



The International Centre for  
Underutilised Crops

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# ICUC-News #49

17 July 2007

Dear colleagues,

My apologies for the delay in sending ICUC-News due to my heavy travel schedule. The up-side of this of course is that ICUC is much in demand to contribute to a variety of exciting activities. I am writing this from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where I am attending the International Tropical Fruit Network's (TFNet) International Seminar on Economics and Marketing of Tropical and Subtropical Fruits; last week I attended an expert consultation on the role of herbal, medicinal and aromatic plants to reduce poverty and reduce poverty of rural people in the Near East and North Africa region, organised by IFAD and ICARDA in Aleppo, Syria (see point 3.3).

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With best wishes,  
Hannah

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**1. Funding & Job opportunities**  
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### 1.1 Vacancies at ICIMOD

From Beatrice Murray – closing date 16 July 2007. My apologies for this late publication; Beatrice, please let us know if the closing date has been extended.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is an international, independent mountain learning and knowledge centre committed to improving the sustainable

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livelihoods of mountain peoples in the extended Himalayan region. ICIMOD serves eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) area: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan as well as the global mountain community. Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and brings together a partnership of its regional member countries, over 300 partner institutions, and committed donors.

ICIMOD is currently seeking to recruit qualified persons for the following vacant professional level positions for which applications are now invited.

1. Senior Economist

A proven background in natural resource economics, development economics, and/or applied economics with a Ph.D. in the relevant field; 6 years experiences in micro credit and micro enterprise, value chains are desired, specific works on remittances, micro-credits, and migration is an additional asset; experience in poverty reduction initiatives through livelihood development in the rural communities preferable in rural mountainous areas.

2. Information and Knowledge Management Coordinator

An advanced degree in a relevant discipline with specialization in knowledge management; 10 years of experience in the field of knowledge management and development communication, of which part preferably has been gained in the region

3. Capacity Development Officer

Post graduate academic background in social sciences, psychology, pedagogy, adult education, training management or institutional development; 10 years' professional experience in managing training programs, unit or facility, part of which should be in mountain related-field: natural resources management, livelihood development, poverty alleviation, etc, preferably in the HKH region.

4. Environmental Change Specialist

Preferably a PhD. academic background or equivalent experience, in environmental change or climate change with an up-to-date research knowledge and expertise in networking, multi-disciplinary research and institutional coordination.

5. Disaster Risk Reduction Specialist

A post-graduate academic degree or equivalent in natural resource management or social sciences with a thrust towards natural resources management; 5 years of work experience in the field of disaster risk reduction, of which part preferably has been gained in the HKH region.

6. Programme Manager, Integrated Water & Land Management

Post-graduate academic degree or equivalent in water, land, or natural resource management or related fields; 10 years of work experience in integrated research and development work, of which part preferably has been gained in the HKH region.

Further information on the vacancies, including Terms of Reference for the positions, can be found at [www.icimod.org](http://www.icimod.org) or can be requested from the address below. Applications with complete curriculum vitae together with the names and addresses of three referees should be sent to the following address not later than 16 July 2007.

- Applications from qualified women and disadvantaged section of the society are strongly encouraged.
- Only short-listed candidates will be notified.

HRD Officer, ICIMOD, GPO Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Tel: (00977-1) 5003222; Fax: (00977-1) 5003299 / 5003277  
E-mail: [hrd@icimod.org](mailto:hrd@icimod.org)

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**1.2 Recruiting ASB Programme Associate**

From Joyce Kasyoki – closing date 20 July 2007

The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) is recruiting a Programme Associate to be part of the ASB's Global Coordination Office and the ASB partnership as a whole. The incumbent will be based at the

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World Agroforestry Centre, headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The Associate will support the coordination and implementation of the ASB global programme, particularly its new policy focus: 'Avoided Deforestation with Sustainable Benefits: A Simple Way to Reduce Carbon Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)'. The Associate will be active in synthesis of research findings, understanding of policy processes, facilitating the global partnership, sharing and managing information, raising public awareness, and fundraising. The Associate will support ICRAF's agenda on multifunctional agroforestry landscapes for environmental services, climate change and policy options and tools for agroforestry.

