



The International Centre for
Underutilised Crops

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ICUC-News #39

3 April 2007

Dear colleagues,

With this issue I am wishing you all a Happy Easter – there will be no ICUC-News next week.

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With best wishes,
Hannah

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1. Funding & Job opportunities

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1.1 Ecoagriculture Partners seeking Program Coordinator for Eastern and Southern Africa

Ecoagriculture Partners (www.ecoagriculturepartners.org) is a small, rapidly-growing international non-profit organization working to facilitate landscape management approaches that simultaneously enhance agricultural production, support rural livelihoods and conserve ecosystem services. EP seeks a Coordinator for our program activities in Eastern and Southern Africa, to join our committed team by July 1, 2007 or earliest available.

The Program Coordinator will:

- Provide support to partners in ecoagriculture landscape planning and action in selected landscapes;
- Assist in organizing Ecoagriculture Leadership Courses and other capacity-building activities;
- Support and engage with the regional and national Ecoagriculture Working Groups;
- Provide input to national ecoagriculture 'hotspot' mapping;
- Participate in and help to organize regional dialogues with regional partners on ecoagriculture-related policy and planning issues;
- Support the adaptation and development of ecoagriculture landscape assessment and planning methods in the Eastern and Southern African context;

- Ensure effective coordination among the various elements of EP's program in the region;
- Manage grants, grant proposals, reporting, budgeting and planning for regional projects;
- Manage contracts with regional consultants and grantees for all Ecoagriculture Partners programs;
- Develop and maintain excellent collaborative relationships with key partners in private, public and community sectors.

Required:

- At least five years of relevant experience in land use planning and policy, particularly in developing countries;
- Experience working with the private sector and with farmer or community conservation organizations;
- At least three years of experience working in related topics in East and Southern Africa,
- Experience with multi-stakeholder processes and policy discourse.
- Demonstrated commitment to, and achievements in, promoting market initiatives that achieve both conservation and agricultural livelihood benefits;
- Masters' degree in relevant field;
- Strong skills in team-building and participatory processes;
- Expertise in land use, regional or landscape planning and policy analysis.
- Highly organized
- Excellent English writing and communication skills.

Desirable:

- Experience and competence in working in diverse, cross-cultural teams;
- Experience in project planning, budgeting and management,
- Competency to read and speak French.

Salary and benefits:

- Competitive salary, depending upon experience;
- Health and retirement benefits, life and disability insurance, 20 days vacation, holidays;
- Initial 2-year position, renewable;
- Posting in Nairobi or Kampala negotiable;
- Staff will be hosted in the offices of a regional partner institution.

Please send your C.V., a cover letter indicating your background and experience, and names and contact information for three references in an email with subject line 'Program Coordinator for Eastern and Southern Africa' by April 30, 2007 to Seth Shames, sshames@ecoagriculture.org

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1.2 IFPRI vacancy: Research Fellow (Nutrition, Gender and Poverty in South Asia)

Location: New Delhi, India

Division: Food consumption and Nutrition (FCND)

Grade: 16B

Reports to: Marie Ruel and Ashok Gulati

Closing date: March 31, 2007 or until filled

JOB SUMMARY

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) seeks a qualified candidate to serve as a Research Fellow for a two-year, fixed term, renewable appointment reporting to Ashok Gulati, director of IFPRI's New Delhi Office and Marie Ruel, director of the Food Consumption and Nutrition Division at IFPRI Washington. The selected candidate will develop and implement a policy research program on the linkages between nutrition, gender, poverty and inequity in South Asia and the role of social protection in alleviating poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition among vulnerable groups. This position is based at IFPRI's office in New Delhi, India, but will involve travel to other countries of the region, to IFPRI's headquarters in Washington and to other countries as required.

