry project coordinators and two Bank representatives successfully participate in the study tour to Tsukuba University
- (ii) One mission report prepared by the Bank's representatives on the tour
- (iii) One report prepared by Tsukuba University indicating agreed follow up action plans with the countries
- (iv) Feedback from project coordinators after briefing and consulting their governments
- (v) 2-3 feasibility studies completed within 3 months after the trip, and used to develop a pilot project on applicability of various technology including biotech tree planting.
- (vi) Bank GM policy, guidelines and safeguards developed with expertise from Tsukuba University
- (vii) One seminar for Bank staff presented by Tsukuba University

The key benefits to recipient RMCs will be in terms of knowledge transfer and the economic and environmental benefits derived from new

planting programmes.