

1st Coordinated Call for a Transnational Research Activity under the ERA-ARD Net

Bioenergy – an opportunity or threat for the rural poor

Project Title:

**Bioenergy in Africa and Central America – Opportunities and Risks of *Jatropha*
and Related Crops**

Project Summary:

The main objective of the project is an enhanced information and knowledge basis upon which sustainable and pro-poor development strategies and policies on biofuel production can be designed and implemented by development partners and governments in both the North and the South. A focus on *Jatropha curcas* was chosen, as this feedstock is considered to have high potentials in marginal areas, and because a strong increase of its production is expected in Eastern Africa. The project intends to assess opportunities and threats of increasing *Jatropha* production, appraise its social and environmental impacts, and develop decision-support tools for sustainable bioenergy production in Eastern Africa. In order to achieve these goals, four complementary work packages will be implemented by the project partner institutions:

1. **Crop growth and processing:** Assessment of sustainable bioenergy production potentials and processing of *Jatropha* biomass in different production systems and under different environmental and cultural settings
2. **Impacts of biofuel production:** Case-study based research on the socio-economic and environmental impacts of biofuel production in the local context
3. **Global policy, trade and certification:** Analysis of the influence of external socio-political and economic decision-making processes on the regional and local biofuel production processes in Eastern Africa and Central America
4. **Potentials of biofuel in Eastern Africa:** Up-scaling of finding from the three other work packages in view of providing relevant decision-making and planning tools at the national and regional levels in Eastern Africa.

Start date:

June 1st 2009

Duration:

3 years



Research Coordinator:

Albrecht Ehrensperger

Tel.: +41 (0)31 631 54 58

Fax: +41 (0)31 631 85 44

Email: albrecht.ehrensperger@cde.unibe.ch

Website: www.cde.unibe.ch

Partners:

- Swiss Federal Laboratories for Material Testing and Research (EMPA), Dübendorf, Switzerland
- Plant Research International (PRI), University of Wageningen, The Netherlands
- Austrian Bioenergy Centre (ABC) GmbH, Wieselburg, Austria
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI), London, United Kingdom
- Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
- Haramaya University, Dire Dawa, Ethiopia
- Centre for Training and Integrated Research in ASAL Development (CETRAD), Nanyuki, Kenya
- Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Morogoro, Tanzania
- Universidad Autónoma Chapingo (UACH), Chapingo, México
- Galen University - Applied Research and Development for Sustainability Institute (GUARD), San Ignacio, Belize
- Tropical Studies and Development Foundation (TSDF), Belmopan, Belize