

Indo-US biofuel project review meeting held

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Indo-US biofuel project review and planning meeting held



The Indo-US Sustainable Advanced Ligno-cellulosic Biofuel Project's half-yearly review and planning meeting was held at Udhamandalam, Tamil Nadu on June 12-13, hosted by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU).

Inaugurating the meeting, the university's vice-chancellor, Prof K Ramasamy spoke on the demand-supply gap for transport grade ethanol in the country and the project's role in bridging the gap. Project Investigator Dr Ahmed Kamal (Indian Institute of Chemical Technology) gave a brief account of the progress made over the last 8 months since its launch in 2012. The meeting was attended by 35 researchers from 11 consortium partners.

Representing ICRISAT, senior scientist, Dr P Srinivasa Rao gave a detailed progress report of feedstock development and supply and addressed the issue of bringing marginal lands under biofuel feedstock cultivation and its implications for the livelihoods of marginal farmers in terms of food and fodder security in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

Drs Ganesh Kumar and Beena Patel spoke on the progress made in conversion technologies and sustainability and markets. Partners from the Directorate of Sorghum Research, Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Junagadh Agricultural University, TNAU, IICT, Abellon Clean Energy, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd, Indian Institute of Technology - Chennai and Delhi shared their progress.

Commending the progress made, Dr Rajiv Sharma, executive director, Indo-US Science & Technology Forum underlined that threadbare discussions would help in developing a clear roadmap for success.

Also, the problems faced by partners were discussed and possible solutions were suggested by the consortium. Work plans for the next six months were finalized.