BiomassWeb

Improving food security in Africa through increased system productivity of biomass-based value webs

Project Director
Dr. Manfred Denich

Project Coordinators at ZEF
Dr. Tina Beuchelt and Dr. Christine Schmitt

Regional Coordinator at FARA
Dady Demby
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
Accra-Ghana

Phone: +233 302 774838; +233 302 744888
Email: ddemby@faraafrica.org

BiomassWeb Project Office
Jelana Vajen
Center for Development Research (ZEF)
University of Bonn
Walter-Flex-Str. 3
D-53113 Bonn

Phone: +49 228 73 4972
Email: biomassweb@uni-bonn.de
www.biomassweb.org

Partners

- CONSIDEO GmbH
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- ETC Foundation
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- Environment and Coffee Forest Forum (ECFF), Ethiopia
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Contact

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Increasing global demand for food, animal feed, fuel, and fiber crops has increased pressure on the agricultural sector and food production, especially in Africa. Concepts to increase food security while attending growing demands for non-food biomass are still in their infant stages.

BiomassWeb aims at contributing to food security in Sub-Saharan Africa by focusing on biomass-based value webs and innovations in the agricultural sector.

With BiomassWeb, we aim to provide concepts to increase availability of and access to food in Sub-Saharan Africa through more and higher-value biomass for food and non-food purposes in the next decades. We identify biomass-based value webs and study selected entry points to increase the overall system productivity. We are seeking exemplary agronomic, technological and institutional innovations in production, processing, and utilization of biomass-based goods.

Our concept is based on innovation system approaches, stakeholder participation, demand-driven research and development activities.

Our research is organized in seven research clusters (RCs), which are structured in three thematic areas:

**Analysis**: the analysis of biomass demand, supply and related value webs (RCs 1 to 3)

**Innovations**: research innovations in production systems, post-harvest technologies and institutional innovations (RCs 4 to 6), and

**Implementation**: the implementation of findings through joint learning and transition management (RC 7).

**Biomass-based value webs**

are complex systems of interlinked value chains in which food and fodder, fuels, and other raw materials are produced, processed, and traded.

**Project outputs**

BiomassWeb will have three major outputs:

1. specific recommendations for the crops and countries that are being studied as 'model' webs;
2. methods, tools, and regional biomass resource experts to address future biomass challenges;
3. a pan-African network which serves as a stakeholder platform in the biomass sector.

**Project region and focus crops**

Our research focuses on the productive Sudanian savanna belt (Ghana, Nigeria) and the East African highlands (Ethiopia). Specific exemplary ‘model’ value webs will be studied based on cassava, maize, banana/plantain/enset and biomass derived from natural vegetation and agroforestry systems.