

July 2009

This email newsletter highlights the latest additions to the site Knowledge for Development.

Dossiers**New dossier: Innovation Systems**

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/Dossiers/Demanding-Innovation/Innovation-systems/>

The agricultural context in the ACP region is rapidly changing in a world in which scientific and technological advances, for example ICTs and bio- and nanotechnology, influence the agricultural landscape and rural environment. Farmers, policymakers and scientists have to respond adequately to these rapid changes; while preserving the natural resource base for future agricultural production. The IAASTD report 2009, also places emphasis on the importance of knowledge, science and technology for sustainable development. In the lead article of this new dossier *'Innovation Systems in Agriculture and Rural Development'* Tesfaye Beshah discusses that much has been written on innovation systems but that, with few exceptions, the literature does not adequately explain how system thinking enhances innovation or how innovation systems can be initiated and facilitated. In a second article, *'Promoting Agricultural Innovation Systems Approach: The Way Forward'* Riikka Rajalahti explains that investments in knowledge systems have featured consistently in most strategies that promote sustainable agricultural development at the national level. In addition, this dossier contains a selection of annotated links to relevant resources and documents that are available on the web.

[Lead Article] Innovation Systems in Agriculture and Rural Development

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9567>

By Tesfaye Beshah, Post Doctoral Fellow, International Livestock Research Institute. Much has been written on innovation systems (IS), especially in industrialized economies, and recently in developing countries contexts. However, with few exceptions, literature on IS does not adequately explain how system thinking enhances innovation or how IS can be initiated and facilitated. Another gap is the fact that "innovation" itself is promoted rather than its embeddedness within a system that in turn operates within certain institutional and policy contexts. Even though there is consensus on the importance of innovation for economic development, the systemic mechanism through which it can be enhanced is not given equal attention. These and other grey areas limit the promotion of the concept of IS, and in a worst case raises suspicion on its value addition for research and development. 30/06/2009

[Lead Article] Promoting Agricultural Innovation Systems Approach: The Way Forward

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9564>

By Riikka Rajalahti, Sr. Agricultural Specialist, Innovation Systems, Agriculture and Rural Development Department, the World Bank. Investments in knowledge systems have featured consistently in most strategies to promote sustainable agricultural development at the national level. The World Bank alone has invested more than 2.5 billion USD into agricultural R&D and advisory services over the past 20 years. Many of these investments have resulted in very high returns and pro-poor growth. We have also been fairly successful in strengthening research systems and increasing available knowledge but they have not necessarily resulted in greater use of knowledge and innovation. Farmer productivity is still often constrained by lack of appropriate technology or access to technology, inputs, services and credit, and by farmers inability to bear risks. In addition, farmers information and skills gap constrains the adoption of available technologies and management practices or reduces their technical efficiency when adopted. To address these challenges, we have gradually shifted from strengthening research systems and knowledge transfer towards building innovation capacity, enhancing use of knowledge and creating social and economic change. 30/06/2009

New pathways to build capacity for development oriented agricultural research and innovation

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9591>

By John Daane, ICRA, Wageningen University, the Netherlands
Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are struggling to establish an operational National Agricultural Research System (NARS) with far too limited resources, at a time when the insight is gaining ground that NARS need to evolve into Agricultural Innovation Systems to remain relevant in the face of the growing complexity of the issues they need to address. Initiatives to revitalise or modernise agriculture emphasise the importance of the capacity to access, generate and use new knowledge to promote market access for poor smallholder farmers, value adding, and chain development in increasingly globalising competitive markets and to address critical issues in the management of natural resources. This calls for equally revitalised research and development institutes and higher education institutes.

Conceptual and methodological developments in innovation

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9597>

By Niels Röling, Professor Emeritus, Wageningen University, the Netherlands
The author uses an autobiographical approach to tell the story of innovation and its changing fortunes and uses. The Convergence of Sciences (CoS) project in West Africa is highlighted. During its first phase, CoS established a pathway for an agricultural science that can improve the livelihoods of resource-poor farmers. But that phase also showed that technical innovation within very small windows of opportunity can only have limited impact. It further demonstrated the need for, and possibility of, institutional development. The second phase of CoS focuses on innovation systems as an approach to institutional development that stretches the windows of opportunity for small-scale farmers.

How innovative is your agriculture? Using innovation indicators and benchmarks to strengthen national agricultural innovation systems

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9576>

By David Spielman, Regina Birner, IFPRI, Washington DC, USA.
The authors develop a conceptual framework that ties the innovation systems framework to the agricultural sector and review how the framework has been used to develop innovation indicators in other fields. They aim to inform policy-makers, researchers and other stakeholders interested in developing or using indicators as a tool for designing evidence-based agricultural innovation policies.

