



2010 International Day of Biodiversity celebrations



In collaboration with national and international partners, Bioversity International launched a campaign 'Diversity for Life' on 22 May 2008 (the International Day of Biodiversity) leading to and culminating in the International Year of Biodiversity, 2010. The campaign is raising awareness of the role that agricultural biodiversity plays in the lives of people.

To focus the world's attention on the importance biodiversity plays in sustaining life, the United Nations proclaimed 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB). In Africa, where food insecurity threatens the lives of many people in the midst of a large diversity of agricultural biodiversity resources, the year 2010 presents a unique opportunity to highlight the need for the conservation and use of these resources to feed Africa's populations.

The official celebrations marking the International Day of Biodiversity (IDB), (22nd May, celebrated worldwide every year) were officiated by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), National Museums of Kenya (NMK), Bioversity International, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture of Kenya. National and international delegates to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 14th) meeting in Nairobi, researchers, students and the general public attended the event.

As part of the celebrations of the IYB 2010 special events were held at the NMK. These included the Guardians of biodiversity exhibition, a tented exhibition and a lecture. The "Guardians of Biodiversity" comprises photographs and captions on the work of farmers, communities and researchers who are role models in the conservation of agricultural biodiversity resources. It is jointly organised by the CGIAR and Bioversity International and will run for three months at the Museums hall. A similar exhibition is also on display in Italy. The 'Guardians' are people who are dedicated to safeguarding and using agricultural biodiversity to improve their lives and those of others. Their passion for agricultural diversity is helping to create a healthier, more food secure world

Outside the main hall tented exhibits from several agricultural and environmental research institutions and community-based organizations attracted visitors as a Public Discussion entitled "Multifunctionality: The Unexplored Positive Side of Agriculture" ensued inside the museum's lecture hall. The key note speaker during the Discussion was Dr. Hans R. Herren, the 1995 World Food Prize Laureate and President of the Millennium Institute. Dr Herren presented the case for alternative views of agriculture and explored the multifunctional nature of agriculture and how it can mitigate its "transgressions" into nature. Other panelists included Prof. Stephen Gichuki Njuguna, Dean, School of Environmental Studies at Kenyatta University, Patrick Maundu (Bioversity/NMK) and Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati of the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, UNEP. Dr Toby Hodgkins from Bioversity moderated the discussion.

The day's event ended with the planting of trees outside the museum and a visit to Karura Forest for the Karura Forest Biodiversity Action Day where there was a guided tour of ecosystem services, and more planting of trees by Green Wave².

Also see <http://bit.ly/9CfWAY> and <http://bit.ly/bgA37a>

By Elizabeth Obel Lawson and Yvonne Otieno

(Endnotes)

1 SBSTTA is the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice body to the United Nations Framework Convention For more about SBSTTA see <http://www.cbd.int/sbstta/>

2 The Green Wave is a multi-year campaign to raise awareness about biodiversity in general, and the 2010 biodiversity target in particular, that contributes to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) programme of work on Communication, Education and Public Awareness

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Newsbytes

CPWF Phase II project development workshop

A project development workshop for the Challenge Program for Water and Food (CPWF) Phase II in the Limpopo Basin recently was recently held in Pretoria. The workshop was hosted by the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), the coordinating institution for Phase II projects. Integrated management of rainwater to improve smallholder productivity and livelihoods and reduce risk has been chosen as a common Basin Development Challenge for Phase II, with research to be structured into five projects: Farming Systems and Risk Management project; Targeting and Scaling-Out; Small-scale infrastructure; Water governance; and Learning for innovation and adaptive management. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a common research theme and focus, negotiate project inter-dependence for outputs and agree on sites selected for shared activities by project partners.

Climate Change, Aquaculture and Fisheries in West Africa

How will climate change affect fishery resources? Can aquaculture address both national food security and macroeconomic growth? Should regional trade be promoted or access to global markets prioritized? These were some of the questions addressed at a workshop aimed at helping West African Fisheries adapt to climate change.

The workshop which was held in Dakar, Senegal, concluded that better understanding of the likely effects of climate change on West Africa's valuable ocean fisheries is needed to guide the sustainable development of these resources in line with the aspirations and expectations of fisher communities.

The event organized by WorldFish Centre attracted experts from Ghana, Mauritania and Senegal to debate critical issues facing their fisheries in the next 40 years. For more about the workshop see <http://bit.ly/98kQK3>

CGMap Ongoing Research in Africa Highlights!

Sweating over what research our colleagues at IFPRI and AfricaRice are carrying out? No need for that anymore, simply visit Ongoing Research Map for these latest updates and many other enlightening research projects at <http://ongoing-research.cgiar.org/>

Good news! CGMap Ongoing Research in Africa was recently selected as a poster entry for the May Cali, Columbia Knowledge Share Fair. Find out why at: <http://regionalplan.wordpress.com/2010/05/25/knowledge-share-fair-cali-columbia-may-2010/>

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