

DBT seeks industry's participation to promote PPP in algal biofuels

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This comes after DBT's success in the Algal Network project on collection, selection and characterization of Microalgae and Cyanobacteria. In a program, recently carried out by DBT, nearly 2000 Cyanobacteria and Microalgae strains have been collected from diverse ecological niches from regions located all over India by a team of scientists from 12 reputed National R&D Institutes and Universities. The goal is to generate algal biomass to produce liquid hydrocarbon or biodiesel on an industrial scale.

Also, the CO₂ utilization from flue gases can be integrated with wastewater treatment and reclamation, providing an early application of this technology. The developed technology will be helpful to preserve our planetary atmosphere and biosphere.

Currently, the major challenge is to generate algal biomass at a mass scale on a continuous basis as a feed stock for Bioenergy application. Part from that the other challenges would be to increase the algal productivity >0.5 kg/day/1000L or with use of cheaper sources of NPK or with > 90% NPK recycling; lipid content of algae should be > 30 percent of dry biomass and to reduce production cost by recycling of resources, cheaper bioreactor design, lower power consumption with a target of Rs. 5-10/kg dry algae.

This call from the DBT is for inviting Innovative R&D proposals (maximum 18 months duration) in collaboration with industry. Proposals have been invited from R&D centers (National Laboratories, Public Institutes, and Universities etc.) preferably with industrial partners who are interested in exploring promising algal resources for developing cost effective biofuel and value added product(s) of industrial importance before February 28, 2015.