

East & Southern Africa

Biotechnology

Uganda Develops a Biotechnology R&D Agenda 2010

Uganda now has a "Biotechnology Research and Development Agenda 2010" to guide policy makers in strategy formulation for implementing priorities in biotechnology. This was developed at the end of a two-day workshop in Kampala, Uganda in early February. The workshop was organized by the Biotechnology Policy Program (BIO EARN), in conjunction with Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS) and Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST).

Participants to the workshop included scientists, politicians, journalists and academicians. Through a participatory approach, participants came up with an action plan to assist policy makers in prioritizing areas of research in Uganda. Key recommendations of the strategy include: Capacity building in R&D, improvement of infrastructure, formation of partnerships and networking among researchers, linking biotechnology to industry, institutionalization of Intellectual Property Rights, allocation and maintenance of funding mechanisms, and development of a clear communication strategy.

It is hoped that the Biotechnology Agenda will provide guidance to legislators and policy makers as the country prepares to pass its Biosafety law.



Ethiopia - Test Biosafety Proclamation

Ethiopia's State Minister for Agriculture & Rural Development, H.E. Abera Deresa advised researchers and technology developers to test the recently enacted Biosafety Proclamation first before calling for its repeal. "Only with concrete evidence of the gaps can the government ascertain its limitations and weaknesses," said the Minister at a recent stakeholders meeting in Addis Ababa. The meeting was organized by the Government in partnership with USAID, State Department and CropLife International to discuss the future of modern biotechnology in the country.

The stakeholders who included public researchers from four local Universities, the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research (EIAR) and MOARD affiliate centres, various private and civil society organizations, the cotton sub-sector and the World Food Program were appealing for a review of the Biosafety Proclamation saying it was very restrictive. Contributing to the discussion, a cotton expert Dr. Geremew Terefe said the law was a threat to the cotton industry as technology providers are unwilling to partner with them even for research purposes. With a potential area of 3 million ha suitable for cotton growing, Geremew told the meeting that the country is only utilizing a paltry 2.5% of this land. Cotton production in Ethiopia is constrained by many factors among them lack of quality planting seed, limitations in input supply, poorly developed human and infrastructural capacity and pest damage of which bollworms are the most important.



Biotechnology

Ethiopia - Test Biosafety Proclamation cont..

Echoing similar concerns, the Director of Crops Research at EIAR Dr. Adre'ris said: "While we initially thought enactment of this law would provide the required favourable domestic policy environment for R&D in modern biotechnology, our attempt to access technologies from proven sources has proven impossible as the Biosafety Proclamation is highly prohibitive than facilitative". Prof Magdy Madkour, founder of the Agricultural Genetic Engineering Research Institute (AGERI) shared Egypt's experiences in research, development, commercialization and regulation of agricultural biotechnology where he emphasized the importance of developing local capacity and sustained political support for the technology. The need to embrace public-private partnerships in harnessing the benefits and mitigating against potential risks from agricultural biotechnology applications was stressed by Jacob Mignouna of the AATF based in Kenya.

An official from the Environmental Protection Authority, Mr. Wondwossen Siatayehu who was representing Dr. Tewolde Berhan, author of the Biosafety Proclamation, said EPA welcomed open and constructive discussion surrounding the legislation. As a way forward, the Minister pledged to support an all inclusive task force that would look into the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for implementing the biotechnology strategy and also ensure stakeholder engagement as learnt from the Kenyan experience.

CropLife International was a contributor to the funding of this workshop and also sponsored Wally Green of CPBioS who gave two presentations, one on the development of the technology in Africa and a second on the importance of Intellectual Property Rights in the development of the technology.

Getachew Cherinet of CropLife Ethiopia was a key player on the Organizing Committee of the event.



Malawi



Participants at the "Special CropLife Malawi Management Meeting"

CropLife Malawi

The AGM and "Special Management Meeting" took place on Friday 27 Feb. During the AGM the following office bearers were elected:

Adamson Tong'o—Chairman

David Hayes—Treasurer

Fred Kawalewale—Secretary

During the "Special Management Meeting" the following were covered:

- * A presentation on the update of the CLI Safe Guarding project. This was given by David Laycock.