#### About ASB and World Agroforestry Centre

ASB is the only global partnership devoted entirely to research on the tropical forest margins. ASB is a system wide programme of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) hosted by ICRAF. It aims to identify, assess, and develop policy, institutional and technological options that can raise income of rural households without increasing deforestation or undermining essential environmental services. Much ASB research focuses on forest margin benchmark sites in Peru, Brazil, Cameroon, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines. ASB's goal is to raise productivity and income of rural households in the humid tropics without increasing deforestation or undermining essential environmental services. ASB links researchers working across Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America and builds connections between knowledge and action at the global, regional, national and local scales. ASB focuses at the nexus of two important global problems: tropical deforestation and human poverty. The World Agroforestry Centre's mission: We use science to generate knowledge on the complex role of trees in livelihoods and the environment, and foster use of this knowledge to improve decisions and practices impacting on the poor.

We invite you to learn more about ASB and ICRAF by accessing our web sites: [www.asb.cgiar.org](http://www.asb.cgiar.org) and [www.worldagroforestrycentre.org](http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org)

#### Responsibilities

Under the supervision of ASB Global Coordinator, Brent Swallow, the responsibilities will include:

- *Research and synthesis*: Undertake research that contributes to the global synthesis of ASB results across sites in the three tropical continents and ICRAF's research agenda on environmental services. Assist and engage with REDD analysis by country teams; information synthesis and dissemination; prepare summary results; and disseminate research results through web sites, listservers and other media. Contribute to the writing, editing, and dissemination of ASB research outputs ([www.asb.cgiar.org/publications](http://www.asb.cgiar.org/publications)).
- *Facilitation, partnership revitalization and maintenance*: Provide support and training to national teams and new projects on REDD and Rewards for Environmental Services [www.worldagroforestry.org/cres](http://www.worldagroforestry.org/cres) in several technical areas: visioning, scenario analysis, [www.asb.cgiar.org/ma/scenarios](http://www.asb.cgiar.org/ma/scenarios), modelling, Participatory GIS, and institutional analysis. Facilitate partnership and country scoping for ASB's new policy focus, applying concepts of boundary organizations and outcome mapping.
- *Fundraising*: Lead and support preparation of concept notes, budgets, workplans, and proposals for submission to donors, especially related to REDD.
- *Information sharing and management related to emerging science and policy trends*: Targeted information sharing, capacity building, and virtual and on-the-ground support to regional and national teams on emerging science and policy trends related to ASB and ICRAF's research agenda. Keep the ASB website up-to-date following ASB's web strategy. Ensure consistent dissemination of information on global trends related to deforestation and natural resource management through ASB listserv (on funding opportunities, training seminars, relevant capacity-building workshops). Implement a system of monitoring and evaluation of knowledge outputs.
- *Management*: Help plan and coordinate workshops and ASB meetings, including the annual meeting of the Global Steering Group. Contribute to strategic planning for policy outcomes, capacity building and institutional strengthening. Participate in the recruitment of ASB Research Fellows and interns.

#### The Requirements:

- M.Sc. with a minimum of two (2) years post-graduate experience, preferably related to research or research support in an international organization
- Geographer (social, economic), Environmental studies or other discipline relevant to ASB: e.g., public policy, natural resource management, political science
- Proficiency in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- Fluency in English, with excellent communication skills (verbal and written)
- Experience with design and maintenance of websites
- Well organized and able to meet deadlines
- Excellent facilitation skills and ability to work well in multicultural and multidisciplinary teams
- Previous experience travelling, living, and working in developing countries and willingness to travel.

While not required, the following skills also would be advantageous:

- Familiarity with French, Bahasa Indonesia, Thai, Spanish and/or Portuguese
- Experience with CGIAR institutions and donors
- Familiarity with the techniques of outcome mapping, community visioning and/or scenario analysis
- Experience in simulation modeling, remote sensing, statistical analysis and/or database management
- Interest and experience in monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment

Women and citizens of countries where the ASB Consortium is active are particularly encouraged to apply. We believe that staff diversity promotes excellence.

