

Editorial

Dear All,

Welcome to this issue of JointMAG, which deals with questions of new sources of energy in the face of climate change. We feature an article on renewable energy cooperation from Dennis and a contribution from Henner Busch on biofuels, an expert in environmental studies who attended the recent Climate Summit in Copenhagen. Also, you will find some more Go Africa... Go Germany news below and of course a new alumni profile. We wish you a Happy New Year and hope that the Go Africa... Go Germany network will grow further in 2010.

Best,

Dennis Kumetat and Linda Poppe

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*Call for Contributions to the April
Issue of JointMAG*

From the Off: Went Africa, Went Germany

In April we would like to reflect a little on the Go Germany, Go Africa Programme. Please sent us your impressions, stories, anecdotes and pictures from the exchange or post-exchange events and we will publish them in an all-alumni issue! Please contact one of the editors personally or via [go_africa_go_germany\(at\)yahoogroups.de](mailto:go_africa_go_germany(at)yahoogroups.de). We welcome any suggestions until March 15, 2010.

JOINTM

Africa

Germany

(Bio) Fuels

by Henner Busch, Germany

Despite the great expectations, the COP-15 climate conference in Copenhagen last month must be considered a failure. But these conferences are more than a mere gathering of world leaders. Several thousand scientists, civil society activists and business representatives, as well as journalists were accredited, too. A multitude of so-called "side-events" offered the opportunity to get an insight into the latest research and developments in the field of climate change.

A particularly interesting event was hosted by the Brazilian delegation. Here, the latest technologies for the production of bio-ethanol were presented. Bio-ethanol is an alcohol that can easily be produced through fermentation from a great variety of plants. The production process is rather simple and it requires only small investments. Many developed countries in the North hope to meet their fuel requirements by importing bio-ethanol from countries where agricultural land can be found in abundance and where labor is cheap – as it seems to be the case for many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and South America. Many questions about fuel-security and the ability of developing countries to reliably deliver the fuel were raised in the discussion following the presentation.

However, the conference in Copenhagen was very much shaped by the self-assertive stance the BRIC-countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) took. Consequently it was a delegate of the Brazilian delegation who put the entire discussion into perspective by pointing at the enormous opportunities bio-ethanol offers to improve the situation in developing countries through domestic use: As alternative cooking-fuel or for local off-grid electricity production. Only if dire local resource needs are respected and served first a trade cooperation of equal partners can evolve. Let us hope that bio-ethanol can live up to these high expectations.

Info: Bio-fuels

Bio-fuels might be the solution to a number of problems. They are a renewable source of energy, can be produced in a climate-neutral way and promise to have a high potential for a sustainable expansion of the agriculture industry. At the same time they are easy to produce and emit fewer pollutants when burned. To mitigate climate change gasoline already has to be blended

The Past and Coming Months in Short

The Go Africa ... Go Germany Association had its constitutional meeting in Berlin in Fall 2009. Preparations are now on the way to establish a working structure and use the association to put the network to work // Katja Böhler had the honor to present the past, present and future developments of the programme to the German Federal President Köhler in November 2009. He is still very supportive of the programme // A Go Africa...Go Germany Network Meeting is on the way and going to take place in June 2010. Contact Miriam for details. The meeting aims at collecting ideas and giving new and concrete input to the network. Start thinking of what you want this programme to develop into! // The call for the 4th generation is out. Once selected they will have their preparatory meeting in Potsdam in June 2010. If you are around and would like to join, let the bpb know // More to come...

with a certain share of bio-fuels in many countries (EU standard: 5.75 % for bio-diesel within this year).