Essential Duties

- Develop and implement a policy research program on the linkages between nutrition, gender, poverty and inequity in South Asia and the role of social protection in alleviating poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition among vulnerable groups.
- Coordinate South Asia research program on these issues with on-going research programs in the Food Consumption and Nutrition Division, especially the "Pathways out of Poverty", the "Evaluation

of Large-Scale Human Capital Interventions” and the “Diet Quality and Diet Changes” of the Poor programs

- Take the lead in efforts to fund-raise for the research program
- Contribute to IFPRI’s capacity strengthening activities in the South Asian region
- Disseminate research findings in appropriate formats to stakeholders at national, regional Publish research findings and synthesis work in peer-reviewed journal

Required qualifications

- PhD in International Nutrition
- 5-10 years of experience conducting policy research on nutrition/gender/poverty in developing countries
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative research methods
- Experience working across disciplines, and especially with economists, sociologists and anthropologists
- Experience working in multi-cultural teams
- Understanding of program design and implementation, and experience working with implementers of nutrition interventions such as governments, non-governmental organizations and United Nations institutions
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Proven track record in research in international nutrition with a focus on childhood malnutrition – determinants and programs and policies to alleviate malnutrition
- Capability and interest in capacity strengthening and policy dialogue
- Experience working and living in South Asia
- Ability to travel extensively
- Demonstrated ability to publish in peer-reviewed journals on international nutrition topics.
- Demonstrated ability to raise funds for research program

Preferred qualifications

- Familiarity with food and nutrition policy issues in developing countries particularly in South Asia
- Familiarity with national and regional contexts in South Asia
- Past research on gender and childhood malnutrition

IFPRI is one of the international agricultural research institutes organized under the umbrella of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The mandate of IFPRI is to identify and analyze alternative national and international strategies and policies for meeting world food needs in ways that conserve the natural resource base, with emphasis on low income and on the poorer groups in the countries.

IFPRI offers a multicultural, collegial research environment with competitive salary and excellent benefits. IFPRI is an international and equal opportunity organization and believes that diversity of its staff contributes to excellence. We encourage women and developing country professionals to apply.

TO APPLY:

Internal Candidates: Please send cover letter & resume – via email – to Alma López.

External Candidates: Go to www.ifpri.org . Click on “Careers” and “Research” to link you to Position # 07-108 – Research Fellow, FCND. Please complete on-line application, including a complete curriculum vitae and a detailed letter of interest. Also complete section providing 3 references.

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1.3 IFPRI vacancy: Postdoctoral/Research Fellow (CONCERN-IFPRI Partnership on AIDS, Food and Nutrition Security)

Location: Dublin, Ireland

Division: Food consumption and Nutrition (FCND)

Grade: 15B/16B

Reports to: Marie Ruel, Stuart Gillespie and Howard Dalzell

Closing date: March 31, 2007 or until filled

JOB SUMMARY

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) seeks a qualified candidate to serve as a Postdoctoral/Research Fellow for a two-year, fixed term, renewable appointment reporting to Marie Ruel and Stuart Gillespie and liaising with Howard Dalzell, Policy Director in Concern. This position is designed to facilitate an emerging partnership between IFPRI and Concern Worldwide. The successful candidate will conduct operationally relevant research on AIDS, livelihoods, food and nutrition security in the context of IFPRI's ongoing activities within the RENEWAL program, its emerging program on Agriculture and Health, and Concern's activities in this field. This position will be based at Concern's headquarters in Dublin, but will involve periods of stay at IFPRI headquarters in Washington, D.C. and extensive travel to several focal countries in Africa where Concern and RENEWAL are both active.

The objective of the work program is to engage in new policy-relevant, operational research on AIDS, livelihoods, food and nutrition security that furthers the agendas of Concern and of RENEWAL. The geographical context is primarily southern and eastern Africa, especially Zambia, Malawi, Kenya and Uganda.

Essential Duties

- Initiate key operational research on AIDS, food, nutrition, agriculture and livelihoods, in the context of the goals of Concern and of IFPRI, and publication of the research including peer reviewed publication;
- Contribute to capacity strengthening support to RENEWAL partners in developing countries
- Support the director and regional coordinator of RENEWAL in their activities.

Required qualifications

- PhD in Economics, Agricultural Economics, or a relevant development subject
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative methods
- Strong understanding of program design, implementation and operational issues
- Ability to work across disciplines
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Proven track record in research on the broader dimensions of the AIDS epidemic.
- Capability and interest in capacity strengthening and policy dialogue
- Experience working and living in developing countries, especially Africa
- Ability to work in multi-disciplinary and intercultural teams
- Ability to travel extensively

Preferred qualifications

- Familiarity with food and nutrition policy issues in developing countries, in particular Africa
- Demonstrated ability to publish in peer-reviewed journals on AIDS, food and nutrition security.
- Experience of working in the NGO sector
- Familiarity with national and regional contexts in Africa, particularly southern Africa.