#### Terms of offer

ICRAF/ASB is an equal opportunity employer offering an internationally competitive salary and benefits package, and a collegial working environment. The appointment will be for an initial period of two (2) years with six (6) months probation period, with potential for extension and renewable subject to assessment of performance and availability of funds. Applicants are invited to send one (1) page cover letter illustrating their suitability for the above position against the listed qualifications/competencies/skills, and a detailed curriculum vitae with names and addresses of three (3) referees who are knowledgeable about the applicant's professional achievements (including telephone, fax numbers and email addresses). All correspondence should be addressed to the Human Resources Unit, sent via email to [icrafhru@cgiar.org](mailto:icrafhru@cgiar.org) with a copy to [ASB@cgiar.org](mailto:ASB@cgiar.org). Please mark the email subject as: "ASB Programme Associate". Applications will be considered until 20<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

Only short listed applicants will be contacted.

#### More about ASB

A comprehensive external review in 2005 <http://www.asb.cgiar.org/impact/default.asp> found that ASB is "... the world's pre-eminent pantropical research system for producing generalizable understanding of human/environment interaction at the forest margins." ASB is governed by a Global Steering Group of 10 national and international agricultural research institutions. ASB received the CGIAR Science Award for Outstanding Partnership in 2005. CGIAR Centres participating in the ASB Alliance include CIAT-TSBF, CIFOR, ICRAF and IITA. ASB partners around the world share an interest in conserving forests and reducing poverty in the humid tropics.

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### **1.3 Project Coordinator System Wide Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Agriculture (SWIHA)**

Closing date 30 July 2007

Africa Rice Center (WARDA) temporarily headquartered in Cotonou, Benin, invites applications for the position of Project Coordinator System Wide Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Agriculture

WARDA is one of the 15 international agricultural research Centers supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). It is also an autonomous intergovernmental research association of African member states.

#### OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY

The Project Coordinator (SWIHA) is the focal point for the development and management of the goals and objectives of the SWIHA programme within WARDA

#### DETAILED RESPONSIBILITIES

- Set up and manage a modern website and information exchange portal
- Identification and development of intervention strategies for the mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS through agriculture in collaboration with National Agricultural Research Centres (NARS)
- Development of materials for the building of awareness

- Coordination of the flow of information flow among SWIHA stakeholders regionally and internationally
- Identification of potential partners and sub-projects
- Promotion of staff sensitization and awareness of HIV/AIDS within the WARDA workplace
- Resource mobilization through the development of project proposals
- Development of links with other CGIAR centres for the development and implementation of best practices
- Supervise WARDA-based students working on HIV/AIDS in agriculture.
- Prepare project reports and briefs as well as material for publication in technical journals.

**REQUIREMENTS**

- Advanced degree in the Social Sciences (including Development/Rural Sociology, Anthropology and related disciplines)
- A background in agricultural/rural development will be a strong advantage
- Experience or background in policy analysis and advocacy work in HIV/AIDS
- An established reputation for understanding complex systems, setting research priorities and leading interdisciplinary research teams on global/ regional issues
- Demonstrated capacity to work collaboratively within a multidisciplinary, multicultural setting
- Extensive fundraising experience
- Familiarity with the current status of agriculture with West Africa
- Ability to communicate effectively in English or French (and working knowledge of one) would be distinct advantages

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

Coordinate research and development activities related to HIV/AIDS particularly within the context of, but not limited to rural/agricultural stakeholders in sub-Saharan Africa. collaborate with partner organizations and national/international stakeholders on research and capacity building initiatives related to HIV AIDS mitigation in rural/agricultural communities

**BENEFITS AND TENURE**

WARDA offers an internationally competitive salary and benefits. The initial contract period is two years and is renewable.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Candidates should send an application with current curriculum vitae and the names and addresses (including telephone/fax/e-mail) of three referees to:

Human Resources Manager, Africa Rice Center (WARDA), 01 B.P. 2031Cotonou, Benin  
 Fax: + 229 - 21 35 05 56  
 Tel : + 229 - 21 35 01 88  
 E-mail: WARDA-HR@CGIAR.ORG

Applications will be received until July 30, 2007

*WARDA believes that staff diversity contributes to excellence and encourages women professionals to apply. [www.warda.org](http://www.warda.org)*

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**1.4 Two joint AVRDC-ICARDA vacancies**

From Ahmed Sidahmed – closing date 15 August 2007

**1. Horticultural Economist**

AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center is a non-profit, autonomous international agricultural research center with headquarters in Taiwan and regional offices around the globe. AVRDC conducts vegetable research and development programs that contribute to improved incomes and diets in the developing world.

