Jatropha curcas L. and JatroMed in Morocco

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The Moroccan energy context is dominated by a strong dependency on imports (95 to 97% primary energy), an increasing energy demand (7%) and a low renewable energy penetration despite the high potential of the country. As a consequence, in 2009, Morocco adopted an energy strategy axed on increasing the share of renewable energies in its energy mix, promoting energy efficiency and mobilizing the national energy resources including bio-energy. *Jatropha curcas* L. (JCL), is considered as a potential bio-energy feed, especially in rural areas due to its multiple uses. However, the cultivation of energy crops is not yet well developed in the country and the reasons that are generally invoked include: scarcity of water, un-even distribution of rain fall, limited useful agriculture land and the priority of food security.

The few limited plantations and studies of JCL in Morocco were either destined as demonstration projects, to study the sowing and transplantation of this species in arid areas or to evaluate its irrigation by waste water and its soil bioremediation properties. The JatroMed project, on the other hand, will provide a comprehensive and systematic study of the growth of JCL under the climatic condition of the Essaouira region, were a 4 hectare demonstration field was established, as well as of its socioeconomic and environmental impacts. Four genotypes were cultivated and their growth was monitored as a function of irrigation, fertilization and pruning parameters. The different stages of the implementation of this project as well as the results of the monitoring of the established plants will be presented and discussed. A field visit is planned in the following day for onsite observations and discussions and to meet local population and stakeholders.