



Ministry of Mines, Energy & Water of Mali

In cooperation with



MFC (Mali-Folkecenter)

present

A Regional Conference: JATROPHA AS A TOOL TO COMBAT ENERGY POVERTY IN AFRICA

Bamako, 16-17 January 2006

Context

There is increasing global recognition of the central role of energy in underpinning efforts to improve the lives of the poor people in developing countries and hence achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Results of major global conferences that include the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (August 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa), and the Bonn International Conference on Renewable Energies (June 2004, Bonn Germany), Energy for Development Conference (Netherlands, December 2004) have confirmed the need to increase access to adequate, affordable, reliable, safe and environmentally benign energy services.



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The energy situation in Africa is seriously disappointing, and trends over the past half-century do not indicate any significant shifts from the current situation. However, Africa has huge natural resources which are largely un-capitalised and could be a sustainable source of energy services to allow sustained economic growth.



Recently, with increasing fossil fuel prices, the possibility for locally produced biofuels as a source of energy has moved into the limelight. Therefore many developing countries are engaged to make maximum use of their potential of oil bearing plants, including Jatropha.

Jatropha grows easily in the Sahel and semi desert region and protects soils against erosion. Jatropha seed can be pressed to produce inedible oil which can be used as an alternative fuel to diesel in stationary engines, in the transportation sector, and for the generation of electricity. It can also be used for the production of soap.

Thus, Jatropha oil can be used as a fuel to combat energy poverty and generate income for rural people while simultaneously protecting the environment. Net CO₂ emissions are zero. Use of locally produced Jatropha oil could potentially have a huge positive socio-economic impact for countries in the region, especially those which are landlocked and highly dependent on increasingly expensive fossil fuel imports.



This conference is being organised by the Ministry of Mines, Energy & Water in cooperation with MFC (Mali-Folkecenter). It will bring together for the first time in the region all stakeholders including governments, decision-makers, civil society, private sector, development partners, and Financial Institutions. It will give the possibility to share knowledge and information about Jatropha achievements to date, as well as perspectives for the future.