The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) is a non-profit international agricultural research center in a worldwide consortium of 15 centers, supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Its mission is to improve the

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welfare of poor people and alleviate poverty through research and training in dry areas of the developing world by increasing the production, productivity and nutritional quality of foods while preserving and enhancing the natural resources base.

AVRDC and ICARDA are seeking a horticultural economist for a joint ICARDA/AVRDC appointment to enhance horticultural research and development in the near East and North Africa (NENA) region.

**Key Responsibilities:** The successful incumbent will be responsible for the coordination, management and conduct of research and development aspects of horticultural systems in the NENA region.

Specifically, the incumbent will:

- Develop competitive and efficient horticultural product supply chain models for linking farmers in NENA to markets through local, national, regional and global food chains, supported by quality assurance standard and certification systems;
- Design and conduct pilot studies, and develop/adapt appropriate upscaling approaches for successes emerging from the pilot studies;
- Link into existing training and capacity building initiatives for enhancing farmers ability to be reliable commodity-chain partners, and specially for enhancing the capacity of women in value-added processing and water use efficiency; and
- Develop and maintain databases and disseminate information in local languages on marketing potential and post harvest handling/processing of fruits, vegetables, ornamentals, herbs and spices, medicinal plants that can be grown competitively in the NENA region.

**Qualifications and Experience:** The applicant must possess a Ph.D. in horticultural economics or related discipline with a postgraduate research experience in marketing. S/He should have excellent communication skills in spoken and written English and good track record of research, development, publication, and obtaining funding for research and development activities. Working experience in NENA region and fluency in Arabic and/or French are desirable.

## **2. Olericulturist / Horticulturist**

AVRDC and ICARDA are seeking an olericulturist (vegetable horticulturist) for a joint ICARDA/AVRDC appointment to enhance vegetable research in the near East and North Africa (NENA) region.

**Key Responsibilities:** The successful incumbent will be responsible for the coordination, management and conduct of activities that will expand and strengthen vegetable research and development in the NENA region.

Specifically, the incumbent will:

- Survey the current research and extension programs for vegetable crops, including indigenous vegetables, in NENA, to develop a process for collaboration, networking and sharing of information among institutions in the region;
- Establish a program for collecting, storing and characterizing regional vegetable germplasm and for testing new cultivars of the major vegetable crops in various sites in the NENA region in collaboration with appropriate national research and extension centers and seed companies/nurseries; and identify the cultivars most suitable for the major agro-ecological zones and consumer preferences;
- Conduct research using improved germplasm and crop management practices addressing regionally important abiotic and biotic constraints including heat, drought, salinity, high cost of water, low soil fertility and pests and diseases;
- Organize training programs on sustainable production systems for the selected vegetable crops for participants from the NENA region; and
- Develop and maintain databases and disseminate information in local languages on sustainable production systems (both conventional and certified GAP/organic) for vegetable crops in the NENA region.

**Qualifications and Experience:** The applicant must possess a Ph.D. in a relevant field of horticulture, preferably vegetable cropping systems, with an excellent record in research, development, publications and obtaining funding for research and development activities. S/He must have well-tested organizational skills and excellent communication skills in spoken and written English. Working experience in the NENA region and fluency in Arabic, and/or French are desirable.

**Terms of Appointment for both positions:** The initial appointment will be for 2 years with possibility of re-appointment. Salary and perquisites will be commensurate with qualifications and experience, and

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will be comparable with regional positions for agricultural scientists. The successful applicant will be based at ICARDA's headquarters in Syria.

Application: Submit a letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, with names and contact addresses (phone number and email) of three referees to Ms. Lilia Tan-Habacon, Human Resources Manager, AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center, P.O. Box 42, Shanhua, Tainan 74199, Taiwan; e-mail: lilia.tanhacon@netra.avrdc.org.tw; fax: +886-6-583-0009.

