



Kenya

1 Which bioeconomy-related policy strategies exist?

In Kenya, bioeconomy development is strongly related to biotechnology policy. With the “National Biotechnology Development Policy” (2006) the government formulated its vision to transform Kenya into a knowledge-based economy by fostering research, development and commercialization of modern biotechnological products. The strategy is in line with Kenya’s “National Development Plan”

(2002-2008), which strives to optimize the agricultural output through scientific and biotechnological interventions. In recent years, the government has further provided political guidance and support in the area of bioprospecting. With its **national strategy on bioprospecting** (2011) the government has undertaken first steps to capitalize on the countries rich biodiversity.

2 Is the term “bioeconomy” or “biobased economy” used in the strategy documents?

Yes

No

X

3 Who is the author of the strategies?

The Kenyan Cabinet approved the “National Biotechnology Development Policy” in 2006. The strategy was prepared by the Kenya National Council for Science and Technology (NCST), a

governmental advisory body, and is based on consultations across government authorities and business actors.

4 What are the key goals of the strategies?

With the “National Biotechnology Development Policy” (2006) the government aims at developing biotechnology and its safe application. Biotechnology should contribute to promoting economic growth, healthcare, as well as food and environmental security. By implementing the strategy, the country should become “a key stakeholder in the international biotechnology enterprise within a decade”⁶.

While the national bioprospecting strategy (2011) was mainly developed to regulate illegal biopirating activities, Kenya’s government has also recognized the economic potential of the countries biodiversity and, therefore, aims to generate wealth from the utilization of natural resources.

⁶ Republic of Kenya, 2006, p. 5

5 What are the priority areas of the strategies?

The “National Biotechnology Development Policy” generally comprises all biotechnological disciplines. In order to create an enabling environment for biotechnology development, the strategy paper focuses on promoting research and development, raising awareness on biotechnological innovations and encouraging investment and the creation of new businesses. The strategy further seeks to improve public health. Therefore, it specifically highlights medical applications of biotechnology, e.g. bioprospecting as opportunity to develop value added therapeutic products. Further priority is given to promote capacity building, national and international cooperation, as well as policy coherence in order to foster biotechnology development and commercialization. Therefore, A National Commission on Biotechnology should be established, which would be responsible

for implementing the biotechnology policy and coordinating all policies on sustainable development that relate to biotechnology.

The national bioprospecting strategy (2011) put great emphasis on regulating bioprospecting activities. In this respect, the government seeks to evaluate the current regulatory framework and to enhance institutional capacity. In order to capitalize on the countries biodiversity, the strategy highlights the use of natural resources, e.g. for the production of medicines. Other intervention activities include the development of Kenya’s research infrastructure by establishing centers of excellence, monitoring and assessing biodiversity, raising public awareness by developing a communication system and mobilizing investment.

REFERENCES

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