- * That Malawi is on "centre stage" in the eyes of the Developed World, from a net importer of food to a net exporter of food. A country that is prepared to embrace new technologies, all in the interests of food production and food security. The Pesticide Industry has however not kept pace with these developments and the purpose of the "Special Meeting" was to map out the future of the National Association.
- * An action plan with timelines was developed starting with the training programme which will be in place by end March. The Registrar was present at the meeting and agreed on the actions developed where the regulators have a key role to play.

FANRPAN

Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network



Launch of Regional Seed Project to Boost Food Security

On 24 Feb FANRPAN announced a four-year project to help domesticate the SADC Harmonised Seed Regulatory System. The project is supported by a \$4.7mil grant from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Liberalisation of seed trade is set to benefit African smallholder farmers by improving seed availability, access and affordability. SADC Ministers of Agriculture and Food Security recently signed a MOU for the implementation of a SADC Harmonised Seed Regulatory System. The system aims at improving seed trade and increasing the availability of high quality seed to farmers in the region. The Harmonised Seed Regulatory System will facilitate easier movement of seed between SADC countries and will make more varieties of seed available throughout the region. It will also integrate small isolated national seed markets into one large SADC market. This system has been developed through a consultative process and represents a direct response of the Member States to the low availability and limited access by farmers in the Region, to key agricultural inputs. Special attention in this regard is on small scale farmers who have limited resources and face challenges in sourcing seed of high quality.

The project starts in four countries – Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

CropLife Africa Middle East has a MOU with FANRPAN and will act as a partner in the training component of the project. FANRPAN will also assist in the development of the E & SA region's communication plan.



FANRPAN Launch
Group Photo

L – R Sindiso Ngwenya, Chairman of FANRPAN, Richard Chenevard, SDC, Eric Amhof, Counselor, Swiss Embassy and Lindiwe Sibanda, CEO of FANRPAN



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Representing the Plant Science Industry

Africa Stockpiles Programme

ASPIC Meeting and ASP Forum

The Africa Stockpiles Programme (ASP) held its fourth Stakeholder's Forum from 17 -19 February in Bamako, Mali. The Forum provides an opportunity for countries and organisations involved in the programme to share information and progress reports with a wide range of stakeholders, exchange experiences and to discuss concerns and lessons learnt from the implementation of the programme. The Forum is convened by the ASP Implementation Committee (the World Bank, FAO, CropLife International, Pesticide Action Network and WWF).

The theme at the Forum this year was *"Sustainable Solutions for Minimisation, Collection and Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides"*. In addition to the progress reports presented by all participating countries, representatives from Tanzania and South Africa presented the initiatives planned in their respective countries to ensure sustainable management of obsolete pesticides in future.

The FAO, the Basel Regional Centre in Senegal, and CLI discussed best practice and lessons learnt from projects outside the ASP. The interactive design of the sessions created an atmosphere of open communication and invigorating discussions among the participants.

More than 40 participants including representatives from the Phase 1 countries, potential Phase 2 countries, implementing and technical partners such as FAO, WWF, PAN-UK, PAN-Africa and the World Bank attended the Forum.



Participants at the Forum



Participants from CropLife (L) attended the forum along with other organizations such as FAO (R)

West & Central Africa

Sustainable Agriculture



IPM Course Roll Out

The IPM roll out took place between 8 - 11 February in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and Kumasi, Ghana and between 22 - 25 February in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The objective was to develop IPM knowledge for participants and trainees as well as to provide tools for these future trainers to coach farmers on the implementation of IPM.

23 Participants attended the session in Burkina (5 female), 18 in Ghana (4 female) and 22 in Côte d'Ivoire (2 female). The participants came from a wide group including farmers and producers and other organizations involved in training activities.

The courses were based on the CropLife International IPM Course and participants were evaluated through a pre-/post-test and their progress assessed. Certificates of competence and participation were presented based on the tests results. In order to continually improve the training participants were asked to evaluate the training on content, organization, venue, facilitator's competence etc. This feedback will be used to improve on future training sessions.