New Initiatives

AfricaAdapt: Getting adaptation knowledge into use

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9625>

The Climate Change Adaptation in Africa programme (CCAA) launched in May 2009 the AfricaAdapt website, a new platform for sharing knowledge about climate change and adaptation. AfricaAdapt is a pan-African networking initiative. Originating from the CCAA supported project 'Knowledge Sharing for Climate Change Adaptation in Africa', AfricaAdapt provides a means for researchers, policymakers, and all Africans affected by climate change to test new ways of sharing their experiences and challenges across barriers of distance, culture and language.

Developments

Scientists to step up surveillance of cassava diseases in the Great Lakes region

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9648>

After achieving considerable success in controlling Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD), scientists and cassava farmers in the Great Lakes region were sure that cassava production was back on track. Then the Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD) struck in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, creating a dilemma for scientists. The emergence of what appears to be the second cassava virus disease pandemic to strike the region creates the need for an effective and well-coordinated regional surveillance program. Setting up such a program was the aim of a meeting of leading cassava researchers in Dar es Salaam organized by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). Scientists from the national agricultural research systems of Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, as well as from IITA, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the UK's Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) agreed on a common methodology for the surveys - including sampling strategy, data collection and analysis. The pest and disease surveillance is a component of the Great Lakes Cassava Initiative (GLCI), led in the region by CRS, that aims to provide healthy planting materials of improved varieties to over one million farmers in the Great Lakes region. (Source: ASNS, 11 June 2009)

Scientists develop easy ways to spot banana disease

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9642>

Scientists have developed improved methods for identifying a bacterium devastating banana crops in East Africa, where the fruit is a staple part of the diet and an important part of the rural economy. Until now, *Banana Xanthomonas wilt* (BXW) was diagnosed by symptoms alone. These include a progressive yellowing and wilting of leaves, premature ripening of fruit, brown discoloration of fruit and pale yellow ooze coming from cut surfaces, says Leena Tripathi, the study's lead author. The research team, including Steffen Abele, head of the Banana and Plantain Systems Program and research director at the new Dar es Salaam branch of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Tanzania, tried a variety of biochemical tests to identify the BXW pathogen in the laboratory. Tests that amplify and identify the pathogen's DNA were "most reliable, as the infected plants can be tested even before the symptoms develop", says Tripathi, a biotechnologist at the IITA in Uganda. (Source: SciDev.net, 4 June 2009)

Partnership to protect yam and taro diversity in the Pacific

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9640>

The Global Crop Diversity Trust announced that it has entered into an agreement with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to protect the important collections of yams and edible aroids (taro) from different countries in the Pacific region. The Trust will provide USD 50,000 annually, in perpetuity, towards the long-term conservation of the collections held in-trust by the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT). A significant portion of the fund was used to put up a new storage center, which will provide excellent facilities for long-term conservation of plant genetic resources. The center is set to open in September 2009. The SPC said that the partnership means a lot for the conservation of the region's crop diversity. The Trust noted that the importance of crop diversity to sustainable development in the Pacific region is becoming more and more apparent, especially as farmers try to maintain and improve food production in the face of a changing climate. (Source: Croptrust, 4 June 2009)

Fiji: Longer span for breadfruit crops

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9659>

Agricultural researchers are working towards increasing the timeframe of fruiting bearing for some local vegetables and crops. Ministry's Principal Agriculture officer Kamlesh Prakash said one such study is being conducted on local breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*) to improve the produce for enhanced export. The department is trying to achieve a longer span for the local breadfruit season. Mr Prakash said the standard season for breadfruit was three months but with research the department has been able to produce local breadfruits for nine months. (Source: Fiji Times, Sheetal Singh, 18 June 2009)

Climate change blamed for Caribbean coral deaths

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9650>

Climate change has contributed to a flattening of the complex, multi-layered architecture of Caribbean coral reefs, compromising their role as a nursery for fish stocks and a buffer against tropical storms, a study shows. The analysis of 500 surveys of 200 reefs, conducted between 1969 and 2008, showed the most complex types of reef had been virtually wiped out across the entire Caribbean. "We suggest that the last period of decline is partly due to climate change, but also due to several other human impacts such as over-fishing and coastal development," Alvarez said. "In the future, we'll need to change our behavior and reduce the stress on the reefs." (Source: Caribbean Net News, 11 June 2009)