Despite its advantages a number of potential disadvantages have to be observed. The climate-footprint of bio-fuels can even be negative if radical changes in the land-use patterns are implemented and if potential emissions from fertilizer usage (mainly nitrous-oxide) are taken into account. In some South-East Asian countries palm-oil plantations are established on the expense of tropical rainforest. Especially in Indonesia huge areas of rainforest are destroyed by slash and burn techniques. This does not only destroy an ecosystem with an abundantly rich biodiversity but it also emits enormous amounts of CO₂. By producing bio-fuels, food and fuel become competitors for the resource land. The major disruptions of the 2008 food crisis can be traced back to crop changes caused by high subsidies of bio-fuels which in turn caused the strong global increase in staple food prices. Large-scale mono-cropping brings about several negative aspects. The current development of land-grab in many African and central Asian states might be due to plans to expand the bio-fuel production. Often, as is the case in Brazil and Indonesia, indigenous peoples are threatened and forced of their land. Independent peasants are displaced, forced to less profitable plantation work or become subject to exploitation. Finally, there is a larger conceptual question to be discussed: are the transport needs of citizens of developed countries sustainable? Indeed, this can be seen as the core of the problem as such. A constant supply of bio-fuels will certainly not help Western states question their own transport needs and lead into a more sustainable future.

Scholarship Holder Profiles

Interview with Alia Jakoby, Germany

by Benjamin Zasche, Germany

Benni: Hi Alia! Would you please introduce yourself to our readers? Who is Alia Jakoby?

Alia: Hi, I am 24 years old and a participant of the second generation of GoAfrica...GoGermany. In 2008 I completed my Bachelor in "Applied African Studies" in Bayreuth, Germany. Currently I am doing my master in sociology in Bielefeld. My fields of specialization are "Transnation-alisation and Development" and "Sociology of Media, Public Relations and Political Communication". Last summer I had the chance to spend some time in Ghana for field work research, where I explored the role of mobility in the life and work of artists.

Benni: From your perspective as a graduate of Applied African Studies, how do you see the outcome of the Copenhagen Climate Summit?

Alia: The summit was held to agree on a limitation of global CO₂ emissions and to advance collective action along ecological standards. Especially the industrial states have failed to make a step towards a



common global agreement with strict guidelines to responsible action. Instead, the minimal consensus based on a vague commitment shows that the International Community is not yet willing to work on a common agenda that would be in the interest of all people. It became obvious that powerful countries like the USA and China care more about maintaining their political and economic power than to consider supporting countries with fewer capacities to fight climate change. Many countries fear to lose economic competitiveness by spending too much on ecological issues. But especially in industrialized countries the knowledge and technology are available and this should be incentive enough to foster ecological solutions that could create economic advantages in both the industrialised and less developed countries.

Benni: During a conference held in June 2009 in Essen, climate scientists discussed the need of a "great transformation" in order to face global warming. One of their concerns is that "democratic regimes are not well prepared for the level of participation that is required". They consider that authoritarian regimes might "possibly be better placed to enforce the necessary measures". A concession to dictators worldwide?

Alia: With the scientists' statement, authoritarian regimes get a reputation they do not deserve. As far as I see it, authoritarian regimes are not the ones that consider the wellbeing of their own people nor the wellbeing of the planet's population, to be their key political agenda. I think it is not the question whether authoritarian regimes could better enforce the necessary measures, but how democratic regimes could implement important changes more efficiently. It should not be the question if democracy is the right form of governance, but how goals are formulated and what is done to accomplish them. So it is about successful coordination of the different actors (states, international organisations, lobby groups), strong cooperation on an international level and effective management that needs to jump the bureaucratic machinery of democratic systems. Therefore, a binding agreement and clear measures of implementation would have been important to produce a common line in climate politics and a step towards successful global governance.

Benni: What are your prospects for the future of the Go Africa...Go Germany network?

Alia: In my opinion, the network is a good basis for personal and also professional contacts, where each of us can contribute to and profit from a wide range of topics and activities. I think there are so many interesting people in the three generations, with various backgrounds, different fields of interests and knowledge so that there is a great potential within the network. It would be fruitful to have regular meetings where we could exchange ideas, discuss further goals and work on a common outcome and it would make sense to institutionalise the network along the idea of equal partnership. I also think, that it would be a good idea to extend the German-African network on a European-African level.

