



UNCTAD TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT PROJECT
ON ENERGY AND AGRICULTURE

MIEI-UNCTAD National Validation Workshop on Technology Assessment of Agrivoltaics for Controlled-environment Crop Production

Concept Note (draft)

5-8 March 2024

Eden Bleu Hotel, Eden Island, NA Seychelles Eden Bridge, Seychelles

Introduction

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has a project promoting technology assessment (TA) in the energy and agricultural sectors in Africa. TA can become a powerful tool for making strategic choices about the procurement, development, introduction, and governance of new technologies. It entails critical and participatory evaluation of the social, economic and environmental benefits and risks of a particular technology. The UNCTAD project will seek to strengthen the capacities of science, technology and innovation policymakers and other stakeholders in sub-Saharan Africa, and to propose policies and mechanisms to support the learning, diffusion and adoption of technologies in the energy and agricultural sectors.

In Seychelles, following a comprehensive review of national development plans and the technological landscape, it has been decided that the focus of the TA will be on agrivoltaics for controlled-environment crop production. This technology combines, on the one hand, the simultaneous use of land for both agriculture and photovoltaic power generation and, on the other hand, the cultivation of crops in total isolation from the external environment. This technology holds a strong potential to ensure the availability of freshly grown vegetable crops throughout the year.

In July and August 2023, various focus group discussions took place to ensure a participatory and inclusive approach of the TA. These engagements gathered valuable perspectives from various stakeholders such as government representatives, regulatory bodies, academia, the private sector, and civil society.

Following the focus group discussions, the collected data underwent thorough analysis. The insights derived from this analysis and the resulting policy recommendations have been incorporated into a comprehensive TA Report, which also outlines the research carried out in the previous months. Additionally, a draft Action Plan is currently being formulated to delineate the measures and activities that stakeholders are expected to undertake over different time periods.

A crucial step in finalising this endeavour is to validate the findings and recommendations of the TA Report and proposed Action Plan. Recognising the significance of stakeholder input in this validation process, the Ministry of Investment, Entrepreneurship & Industry (MIEI), in collaboration with UNCTAD, is organizing a joint national validation workshop. This workshop is designed to provide stakeholders with a platform to offer feedback on the TA Report and Action Plan and validate them before they are finalised and launched.

In addition to the TA Report and Action Plan, upon request from the Seychelles, a Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) Review with focus on innovation system has been concluded to offer an improved understanding of the relevant policy, systemic challenges and possible solutions for the country. The STIP Review was concluded in 2023, and the report will be launched following the launch of the TA report.

The week-long workshop is structured into four main sessions:

1. Validation Session. Stakeholders will be provided with a platform to offer comments and suggestions on the proposed TA Report and Action Plan.
2. Revision Session. Following the validation session, the UNCTAD staff, along with a team of local and international consultants, will revise the TA Report and Action Plan.
3. Launch of TA Report and Action Plan. The revised TA Report and Action Plan will be launched.
4. Launch of STIP Review. Finally, there will be a launch session of the STIP Review report.

Participation

The workshop targets government officials, officials from regulating agencies and public utility companies, representatives of academic and research institutions, representative from the civil society, and representatives from the private sector. Stakeholders based outside of the capital city are particularly welcome.

Relevant local staff of the TA project and two representatives of the UNCTAD team will also participate in-person.

Format

The workshop is scheduled to take place at Eden Bleu Hotel, Eden Island, NA Seychelles Eden Bridge, on 5-8 March 2024, according to the following structure:

- Morning of Tuesday, 5 March - Presentation and feedback on the TA Report.
- Afternoon of Tuesday, 5 March - Presentation and feedback on the Action Plan.
- Wednesday, 6 March - Internal Revision of the TA Report and Action Plan.
- Morning of Thursday 7 March - Launch of the TA Report and Action Plan.
- Morning of Friday, 8 March – Launch of the STI Policy Review.

More information regarding the agenda can be obtained at the following link:

<https://unctad.org/meeting/unctad-technology-assessment-national-validation-workshop-seychelles>

Objectives

The validation workshop is geared towards achieving two key objectives. First, it aims to produce a conclusive TA Report that provides a rigorous analysis of the potential benefits and challenges associated with the adoption of agrivoltaics for controlled-environment crop production in Seychelles within the context of the country's development priorities, while also including the feedback received from stakeholders.

Second, the workshop seeks to formulate an Action Plan for the adoption and diffusion of agrivoltaics for controlled-environment crop production that is not only effective but that is also informed by the

feedback received from stakeholders and reflects their interests and concerns. The intention is to create a practical and actionable plan that can be implemented successfully, taking into account the insights and concerns of those directly involved in or impacted by this technology.

Contacts

For any queries, please contact: Mr. Matteo Ramina, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD, matteo.ramina@unctad.org.