Climate change talks must not forget fisheries

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9629>

Saying that vulnerable fishing and coastal communities around the world will bear the brunt of climate change impacts, a group of 16 international organizations have urged climate negotiators to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture are not neglected in ongoing discussions regarding a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. In a *policy brief* issued on the first of June 2009 in advance of UNFCCC talks held from 1 to 12 June 2009 in Bonn, Germany, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, the WorldFish Center and 11 other organizations warned that millions of fishers, fish farmers and coastal inhabitants will experience less stable livelihoods, changes in the availability and quality of fish for food, and heightened risks to their health, safety and homes as a result of climate change. Research is required to understand the complex biological and chemical processes of aquatic ecosystems. Equally important is understanding how people adapt to living in a changing climate and how their institutions and livelihoods have evolved, and can further evolve, to maintain resilience in the face of future change. (Source: FAO Newsroom, 01 June 2009)

Guyana's climate change efforts gathering international support

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9654>

The international community has shown keen interest in Guyana's efforts to combat climate change which is encompassed in the draft Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). Consultations on the Strategy were launched on June 8, 2009 and President Bharrat Jagdeo highlighted the international partners who have shown their support and encouragement. In particular, Guyana has been working closely with Norway to determine how to generate performance-based compensation for forest climate services which will support the implementation of the LCDS. Also, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy has promised to include the issue of deforestation in the agenda of the upcoming G-8 meeting and Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton of the United States has pointed out that addressing forestry can also help accelerate a greater global understanding of the need for action on the broader climate change agenda. These partnerships' intention is to support the creation of low-carbon employment and investment opportunities in Guyana; sustained efforts to avoid deforestation and forest degradation; strengthening transparent forest governance; and establishing an international monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) system for Guyana's forests. (Source: Caribbean Net News, 13 June 2009)

EU agricultural research to tackle food security

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9627>

An EU study of future agricultural research challenges stresses the need to conduct transdisciplinary research and redistribute roles between the state, markets and civil society to address the vulnerabilities of the present agri-food system. Despite growing consensus over the diagnosis that climate change, food security and rural development are the main challenges that should drive agricultural research, "strong disagreements exist concerning solutions," notes the report, presented at a conference on the role of EU research in sustainable development on May 27, 2009. Disagreements exist both at political and scientific levels regarding the role of public sector and market liberalisation in solving social problems, as well as regarding the role of technology and innovation in solving agri-environmental issues. Other dilemmas include deciding whether sustainability or competitiveness should come first, determining the role of farmers and consumers in deciding the way forward, and over the role of intellectual property rights (IPR) in agri-innovation. (Euractiv, 29 May 2009)

'Africa calls on world's richest to curb brain drain'

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9657>

Universities in Africa have been 'hollowed out' by the steady stream of scientists moving to developed countries, according to the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC). The group has written to the G8+5 group of developed countries and emerging powers (Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa) to call for greater investment in Africa's research infrastructure. The G8+5 will meet in Italy this July. A third of all African scientists live and work in developed countries, according to NASAC, and this has crippled development efforts in Africa. It noted that just 1.4% of articles published in international peer-reviewed journals come from Africa. Developing science and technology infrastructure is critical to sustainable economic progress, according to a statement from the African scientists. The group wants developed nations to invest in the rebuilding of African universities, provide funding for scientists to pursue postgraduate and postdoctoral work in Africa, and to support links between Africa's diaspora and African-based scientists. (Euractiv, 18 June 2009)

Database aims to put African research on the map

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9656>

An attempt to make African science more visible by tracking the scientific publications of the continent's scientists is underway. *Africa Science Trackers (AST)*, based in Stellenbosch, South Africa, aims to record every peer-reviewed paper by African scientists published in both national and international journals as well as information available through non-conventional channels — so-called 'grey literature' — since 2000. "We want to tackle the under-representation of African researchers in international indices such as Web of Science, Scopus and Pascal," says Taurai Imbayarwo, a Zimbabwean science metrics researcher and the founding director of AST. Ssempe Nurudean Norman, programme manager for the Agency for Science and Technology Advancement in Uganda, a partner in the initiative, says recording African scientists and their publications, whether working abroad or on the African continent, encourages greater scientific collaboration and sharing of expertise. (Source: SciDev.net, 15 June 2009)