Closing Date: The closing date for both applications is 15 August 2007, or until the respective position is filled. *Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.*

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### **1.5. Project Officer – Ecosystem Management**

From Pat Hawes – closing date: 17 August 2007

Reporting to: Programme Officer – Ecosystem Management  
Duty station: IUCN Headquarters, Gland, Switzerland  
Expected start date: As soon as possible  
Function group: P1 in the IUCN classification system  
Work percentage: 100%

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Ecosystem Management Programme (EMP) has the following primary functions:

- to support the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), a network with 400 members from a variety of backgrounds;
- to ensure adequate connections of CEM to other IUCN programmes particularly in relation to gathering and disseminating lessons learned from applying the Ecosystem Approach;
- To coordinate IUCN's work on islands and drylands.

CEM and EMP provide expert guidance on integrated approaches to the management of natural and modified ecosystems to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

#### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Project Officer will carry out the following tasks:

##### **CEM Support**

- Assist with the development and implementation of a joint project of the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), cross-cutting across IUCN's global thematic and regional programmes.
- Assist with the preparation of the CEM Steering Committee meetings.
- Assist with the further development and implementation of the CEM communications and fundraising strategies.
- Assist with the implementation of the CEM member engagement strategy and facilitate strengthened linkages between the Commission and IUCN's regional and thematic programmes.
- Compile and edit the bi-monthly newsletter "Ecosystems" and the monthly CEM member update.
- Develop and update the CEM/EMP website and facilitate its transition to a unified IUCN Content Management System.

##### **Other**

- Assist in the development of and fundraising for project proposal(s) for IUCN's work on drylands and islands, building on past projects and integrating inputs from IUCN's global thematic and regional programmes.
- Assist in the implementation of EMP's projects, with a view to strengthening project management capacity (including administration and financial management, periodic evaluation and adjustment of objectives and work plans as needed).
- Assist with the preparation of meetings of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements where CEM and/or EMP provide substantive inputs (e.g. IUCN position papers, side events, presentations).
- Coordinate EMP's communications activities (publications, website, etc).
- Liaise with the IUCN communicators group to clarify CEM/EMP needs for communications support and help CEM/EMP to respond proactively to changes in IUCN communications policies and practices.

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REQUIREMENTS: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- A degree (preferably at Masters level) in natural sciences or a relevant field of environmental science.
- Demonstrated record of project management experience (workplans, budgets and financial tracking, periodic reporting, liaison with relevant stakeholders).
- Ability to work independently and under pressure to meet deadlines.
- Flexibility, reliability and above all a good team player.
- Strong organizational and analytical skills and attention to detail.
- Good interpersonal and capacity building skills; demonstrated ability to communicate in a cross-cultural environment and to a wide range of audiences, including with volunteer experts and colleagues across the world.
- Excellent writing and editing skills.
- Written and spoken fluency in English and preferably in at least one of the other two (French and Spanish) official languages of IUCN.
- Proficient computer skills and familiarity with major software packages. Excellent knowledge of electronic communications and networks. Knowledge of website development and maintenance.

SALARY

The gross annual salary for this position is in the range from CHF80,640 to CHF100,800, subject to deductions for social security contributions and second-pillar pension, and before tax.

APPLICATIONS

Interested candidates who meet the selection requirements are requested to submit their curriculum vitae and a supporting letter of motivation in English. The letter must specifically address the qualifications and skills in the order presented above. Candidates should also provide the names and contact details of three referees, including one recent employer.

Applications by email are preferred. They should be sent only to the following email address before 17 August 2007:

Human Resources Officer, The World Conservation Union (IUCN), Rue Mauverney 28, 1196 Gland, Switzerland

Fax: +41 22 999 0339

E-mail: [jobapplications@iucn.org](mailto:jobapplications@iucn.org)

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**2. Workshops & Training Courses**  
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**2.1 Call for applications: Doctoral Students Competition to attend the IFPRI 2020 China Conference**

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Government of China (State Council Leading Group Office on Poverty Alleviation and Development) are organizing a high-level international conference on "Taking Action for the World's Poor and Hungry People" on October 17-19, 2007, in Beijing, China. This conference will bring together leaders in government, civil society, development organizations, business, and research from around the world to deliberate on innovative ways to accelerate the reduction of poverty, vulnerability, and hunger.

An international competition is being held to identify and invite leading doctoral students working on poverty and hunger to this conference. PhD students working on issues related to poverty and hunger are encouraged to submit an application outlining their research and the relevance of their work to the theme of the conference. Around ten applicants will be selected as IFPRI 2020 Vision Doctoral Students and invited to attend the Beijing conference in October.

