



An assessment of the potential for the development of bioenergy in Nigeria

E. Uyigüe and M. Agho

Community Research and Development Centre, 248 Ugbowo-Lagos Road, P. O. Box 11011, Benin City, Nigeria. credcsecretariat@yahoo.com

After 35 years of oil production in Nigeria, with huge earnings from it, the level of development is not commensurate with the earnings from oil. Irrespective of Nigeria's position as the sixth largest petroleum oil exporter and a leading gas exporter, the nation suffers enormous energy crisis manifesting in various forms. About 60 - 70 % of the nation's population are excluded from the national electricity grid and petroleum products is epileptic in supply. In the mist of this "energy crisis", sustainable development in Nigeria can only be achieved by replacing the traditional sources of energy with renewable energy sources. The country is blessed with numerous renewable energy source sources that could be harnessed for development. The potential for bioenergies development is high. Nigeria has all the vegetational regions of West Africa except that of the desert, which include the forest zone, the swamps, a variety of savannah lands and the mountain vegetation. Agriculture is the dominant economic activity, which contributes 41% of Nigeria's GDP and employs the highest labour in Nigeria. Roughly 75 percent (74 million hectares) of Nigeria's total land (98 million hectares) is arable and about 40 percent of this is cultivated, leaving the remaining 60% of arable land idle. Nigeria's farmland is cultivable and would have medium to good productivity if properly managed. Policy, institutional and technological approach is inevitable to harness bioenergy potential in Nigeria.