Sorghum varieties discovered by Ethiopian scientist register commendable results

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9663>

The Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development said it has distributed and gained reliable results from two drought and weed-resistant varieties of sorghum discovered by Professor Gebisa Ejeta who was named the winner of the *2009 World Food Prize* on June 18, 2009. One of the species, named Abshir, is being produced in a large scale in Shire, Tigray State. The other, Gubeye, in Wollo area of Amhara State

registered positive results in withstanding diseases. Currently the variety is being distributed to other areas of the country, Dr. Abera, State Minister of MoARD said. The Ethiopian researcher also made similar researches in West Africa and his discoveries are being used in other parts of the world exposed to food shortage. Prof. Gebisa Ejeta will receive the 250,000 USD award on October 15, 2009 in a ceremony, which will be organized by the World Food Prize Foundation in Des Moines, Iowa. President of the foundation, former U.S. ambassador to Cambodia Kenneth Quinn, said Gebisa's work with sorghum has benefited millions of people in Africa and beyond. (Source: Ethiopian Review, 19 June 2009)

UNEP's blue-prints for better managed drylands

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9665>

Drylands make up 40 percent of the Earth's land surface that suffers desertification as a result of unsustainable use of land and water in too many places. These drylands are dynamic ecosystems that feed agricultural growth and are often home to extremely specialized communities of animals and plants. However, they are also increasingly vulnerable to the threat of land degradation. According to the *UNEP-led study* best-bet technologies that combine modern science with traditional and indigenous knowledge such as those introduced in the *nine DMP pilot countries in Africa* are a global example of how to combat the trend of desertification with viable solutions. The project introduced new technologies into the area for improving soil moisture, bush management and constructing terraces which are now contributing to a successful revegetation of denuded ranges. (Source: ASNS, 20 June 2009)

Africa: Livestock may do better than crops

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9667>

The stresses of climate-induced crop failures could be avoided if more small farmers in Africa also raised livestock, say researchers. Climate change will result in a 10-20% drop in yield for crops such as beans, maize and millet in Africa's drylands by 2050, researchers from the Kenya-based International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and the United Kingdom's Waen Associates found. But many farmers in some of the affected areas could keep livestock to increase their incomes and reduce their vulnerability, the researchers say. The researchers warn that the change to livestock farming must be done sustainably, for example by limiting the number of livestock in an area during dry conditions so the pasture can recover quickly when rains come. Mario Herrero, ILRI's systems analyst, acknowledges that an increase in livestock would increase greenhouse gas emissions but says the impact from the alternative - of herders migrating and cutting down forest to grow crops - could be worse. (Source: All Africa, 23 June 2009)

New and improved VetMed Resource has now launched

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9712>

CABI's VetMed Resource, the most comprehensive online veterinary information service available, now has a new look. The authoritative content contained in VetMed Resource - which includes over 1.3 million records covering veterinary and animal health research from 1972 to the present - stays the same, but it has been made more discoverable due to a new design and improved navigation across the site. The platform will be made open access for 2 months. Free access will turn off Monday 31 August.

Selected publications

'Higher Education, Research & Innovation: Changing Dynamics'

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9673>

By UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge. Published by the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge, this report includes position papers and analytical essays covering the major issues facing knowledge systems today. These systems are constituted by the sectors of higher education, science and technology, and innovation where the generation of high-level knowledge through strong research capacity is a common feature. Thus, how research is governed, organized and funded and how the essential human capital is assured are critical concerns. While high-income countries build their knowledge systems through solid investment in higher education, research and development, and information technology, middle- and low-income countries face great challenges to keep pace with the fast-moving trends in this process. The challenges facing the latter group, including the availability and collection of accurate data, are documented in the Special Initiative Project 'Mapping Research Systems in Middle and Low Income Countries' which involved 52 country studies, four regional studies and a meta review of key trends. Increasing investment in research capacity in Brazil, Russia, India and China as well as in emerging economies such as Singapore, Rwanda, Chile and Qatar, attest to the importance of knowledge systems for national development and international competitiveness.

'Jatropha - wonder crop?' Experience from Swaziland

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9677>

By Yonge Nawe, Friends of the Earth Swaziland, May 2009.