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TO APPLY:

Internal Candidates: Please send cover letter & resume – via email – to Alma López.

External Candidates: Go to www.ifpri.org. Click on "Careers" and "Research" to link you to Position # 07-107 – Postdoctoral/Research Fellow, FCND. Please complete on-line application, including a complete curriculum vitae and a detailed letter of interest. Also complete section providing 3 references.

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1.4 IFPRI vacancy: Research Fellow (Joint appointment – IFPRI and Department of Global Health of George Washington University)

Location: Washington, D.C.

Division: Food consumption and Nutrition (FCND) and Department of Global Health of George Washington University

Grade: 16B

Reports to: Marie Ruel – Division Director/FCND and Jim Sherry – Chairman/Department of Global Health of George Washington University

Closing date: April 13, 2007 or until filled

JOB SUMMARY

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Department of Global Health of the School of Public Health and Health Services (SPHHS) at George Washington University (GWU) seeks a qualified candidate to serve as a Research Fellow for a joint two-year, fixed term, renewable appointment. The successful candidate will develop and implement a policy research program on the linkages between agriculture, health and nutrition; lecture and supervise graduate students in their related thesis work. This position is based in Washington D.C. and the candidate will have an office both at IFPRI's headquarters and at GWU.

Essential Duties

- Develop and implement a policy research program on the linkages between agriculture and health; examples of areas of research include, but are not limited to: avian influenza and livelihoods and food security; HIV/AIDS and livelihoods and agriculture; nutrition, diet and health; food safety and growing food supply chains; and waterborne diseases and water management.
- Lead and coordinate the newly formed "Agriculture and Health Platform" of the Consultative Group of International Agriculture Research Centers (CGIAR)". This will involve identifying key research and policy partners, setting research priorities, fund-raising for the research program, and coordinating the research, capacity-strengthening and communication activities of the program.
- Establish and maintain links between this research program and other on-going research programs at IFPRI and GWU, including the programs on HIV/AIDS and livelihoods, the HarvestPlus biofortification program, Institutional Learning Collaboration in East Africa, the avian influenza and food safety programs, and the diet quality and diet changes of the poor program.
- Disseminate research findings in appropriate formats to stakeholders at national, regional and international levels
- Serve as a member of the research and teaching faculty of George Washington University, including supervision of the related thesis work of graduate students.
- Publish research findings and synthesis work in peer-reviewed journal

Required qualifications

- PhD in International Nutrition, Public Health (with focus on nutrition)
- 5-10 years of experience conducting policy research on agriculture and health/nutrition-related issues in developing countries
- Strong quantitative research methods skills
- Experience working across disciplines, and especially with economists, health specialists, sociologists and anthropologists
- Experience working in multi-cultural teams
- Understanding of program design and implementation, and experience working with implementers of nutrition interventions such as governments, non-governmental organizations and United Nations institutions
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Proven track record in research in agriculture and health/nutrition-related topics in developing countries
- Capability and interest in capacity strengthening and policy dialogue
- Ability to travel extensively
- Demonstrated ability to publish in peer-reviewed journals on international nutrition, health and agriculture topics.
- Demonstrated ability to raise funds for research program.
- Demonstrated capacity to serve as a lecturer and supervisor of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows

Preferred qualifications

- Past research on agriculture, nutrition and health issues
- Proficient in at least one other language, preferably French or Spanish
- Strong networks and links with public health community

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TO APPLY:

Internal Candidates (IFPRI employees): Please send cover letter & resume – via email – to Alma López.

External Candidates: Go to www.ifpri.org. Click on “Careers” and “Research” to link you to Position # 07-115 – Research Fellow, FCND. Please complete on-line application, including a complete curriculum vitae and a detailed letter of interest. Also complete section providing 3 references.

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1.5 University of Hohenheim, Full Professor "Biobased Products and Energy Crops"

The Faculty of Agricultural Sciences invites applications for the position “Full Professor (W3) of "Biobased Products and Energy Crops" at the Institute of Crop Production and Grassland Research.

The candidate will conduct research and teaching in Renewable Resources and Bioenergy Crops in an ecosystems context. Research will focus on new innovative methodological approaches such as life cycle analysis and modelling. Experience in crop science is required.

