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FACT Publication: Aquatic Biofuels for Local Development

FACT has published a comprehensive report on the opportunities and feasibility of aquatic biofuels, their limitations and associated problems and threats.

Aquatic biomass is attracting a lot of interest as a valuable feedstock for second and third generation biofuels. Algae are in the news regularly. Less commonly known is that various other water plants are also known for their vigorous growth. Properly managed, these too are a promising feedstock for biofuels. These plants might be an appropriate resource for local biogas for cooking and electrification, thus contributing to local development.

This report is the result of a study on feasibility of aquatic biofuels for local development. It is the result of many years of experience on the management of invasive floating and emergent water plants, and more recently on opportunities and challenges in algae production. The study has revealed chances for aquatic biofuels in a local development context. There are interesting opportunities for community driven development and for local investments using floating and emergent water plants, micro- and macro algae.

Examples of floating aquatic plants which can be valuable for biofuels and consequently for local development are: water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*), water ferns (*Salvinia molesta* and several *Azolla* species), and duckweeds (e.g., *Lemna minor*, *Lemna gibba*, *Spirodela polyrhiza*, *Wolffia arhiza*).

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