R. Vogelsperger, Deputy Chief of party USAID-ATP, congratulating R. Yeboué, the facilitator and addressing the participants at the end of the course (left) before the certificates were presented to the participants (right).

Sustainable Agriculture



Participants proudly showing their certificates

International Code of Conduct

International Code of Conduct training took place in Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire on 25 February. The objective was to provide participants with information on the CoC.

The presentation focused on the importance of the CoC and the CropLife contribution to the promotion and implementation of the Code. A demonstration on the modules and actions necessary for compliance also took place. Each participant received a CD of the code and learning tool.

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Representing the Plant Science Industry

North Africa Middle East

Exco Meeting - Casablanca

The Executive Committee (ExCo) of CropLife Africa Middle East held its first meeting for the year 2010 on 2nd February in Casablanca, Morocco.

Chaired by President Eric Bureau and Executive President Rudolf Guyer, the ExCo addressed the following items:

- Approval of the expense budget for 2010
- Review of progress reports from the 3 sub-regional hubs.
- Updates from the global Stewardship Steering Committee together with IPM, Obstocks and Container Management project teams.
- Review of National Associations key performance indicator reports as presented by the association's specialist.
- Evaluation of feedback from global liaison as presented by the Executive President and the Regional Coordinator.
- Update on the quality scheme project and anti-counterfeiting status report – this was presented by the Executive President.
- Approval of the CropLife AME Trademark Policy.
- Endorsement of the regional training plan covering the 3 hubs.
- Agreement on the annual hub workshops together with the Executive Committee and General Assembly meetings for the year 2010.



Egypt

Egypt Hosts Regional IPM Training Programme

The Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation in collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs have started a co-sponsored regional training programme on Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Training commenced in Cairo in mid February and is scheduled to continue until the end of March 2010.

The training activity is conducted by professional master trainers from the Agricultural Research Centre (ARC) and the Extension Service Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The programme aims to promote the IPM principles by providing practical training at field level on various crops through intensive field familiarization visits in the different governorates of the country.

The programme was attended by 28 participants, the majority of from various disciplines within the agricultural sector in the countries of Africa and Middle East.

The certification of participants will be concluded by the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation by the end of March 2010.



Regional Media Plan 2010

In line with the regional communication plan developed in conjunction with the Global Communication Steering Committee, a regional media plan for the year 2010 has been outlined by the 3 hub coordinators.

The media plan includes approximately 22 media events to be held in the 3 regional hubs during 2010. CropLife AME will participate by direct presence, through the support of events held by National Associations in the regions or through events organized by stakeholder organizations covered by local and regional media agencies.

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Other Regional News

Implementation Workshop of the Rotterdam Convention for Uganda

Stephen Matovu, Chairman of CropLife Uganda attended the Implementation Workshop of the Rotterdam Convention for Uganda as a representative of the Uganda Agrochemical industry (CropLife Uganda). The objective of the workshop was to set the stage to facilitate a dialogue among stakeholders and to identify elements of a national action plan or strategy for the implementation of the convention.

Discussions also covered the linkages between the Rotterdam, Basel and Stockholm conventions regarding chemicals, agrochemicals and pharmaceuticals (both animal and human).

The Workshop was attended by a cross section of the stakeholders including Environment Protection, Flower Industry, Labour Unions, Ministry of Trade, National Bureau of Standards and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.



CropLife Malawi Elects New Chairman



Adamson Tong'o

Adamson Tong'o was elected Chairman of CropLife Malawi at the AGM on 26 February 2010. Born in 1954 in Lilongwe, Adamson holds a BSc degree in Biology from the University of Malawi, trained in Forestry at the Indian Forestry college in India and holds an MBA at Brunel University in UK.