The candidate will participate in interdisciplinary research programmes of the university’s scientific centres. Teaching is expected in German and English both at undergraduate and graduate level.

Qualifications:

Doctorate degree plus post-doctoral record of excellence in scholarly research in the above mentioned areas and teaching experience to warrant appointment as full professor.

The University of Hohenheim attempts to increase the number of female scientists and strongly encourages women to apply.

The position will be tenured. Candidates who have not served as a University Professor will initially be appointed on a fixed-term contract. Exceptions may apply for candidates from foreign countries or from the private sector/industry. The position is to be filled starting winter term 2007/08.

Applications including curriculum vitae, documentation of academic achievements and teaching experience, and a list of publications are to be sent to the address below by 15 May 2007.

Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (300) University of Hohenheim
70593 Stuttgart, Germany, www.uni-hohenheim.de

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2. Workshops & Training Courses

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2.1 Community-based natural resource management and adaptive co-management

Zuurberg Mountain Inn, Addo Elephant National Park, South Africa, 25-28 June 2007

Offered by Rhodes University

Contact information:

Bigtree Project Support. Tel and Fax +27 (0)46 6226242. E-mail: bigtree@intekom.co.za. Alternative fax: +27-(0)86 5208750. Mobile: +27-(0)82 7095329

The course brochure and application form can be downloaded from:
<http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/events/2007CBNRMcoursebrochure.doc>
Or <http://www.nmmu.ac.za/scb/relatcon.htm>

Purpose of the course

Community-Based Natural Resource Management has three main objectives: a) maintaining or improving ecosystem integrity; b) improving the well-being of impoverished people; and c) developing the capacity of local people to manage their own natural resources sustainably. More recently, Adaptive Co-Management, where institutions and individuals learn and work together and flexibly adjust their management strategies in response to new information, has emerged as a complementary concept to CBNRM. In CBNRM the emphasis is often on co-management emphasises cooperative governance, learning, adaptability and capacity development. The purpose of this course is to how to use adaptive co-management as a tool to achieve the outcomes of CBNRM.

The course takes researchers and practitioners through the challenges associated with planning and implementing CBNRM through Adaptive Co-Management. The course will be structured to follow the activities necessary to establish, govern, manage and monitor CBNRM projects, especially those aimed at sustainable natural resource management and poverty alleviation. We aim to provide participants with a number of important and useful tools, which they can use in their own contexts to manage projects around critical success factors. In addition the course will encourage sharing of participants' experience and knowledge, which will add to the information provided by presenters to develop a consensual approach to implementation. Each session will provide opportunities for discussions and contributions from participants. There will be group activities associated with some sessions.

The course will benefit project managers, policy makers, researchers, educators and practitioners working at the interface of natural resources and people. It is of particular relevance to those directly involved in co-management initiatives, community participation in conservation, community-based natural resource management, poverty alleviation through natural resource management, community tourism, developing area agriculture, and community forestry. Although the emphasis is on developing countries, the concepts and outcomes will also be very useful to researchers, policy makers and practitioners in developed countries.

Learning will be through a) formal lectures; b) discussion and sharing of experiences; c) group-based problem solving exercises; d) assessment of real-life case studies; and e) a field trip to assess adaptive co-management in practice. Ample time will be allocated for participants to reflect and share experiences.

The course will be run at the scenic Zuurberg Mountain Inn (<http://www.addo.co.za/>) e-mail Zuurberg@addo.co.za, in the Greater Addo National Park (www.sanparks.org). A block booking has been made. The cost of accommodation (including breakfast) of R 450 (US\$ 65) /day is NOT included in the course fee.

The course fee of R 5 200.00 (US\$ 740) includes all course materials, including the book Rights Resources and Rural Development: CBNRM in southern Africa, edited by Christo Fabricius and Eddie Koch. It also includes transport from Port Elizabeth airport to the course venue, as well as all lunches and teas for the duration of the course, and a field excursion.

The fee excludes accommodation, breakfasts and dinners during the course, which should be settled directly with Zuurberg Mountain Inn. A minimum of 25 participants is needed for the course to be viable, and a maximum of 30 participants can be accommodated.