The search for alternatives to fossil fuel has seen a rush towards biofuels. This is contributing to rising food prices and increasing concern about our ability to grow enough food and fuel. Despite social and environmental concerns and unproven climate benefits of biofuels, the EU has set a target of 10% of transport fuel to come from biofuels by 2020. Against this backdrop, jatropha (*Jatropha curcas*) has been promoted by UK biofuel company D1 Oils as a wonder crop because of the plant's ability to grow on marginal and semi-arid land, saying "it will not compete with food crops for good agricultural land". Local non-government organisations (NGOs) have raised concerns about the social and environmental impacts of jatropha and studies have questioned some of the claims made about jatropha's benefits. This report highlights those concerns for media and policy makers and questions some of the claims being made by D1 Oils and others for biofuel from jatropha. This report looks at D1 Oils' activities in Swaziland, one of the countries where the company is leading the development of jatropha plantations. The report is based on first-hand evidence from farmers involved with D1 Oils and desk research on the impacts of jatropha. By revealing major problems with jatropha production as a biofuel crop, this report poses questions for policy makers who are relying on the plant as a part of a future sustainable biofuel mix.

Arid waste? Reassessing the value of dryland pastoralism

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9680>

By Ced Hesse, James MacGregor, IIED Briefing Papers, June 2009.

East Africa has a huge hidden asset – but risks throwing it away in the quest for economic development. This is its millions-strong herds of dryland livestock managed by pastoralists. New findings show that pastoralism has immense potential value for reducing poverty, managing the environment, promoting sustainable development and building climate resilience. In Kenya alone, the sector is worth an estimated three-quarters of a billion dollars a year. Yet pastoralism is seen by many as archaic, economically inefficient, chaotic and environmentally destructive – perceptions that are not evidence-based, yet drive much regional policy. Inadequate, inaccurate national statistics on pastoralism do little to alter this view. Persistent undervaluation has effectively trapped up to 20 million dryland pastoralists in a cycle of poverty, conflict and environmental degradation. Now, with climate change biting, the time is ripe for a conceptual framework that captures the total economic benefits of this livelihood.

Shifts in African crop climates by 2050, and the implications for crop improvement and genetic resources conservation

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9684>

By Marshall Burke, David Lobell, Luigi Guarino, Global Environmental Change, June 2009.

Increased understanding of the substantial threat climate change poses to agriculture has not been met with a similarly improved understanding of how best to respond. This report examines likely shifts in crop climates in Sub-Saharan Africa under climate change to 2050, and explores the implications for agricultural adaptation, with particular focus on identifying priorities in crop breeding and the conservation of crop genetic resources. Findings are that for three of Africa's primary cereal crops - maize, millet, and sorghum - expected changes in growing season temperature are considerable and dwarf changes projected for precipitation, with the warmest recent temperatures on average cooler than almost 9 out of 10 expected observations by 2050. For the "novel" crop climates currently unrepresented in each country but likely extant there in 2050, current analogs are identified across the continent. The majority of African countries will have novel climates over at least half of their current crop area by 2050. Of these countries, 75% will have novel climates with analogs in the current climate of at least five other countries, suggesting that international movement of germplasm will be necessary for adaptation. A more troubling set of countries - largely the hotter Sahelian countries - will have climates with few analogs for any crop. Finally, countries are identified, such as Sudan, Cameroon, and Nigeria, whose current crop areas are analogs to many future climates but that are poorly represented in major genebanks - promising locations in which to focus future genetic resource conservation efforts.

Climate change and indigenous peoples: A guide to climate change for indigenous peoples

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9685>

By R. de Chavez, V. Tauli-Corpus, E. Baldo-Soriano, Tebtebba Foundation, Philippines, 2008.

This manual has been written to empower indigenous peoples to participate more effectively in shaping relevant policies and actions taken to address issues related to climate change. It also aims to enlighten non-indigenous peoples on indigenous peoples' experiences and perspectives on climate change.

Events

4th TWAS-ROSSA Young Scientists' Conference

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9721>

Dates: 7-9 December, 2009

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

TWAS, the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World - Regional Office for Sub Saharan Africa, (TWAS-ROSSA), will hold its fourth young scientists' conference in Nairobi, Kenya. The Conference will provide a platform for young (below 45 years of age) and senior scientists to take stock of advancements in the profitable application of research and development of science and technology in Africa, as well as to exchange ideas and map the way forward for innovative networking mechanisms among scientists within the region. There will be keynote addresses in plenary sessions by renowned experts, followed by in-depth analysis in working group discussions.

Invitation is also extended to young scientists to make presentations in their research areas with a focus on science and technology enterprises. Selected applicants will be requested to provide these presentations in narrative and PowerPoint formats in advance. TWAS-ROSSA will cover travel (only from within sub-Saharan Africa on economy class), accommodation, meals and local transportation costs for selected participants. The deadline for all applications to reach TWAS-ROSSA offices based at the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) is **30 July 2009**.

