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Biomass energy in Nepal: A conspectus

Parshuram Bhattarai and Nagendra Mahto Sudi

Social Development and Environment Conservation Society Group, Nepal

Biomass are the prominent global source of energy, especially in many developing countries. Biomass includes firewood, agricultural and animal waste which has become the primary energy source in Nepal. Therefore, it is considered to be the alternative energy source at present and probably in the future as well. It is estimated that forest covers around 9.2 million hectare land area in Nepal and 3.4 million hectares of land is considered to be fuel collecting area. The total fuel wood consumption is around 12 million tons. According to 2015 data, Nepal consumes 78% biomass, 3% modern renewable, 12% petroleum products, 4% coal and 3% electricity. In terms of hydroelectricity, it is estimated that Nepal has the potentiality of producing 83,000 MW. But, due to the lack of feasibilities and other resources only 757 MW electricity has been produced. Due to the lack of money, expertise and social political constraints, the other sources of alternative energy like wind, solar and biomass are still limited. To go through the bird's eye view, only biogas projects have been successfully established and implemented. The reasons behind it are price hike in petroleum products and environmental degradation in the country due to greenhouse gas effects. The Nepalese government has also given more priority to biogas energy option, especially in the rural areas where most of the people are farmers and rear cattle. Currently in Nepal, some public vehicles run by bioethanol. This has also helped to reduce the fossil fuel import to some extent. At present, different collaborative researches are being carried out in biomass energy technology in Nepal.

pbhattarai@sodecs.org