Transcontinental Renewable Energy Cooperation – a Blessing for (North) Africa?

by Dennis Kumetat, UK

In the course of the sustainability debate, many researchers have focused on the enormous renewable energy (RE) potentials that the North African and the Gulf states possess. Connected by a trans-continental power grid, studies of the German Aerospace Center (DLR) and others have argued, large-scale concentrated solar power (CSP) and wind energy production in North Africa could supply substantial shares of the future European energy demand. Africa

offers itself as a potential location of large-scale power production also due to only negligible problems with conflicting land use in the deserts. Also, the rapidly growing North African energy demand could be supplied through these projects.

On a European level, efforts are coordinated by the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RECREE, Cairo) and by the Mediterranean Solar Plan, a policy instrument that has been established through the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). It is currently in a two-year long pilot phase that will result in a sequence of pilot projects for the integration of renewable energies into the national grid systems as well as policy programmes for energy

efficiency. Parallel to that, it will produce a major study characterizing potential sites for RE production and identifying policies to make the goals of a 20 GW renewable energy production on the southern shores of the Mediterranean by 2020 a reality. By February 2009, 130 projects that will be evaluated and selected for integration and realization within the UfM have been proposed.

Structurally, the import of power generated through renewables into the European Union has been facilitated through the recent EU renewable energy directive. Article 9 stipulates that energy produced outside of the EU can be financially supported through laws promoting renewable energies as long as this energy export does not lower the previous RE quota of the country of origin. Also, this power can be added to the respective countries' quotas for renewable energy power production and their carbon budgets. In the broader context, these efforts need to be seen as part of the agenda of developing a diversified European energy supply strategy. On September 17, 2009, this was the subject of a debate in the European Parliament. EU Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs and several MEPs reiterated the need for the development of a robust EU energy supply structure. While the Nabucco pipeline from Turkey to Austria will enhance energy security for the supply of fossil fuels, the gird interconnection with North Africa will – assisted by the commercial incentive of the new renewable energy directive – further diversify the EU's energy supply.

Next to the plans on EU level, industry has begun to promote the construction of large-scale renewable energy power plants in North Africa, too. On October 30, 2009, ABB, Abengoa Solar, DESERTEC Foundation, Deutsche Bank, E.ON, HSH Nordbank, MAN Solar Millennium, Munich Re,



(c) DESERTEC Foundation

M+W Zander, RWE, SCHOTT Solar und Siemens and the Algerian company Cevital, (so far, the only North African partner)

registered the DESERTEC Industrial Initiative (DII) as a limited company in order to fast-track RE-based power production in North Africa. DII's first managing director will be Paul von Son, a senior manager who has served as a CEO in various energy-related European corporations. The DII has announced it expects costs of 400€bn which it is willing to invest over the next 20 years.

That being said, it is striking that these plans – although highly relevant for North African industry and policy makers – have largely been developed without local researchers. In many ways, they subscribe to a strongly Eurocentric view of matters in terms of their agenda as well as in the disregard shown to the "host" countries of the Maghreb themselves. Many studies show a limited insight into the political and economic realities of North African countries reducing the entire regional governance aspect to mere technicalities. At the point of writing, researchers of the German Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy are cooperating with the Algerian Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée pour le Développement (CREAD) on a joint project to shed light on the Algerian conditions of success for these projects. It is hoped that such a joint study will help sorting out the intricate issues such as technology transfer, finances and grid connections in a mutually beneficial way. Only if this is the case, an overall success of these ambitious projects can be expected.

Miscellaneous

Call for Applications

Cultural Diplomacy in Africa: A Forum for Young Leaders (CDA). Africa and the Global Economy: Creating Opportunities and Development Strategies (Berlin, 17th – 23rd January 2010) and "The Rise of Africa": An International Conference on New Strategies and Approaches to Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa (Berlin, 21st – 23rd January 2010). Under the Patronage of the Hon. Sir James Mancham, KBE, Founding President of the Republic of the Seychelles. [More...](#)

The Needs of the Others

An Article in the German newspaper taz on a project of the Goethe Institute in sub-Saharan Africa intended to connect cultural projects on the continent. Only available in German (but you may try to translate via google). [More...](#)

Call for Papers Go Africa...Go Germany 2010/11

The Go Africa...Go Germany programme is heading into its fourth year with a new call for papers. Spread the [word...](#)