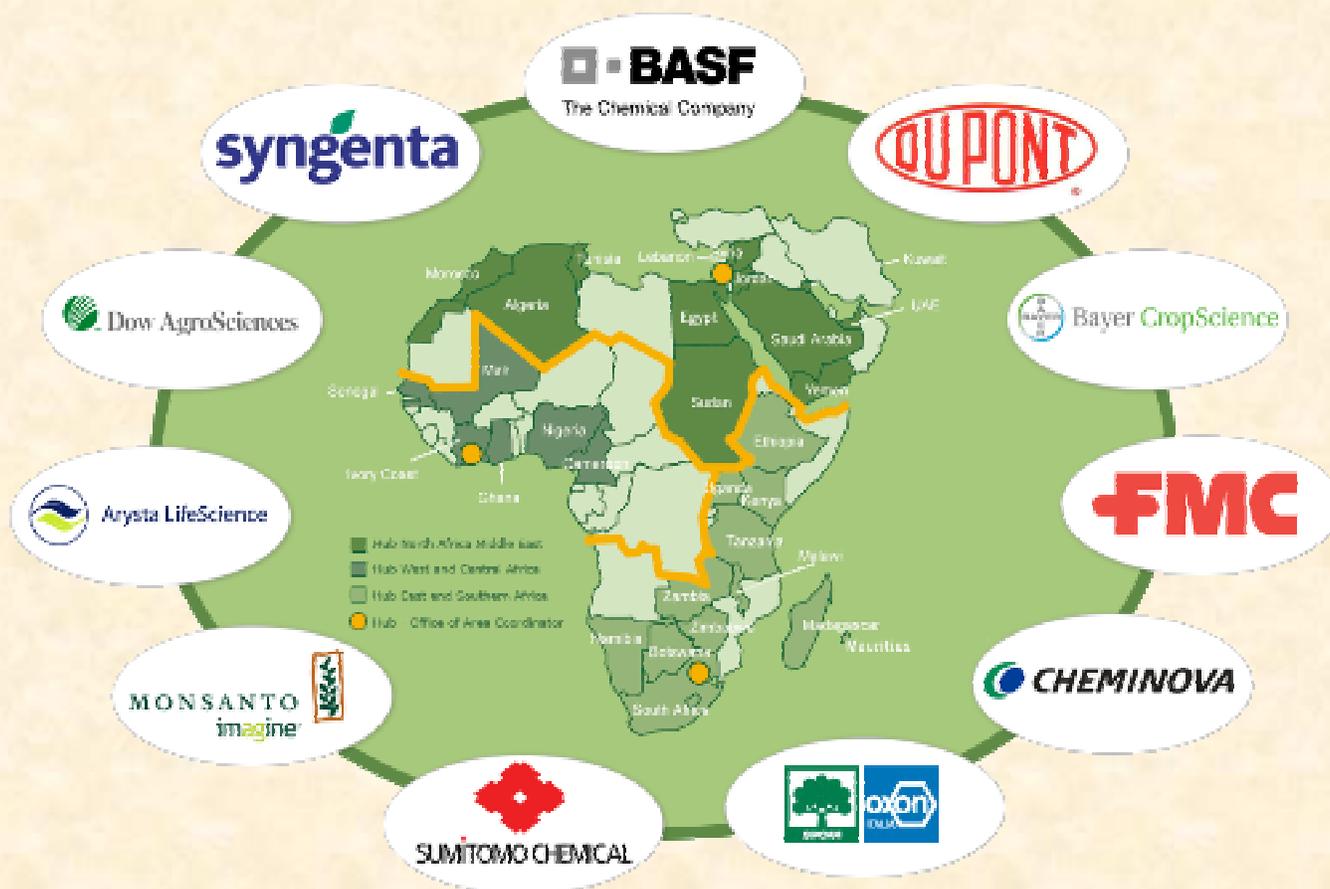
Adamson worked in the Forestry sector between 1979 and 1999 in various capacities. Following this he joined the organisation, Agricultural Trading Company Limited which led to his involvement with CPP's and his association with CropLife Malawi. Adamson served as Secretary of the Association until 3 years ago. We wish Adamson every success for his term of office.

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GROWING FOOD - CREATING RENEWABLES - SUPPLYING SUSTAINABLY

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