



## HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON BIOECONOMY IN BURUNDI AND EAST AFRICA

Theme: “National Bioeconomy Strategies: Paving the Future Growth Path for Eastern Africa”

Bujumbura-Burundi, Kiriri Garden Hotel, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### 1. Background

The International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (*icipe*) and the East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 1 July 2022, to jointly implement activities of the newly launched East African Regional Bioeconomy Strategy. The strategy fosters the development of a sustainable bioeconomy in eastern Africa. This was preceded by the State of the Bioeconomy in Eastern Africa 2022 report launched on 23 June 2022 in Arusha, Tanzania, highlighting Eastern Africa’s competitive edge in developing a sustainable bioeconomy.

As part of implementing the strategy, *icipe*/BioInnovate Africa, in partnership with EASTECO, the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) – Africa Centre, and in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, Republic of Burundi through the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NCSTI) will organize a high-level policy dialogue on bioeconomy on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Bujumbura, Burundi. The theme of the policy dialogue is “**National bioeconomy strategies: paving the future growth path for Eastern Africa**”.

The concept of bioeconomy is centered around scientific research, knowledge, and innovation to support the *sustainable production and use of biological resources to create innovative products, processes, and services for all economic sectors*.<sup>1</sup> Sub Saharan Africa, with its rich biological diversity, and a relatively large proportion of arable land, is well positioned to tap these opportunities, and build a competitive but sustainable bioeconomy. The latter is seen as one of the ways of diversifying sources of growth through value addition to biological resources and linking production to new markets.

The development of a bioeconomy in Eastern Africa, though still in its early stages, presents opportunities for the region to leverage its biological resources to achieve sustainable economic growth. It will support regulatory and policy developments, create more investment opportunities in research and development, and enhance industrial and biomanufacturing capacity of the region. The bioeconomy further plays a crucial role in mitigating climate change, adapting to its impacts, and conserving biodiversity.

The East African Regional Bioeconomy Strategy that was announced by the East African Community Secretary General in December 2022 is an important step towards unlocking the region's bioeconomy potential. To maximize benefits, countries should develop national strategies, as those that prioritize early implementation are likely to reap its rewards early and align themselves with other countries investing in the bioeconomy.

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<sup>1</sup> Malabo Montpellier Panel. (2022). Nature’s Solutions: Policy Innovations and Opportunities for Africa’s Bioeconomy Report.

This policy dialogue aims to discuss the importance of national bioeconomy strategies for future economic growth in Eastern Africa, with a focus on Burundi. The policy dialogue will bring together key stakeholders in Burundi, regional experts including members of the BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee, and BioInnovate Africa innovation project partners to share experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in developing and implementing national bioeconomy strategies. By exploring the potential of the bioeconomy and identifying ways to overcome societal challenges, this policy dialogue aims to contribute to the development of a sustainable and inclusive bioeconomy in Burundi and Eastern Africa.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of the high-level policy dialogue on bioeconomy are to:

- a. Outline the importance of national bioeconomy strategies capitalizing on the efforts of the East African Regional Bioeconomy Strategy.
- b. Share experiences, best practices, and lessons learned for the preparation and implementation of national bioeconomy strategies.
- c. Discuss a roadmap for the development of a national bioeconomy strategy for Burundi.

## 3. Expected outcomes

The policy dialogue will create awareness about the importance of national bioeconomy strategies in supporting East Africa's sustainable economic growth path and provide a platform for participants to share experiences and lessons learned in the national bioeconomy strategy formulation and implementation process. Further, the steps for developing a national bioeconomy strategy for Burundi will be discussed.

## 4. Participants

About 50 to 60 participants are expected to attend the high-level policy dialogue. The participants comprise key stakeholders in Burundi, members of the BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee, regional experts and BioInnovate Africa project partners in the region.

## 5. Draft Program

Time	Activity	Responsible Person (s)
<b>Event Moderator:</b> Prof Tatién Masharabu, National Commission for STI (NCSTI)		
8:45-9:00 am	Anthems: Burundi and East African Community Prayer: Led by Burundi	
9:00 – 9:30 am	<b>Welcome Remarks</b>	Prof Juma Shabani, University of Burundi; Chair, Governing Board, EASTECO  Dr Yifru Tafesse, Chair, BioInnovate Africa PAC  Ms Christine Niragira, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Transport, Industry, and Tourism
	<b>Opening Remarks</b>	Prof François Havyarimana, Minister of National Education and Scientific Research, Burundi

9:30 – 10:15 am	<b>Keynote presentation:</b> The role of a bioeconomy as the future growth path for East Africa	Prof Salomon Nsabimana, Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Burundi
10:15 – 10:30 am	<i>Tea/Coffee Break</i> (incl. group photo)	
10:30 – 11:45 am	<p><b>Importance of national bioeconomy strategies in paving the future growth path for East Africa:</b> Mr Fortunate Muyambi, Deputy Executive Secretary, EASTECO</p> <p>Panelists/Discussants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mr Denis Nshimirimana, Burundi Federal Chamber of Commerce &amp; Industrie (CFCIB)</li> <li>2. Prof Audace Manirabona, Rector, University of Burundi</li> <li>3. Dr Francine Ntoumi, PAC member</li> <li>4. Hon. Fabien Haramategeko, Burundi Senate</li> <li>5. Prof Joseph Nyandwi, Chair, NCSTI</li> </ol>	Moderator: Dr Philip Osano, Director, SEI – Africa Centre
11:45 – 12:40 pm	<p><b>Short (3 minute) reflections</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BioInnovate Africa PAC members (Dr Yifru Tafesse; Prof Mans Nilsson; Prof Dhanjay Jhurry; Dr Silas Obukosia; Prof Anthony Mshandete; and Prof Ruth Oniang'o)</li> <li>2. Executive Secretary, EASTECO (Dr Sylvance Okoth)</li> <li>3. Director General of ISABU (Dr Alfred Niyokwishimira)</li> <li>4. Chairperson, Education Commission; National Legislative Assembly (Hon. Félix Mpozeriniga,)</li> <li>5. Burundi Country Representative International Rice Research Institute (Dr Ir. Joseph Bigirimana)</li> <li>6. Director, AKADEMIYA2063</li> <li>7. <i>Director</i>, UN Economic Commission for Africa</li> <li>8. Permanent Secretary, MoNESR (Prof Frédéric Bangirinama,)</li> </ol>	Moderator: Dr Philip Osano, Director, SEI – Africa Centre
12:40 – 12:50 pm	A presentation of a communiqué and next steps	Prof Tatien Masharabu
12:50 – 13:00 pm	<b>Closing Statement</b>	Prof François Havyarimana, Minister of National Education and Scientific Research, Burundi
13:00 pm	<i>Lunch</i>	