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Mozambique: Energy Minister Speaks of Biofuels

26 June 2009

Brussels — Mozambican Energy Minister Salvador Namburete on Thursday invited foreign businesses to invest in producing biofuels in Mozambique.

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Speaking in Brussels at a round table on energy, held as part of 20th session of the Crans Montana Forum, Namburete said the Mozambican government has adopted a strategy to produce biofuels in order to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels.

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The government's strategy, he said, sought to avoid land conflicts, and to ensure that there would be no clash between food production and biofuels. Thus the government has banned producing biofuels from maize or cassava, the two most important staple foods grown in the Mozambican countryside.

"We don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past, when people produced cotton, tea, copra and other cash crops, but suffered from lack of food security", Namburete insisted,

He added that the government also stresses the need to involve the farmers growing the biofuels in fixing the prices of their production, and to ensure that the crops are processed locally.

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Namburete said that a significant number of companies and individuals are now producing biofuels in Mozambique.

Namburete admitted that the slump in the price of oil in late 2008 and early 2009 had led to a decline in interest in biofuels - but he regarded this as short-sighted.

"It's a fact that the euphoric way in which people used to talk about biofuels has disappeared - but the crisis of fossil fuels has not ended", he said. "In January a barrel of oil cost 40 US dollars, but in the first fortnight of June, it reached 70 dollars. That's a warning".

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Author: Steve Klaber Sat Jun 27 13:14:15 2009

Biofuels are indeed here to stay, but they are best when used to solve another problem. Otherwise, their water cost exceeds their fuel value. Weeds and wastes are what to make biofuels from, and they are available in plenty. I challenge you all to

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Green Data Center

That is good. I remember a revered leader in Mozambique to say that "water is in peoples's brains". So do biofuels. The conflict between food and energy is only apparent. Please check <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=grassoline-biofuels-beyond-corn>. Maize, cassava and a lot of food crop have cellulose containers in their leaves, stalks, roots, etc not necessarily used or recognised as food. So you can great AND produce biofuels with the same crop... I hope that in the future we move away this apparent conflict.

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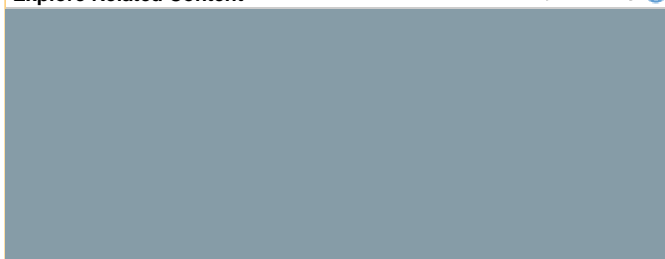
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