For more information and to find out about eligibility and selection criteria, and the application process go to <http://www.ifpri.org/2020chinaconference/chconfdoctoral.asp>. The application deadline is August 19, 2007.

For further questions regarding the competition email [ifpri-2020DoctoralStudents@cgiar.org](mailto:ifpri-2020DoctoralStudents@cgiar.org).

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## 2.2 Conference on Banana and Plantain in Africa

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) is organizing a conference in Mombasa, Kenya (April 7-10, 2008) that will focus on banana and plantain research across Africa: lessons learnt and the way forward. Fostering international partnerships is a major objective of the conference, with particular emphasis to establish the role of research in promoting future commercial activities and trade in banana, plantain and ensete. The conference will focus on three major themes: markets and trade, production, and innovation systems.

Abstracts can be submitted online at [http://www.banana2008.com/cms/details/call\\_for\\_paper.aspx](http://www.banana2008.com/cms/details/call_for_paper.aspx). Accepted abstracts will be published and presented as posters during the conference. Based on the selections from the Scientific Committee, authors of outstanding abstracts will be invited to write full papers. Abstracts will not be accepted after 30 September, 2007. More information on the conference at <http://www.banana2008.com/>.

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## 3. Publications & Information

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### 3.1 ICIMOD publications on-line

ICIMOD has recently put all their books on-line with free download of pdf files. The link is [www.books.icimod.org](http://www.books.icimod.org). It has been up for one month, and is proving very popular, 880 full book downloads and almost as many individual chapters so far. Although most of ICIMOD's books are on topics rather removed for underutilised crops, they could be of interest for some of you.

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### 3.2 AJFAND Vol 7 (4) - Special issue Volume II on African Leafy Vegetables

From Ruth Oniang'o – many thanks to Ruth for her unwavering energy in providing us with excellent reference material!

“As promised we are releasing the second volume of the special issue on African Leafy Vegetables, containing articles emanating from research that was sponsored by Bioversity (formerly the International Plant Genetic Research Institute).

“We do know you enjoyed the articles in volume I that was published last month. In volume II you will find another set of very interesting articles. The Editorial for volume II is by Prof. Timothy Johns of McGill University, Canada, who has served and continues to serve as an invaluable resource person to the project in the area of nutrition. Through this publication, I wish to make a statement about our use of French in our publication since inception. Our major language has been English.

“We wished to serve our French readers by providing all abstracts in both English and French. Our initial translations were voluntarily done by friends. After a while, we contracted a very good translator whom were paying in order to get the job done effectively. We now cannot afford this service anymore.

“More importantly though, a number of French readers come in with all kinds of complaints about certain aspects of the manuscripts. We cannot satisfy them since we do not have a translator in – house. We have decided, therefore, to do away with French articles. We shall not keep there abstracts in and will not provide French either.

“As Editor-in-Chief, I regret having to make this decision but it cannot be helped.

“We thank you for your understanding and wish you good reading.”

Ruth Oniang'o PhD  
Editor-in-Chief

The articles in this issue are as follows:

- Taxonomic Identification and Characterization of African Nightshades (*Solanum* L. Section *Solanum*), Mwai Gideon et al.
- Opportunities for Increased Production, Utilization and Income Generation from African Leafy Vegetables in Zambia, Dickson Ng'uni and Godfrey Mwila.
- Pratiques culturales et teneur en éléments anti nutritionnels (nitrates et pesticides) du *Solanum macrocarpum* au sud du Bénin, Assogba-Komlan et al.
- Utilization and Medicinal Value of Indigenous Leafy Vegetables Consumed in Urban and Peri-Urban Nairobi, Judith Kimiywe et al.
- Conservation African Leafy Vegetables in South Africa, Jansen Van Rensburg et al.
- The Importance of Traditional Leafy Vegetables in South Africa, Vorster H.J et al.
- Re-Creating Awareness of Traditional Leafy Vegetables in Communities, Vorster H.J et al.
- Marketing African Leafy Vegetables: Challenges and Opportunities in the Kenyan Context, Kennedy Masinde Shiundu and Ruth Oniang'o.