International Conference on Food Security and Climate Change in Dry Areas

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9721>

Dates: October 12-15, 2009

Location: Amman, Jordan

An international conference on Food Security and Climate Change in Dry Areas, organized by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and Jordan's Ministry of Agriculture, will be held at Amman, Jordan on October 12-15, 2009. Conference themes include impacts of climate change on natural resource availability, agricultural production systems and environmental degradation in dry areas, mitigation, adaptation and ecosystem resilience strategies: natural resource management, crop improvement, etc, and policy and institutional options to ensure an enabling environment to cope with climate change impacts.

FAO international technical conference on agricultural biotechnologies in developing countries

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9692>

Dates: 2-5 November 2009.

Location: Guadalajara, Mexico

The conference on "Agricultural biotechnologies in developing countries: options and opportunities in crops, forestry, livestock, fisheries and agro-industry to face the challenges of food insecurity and climate change" takes place in Guadalajara, Mexico on 2-5 November 2009. The recent increases in food prices have had dramatic consequences globally. FAO's recent major report on "The State of Food Insecurity in the World" indicates that in 2007, mainly because of rising food prices, the number of hungry people in the world increased by 75 million. Agriculture, which includes the production of crops, livestock, fish and forestry products, has a direct impact on the rural economy and therefore investment in agriculture is vital and must be at the heart of any strategy for the alleviation of hunger and poverty. While the measures needed extend well beyond the issue of producing more food and agricultural products, boosting productivity of smallholders' farms through appropriate application of good practices and improved technologies must be a key ingredient of developing countries' development policies. It is in this context that FAO is organizing this international conference that encompasses the crop, forestry, livestock, fishery and agro-industry sectors, as well as the entire range of agricultural biotechnologies currently available.

Jobs for ACP scientists

IFPRI Program Analyst

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9696>

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) seeks a qualified candidate to serve as a Project Analyst for a one-year, fixed-term, renewable appointment for its Environment and Production Technology Division D.C. The successful candidate will join a multi-disciplinary team implementing the Global Futures project sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The overarching goal of the Global Futures project is to enhance IFPRI's IMPACT model to improve its usefulness in the ex-ante assessment of research and other investments in agriculture, broadly defined to include pastures, forestry and fisheries. The project will involve participants at several CGIAR centers, other international research institutions, and at national and regional research and agricultural policy programs. This position is based at IFPRI's

headquarters in Washington D.C. Application Deadline: open until filled.

Fellowships and Grants

CTA improves access to global literature: TEEAL digital library of agricultural journals.

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9714>

CTA improves access to global literature: TEEAL digital library of agricultural journals. CTA is accepting applications until the end of August 2009 from ACP universities and research organizations for the purchase of The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (TEEAL) sets. TEEAL is a full-text digital library of 149 agricultural journals made available at low cost to institutions in eligible low-income countries. Journal coverage starts in the 1990s and is updated annually. The initial subscription includes the complete contents of 149 journals published over a 17 year period from 1993 to 2009. Annual updates are provided a year after the date of publication. Thus, the 2008 update will be available at the end of 2009 and the 2009 update will be available at the end of 2010. This subscription costs \$4, 500. CTA is willing to assist with the initial investment (1993-2007 and 2008 and 2009 updates) to improve library resources for the furtherance of agricultural research in the ACP region. In return ACP institutions must undertake to sign TEEAL's licensing agreement and pay for annual updates from 2010 onwards. The 2010 update will cost US\$ 525. Prices for 2011 will be confirmed at a later date. You can download the application form in English and French (one document).

TWAS Research Grants Programme in Basic Sciences

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9698>

The TWAS Research Grants Programme in Basic Sciences was established in response to the needs of promising young researchers in developing countries, particularly those attached to institutions that lack appropriate research facilities. Under this scheme, grants are awarded to individual researchers and research units in 80 science-and-technology-lagging countries (S&TLC) to enable them to purchase the research facilities they need to enhance their productivity. Deadline: 31 August 2009.

TWAS-BIOTEC Postdoctoral fellowship programme

<http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/9701>

TWAS and the National Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (BIOTEC) entered into an agreement to provide a number of postdoctoral research fellowships tenable in top class biotechnology laboratories in Thailand. Under the scheme, young scientists from developing countries (other than Thailand) are able to spend 12-24 months working on areas related to molecular biology, molecular genetics, microbiology, biochemistry, biotechnology and bioinformatics at the National Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (BIOTEC). The deadline for receipt of applications is 15 September of each year.

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