For more information, contact Prof. Christo Fabricius, Tel. (office) +27-46-6037003, Fax +27 86 5208750, Cell +27 83 6318828, SKYPE christo.fabricius

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3. Publications & Information

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3.1 Malawi to roll out 'fertiliser trees' project

John Palmer forwarded this link to an example of how underutilised plants can successfully become mainstreamed: <http://www.scidev.net/News/index.cfm?fuseaction=readNews&itemid=3501&language=1>

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3.2 New European Master of Science Agroecology

A new European Master of Science Agroecology will start in August 2007. The master is a 4 semesters (24 months) of full-time study curriculum (120 European credits) with study stays at different Universities in Europe. The master is jointly carried out by five European partners: Norwegian University of Life Science, As, Norway, FESIA consortium (ISARA-Lyon, ESA Angers), France, Swedish University of Agricultural Science, Uppsala, Sweden, University of Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy, University of Torino, Italy.

Detailed information and downloads can be accessed on www.agroecos.fr or www.agroecology.fr

Please distribute this information among interested students at your institutions. For further information please contact Alexander Wezel (wezel@isara.fr).

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To note: with 16 April 2007, ISARA-Lyon will move to a new place: AGRAPOLE - 23, rue Jean Baldassini 69364 LYON cedex 07 Standard: +33(0)4 27 85 85 85 - Fax +33(0)4 27 85 85 86 Direct line: +33(0)4 27 85 85 84 (A. Wezel)

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3.3 Genetic modification of taro plant pits Hawaiians against some scientists

Luigi Guarino sent in this interesting contribution. Though it was published on 1 April it doesn't seem to be an April Fool's contribution. It gives me opportunity to point out ICUC's position paper on biotechnology again (www.icuc-iwmi.org → recently published).

HONOLULU: Both scientists and Native Hawaiians want to save the sacred taro plant from an uncertain future, but they strongly disagree on whether genetic modification is the answer.

Native Hawaiians believe the taro, which is used to make the starchy food poi and revered as an ancestor of the Hawaiian people, should not be tampered with. Taro, tall and broad-leafed, rise from paddy-like patches around the islands, and the purplish poi, a glutinous substance avoided by some, is an essential ingredient at Hawaiian luaus.

Researchers say the only way to protect the taro plant from spreading modern plant diseases is to insert resistant genes from rice, wheat and grape crops, altering the basic structure of the plant. State lawmakers have stalled a bill sought by many Hawaiians that would have placed a statewide moratorium on genetic modification of taro for 10 years.

"How bad do things have to get before those who are anti-genetic modification will admit that taro needs help?" asked Susan Miyasaka, a researcher at the University of Hawaii-Hilo, who has been testing Chinese taro breeds. "The taro farmers are having trouble making ends meet."

About 50 protesters who gathered at a rally at the state Capitol on Friday said they don't want the so-called help that scientists say they can provide.

They question whether genetic modification will be any more effective than traditional crossbreeding techniques, and they worry that genetically modified crops could contaminate their Hawaiian taro breeds.

For some of the demonstrators, the issue about preserving the purity of the taro rather than the scientific merits of genetic modification.

"What we're really angry about is that the biotech industry has turned this into a genetic modification issue," said Hawaiian activist Walter Ritte. "This is about us protecting our family member."

According to Hawaiian legend, the cosmic first couple gave birth to a stillborn child, Haloa, from whose gnarled body sprang the broad-leafed plant whose roots are ground into poi. The Hawaiian people, it is believed, came from a second brother, making the plant part of their common ancestry.

Since ancient Hawaiian times, taro yields have dropped from 48,000 pounds (22,000 kilograms) per acre to 11,000 pounds (5,000 kilograms) per acre, Miyasaka said. Her research with preliminary tests has shown that her genetically modified Chinese taro is resistant to leaf blight, and she hopes to begin greenhouse trials soon.

The University of Hawaii has agreed not to do research on Hawaiian types of taro, and it will be careful to prevent their experimental taro from breeding with native varieties, said Stephanie Whalen, president and director of the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center.

But scientists see no harm in continuing taro research.

"Just because you have research and development doesn't mean you're going to commercialize," Whalen said. "If they don't want it, nothing will happen."

From the International Herald Tribune, The Associated Press, Sunday, April 1, 2007

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4. ICUC-related information

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- no entry -

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Championing underutilised plant species for food, nutrition and sustainable development