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### 3.3 Fighting poverty with herbal and medicinal plants

From ICARDA press release dated 12 July 2007

Scientists from all over the world began deliberations on the role of herbal, medicinal and aromatic plants in improving the livelihoods of the rural poor.

Addressing researchers attending the regional expert workshop held at the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Aleppo, Syria, Dr Mona Bishay, director of the Near East and North Africa division of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) said that several obstacles hinder full exploitation of the potential of herbal, medicinal and aromatic plants (HMAPs) in reducing poverty and improving livelihoods of rural people in the region.

“Poor local technology, inadequate business and entrepreneurial skills and awareness on quality requirements, limited knowledge on properties of HMAPs beyond traditional knowledge, and limited access to intellectual property rights restrict production and the use and marketability of the HMAPs,” Dr Bishay said.

Underscoring the need to analyze and find means to address the obstacles, Dr Bishay said the most important handicap was the inability of the collectors and growers of such plants to take advantage of potential markets due to lack of access to resources, inadequate extension and training services, lack of improved technology and business skills, insufficient marketing information and local organizational skills that could enable them to take advantage of emerging market opportunities.

Dr Mahmoud Solh, director general of ICARDA, said it was regrettable that indigenous knowledge on HMAPs was not backed up with adequate use of modern technology, despite the fact that folk medicine still serves 80 percent of the rural population in the world.

“HMAP sector faces various challenges and constraints, such as over-exploitation of naturally occurring species, fragmented approaches and projects that address only limited aspects of selected HMAP value chains, lack of quality control standards of locally produced HMAPs and products, and poor distribution of benefits in value chains,” Dr Solh said.

“Our partners in National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems possess rich knowledge on HMAPs and this gives us a great opportunity to add valuable new crops to our joint knowledge of eco-geography and farming systems in the NENA region,” said Dr Solh, elaborating ICARDA’s role in research on HMAPs. “Tremendous room for growth and export opportunities are available if quality products are available that can compete with other suppliers. New science and technology can be deployed to understand potential new uses for processing, transforming, and adding value to natural products – with the purpose of generating income for poor farmers.”

Dr Remi Kahane, executive secretary of the Global Horticulture Initiative, emphasized the need to promote HMAPs through effective marketing and product development to support small farmers.

The three-day workshop focused on evolving strategic directions in finding solutions to the challenges, constraints and prospects of using herbal, medicinal and aromatic plants in improving the livelihoods of the rural poor.

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For more information: Dr Ahmed Sidahmed (a.sidahmed@cgiar.org)

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### **3.4 LEISA Magazine (Vol. 23, 2) Securing Seed Supply**

Seed is the future of agriculture. For farmers it is the most essential input: without good seed they have no chance of a good harvest. This is a simple truth but the implications are far reaching. For thousands of years, farmers have been relying on their own harvests, selecting grains, storing them, and then using them as seed for the following season. They have been doing the same with potatoes and other vegetatively reproduced crops. By choosing seeds or planting materials that meet the needs of their particular farming conditions, they have, over time, developed local varieties and breeds which are most suited to their specific context and preferences. Today, however, many farmers have become highly dependent on seeds supplied by external agents, often large seed companies.

Read the articles at:

[http://www.leisa.info/index.php?url=magazine-details.tpl&p\[readOnly\]=0&p\[\\_id\]=113332](http://www.leisa.info/index.php?url=magazine-details.tpl&p[readOnly]=0&p[_id]=113332)

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## **4. ICUC-related information**

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### **4.1 New publications**

To whet your appetite (and to make sure you don't think we are not doing anything if I leave this section blank so often!), there are several publications in the pipeline: Research Report No. 3 by Joshua N. Daniel and Prashant A. Dudhade on "Analysis of Economic Characteristics of Value Chains of Three Underutilised Fruits of India", Position Paper No. 2 by Ian K. Dawson, Luigi Guarino and Hannah Jaenicke on "Underutilised plant species: impacts of promotion on biodiversity" and Research Report No. 4 by Ismael N. Barry on "A Value Chain Analysis of the Woodapple and Beli Subsector in Sri Lanka" as companion paper to his earlier Research Report No. 2 on the rambutan subsector (see ICUC-News #46).

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Championing underutilised plant species for food, nutrition and sustainable development