2ND ASARECA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AND
SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

THEME: TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Date: December 9 - 13, 2013

Venue: Royal Palace Hotel, Avenue du Large, Bujumbura, Burundi

First announcement
The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, the Republic of Burundi, and Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU), announce the 2nd ASARECA General Assembly and Scientific Conference, which is planned for December 9 - 13, 2013 at the Royal Palace Hotel, Bujumbura, Burundi.

About ASARECA

ASARECA is an intergovernmental not-for-profit association established in 1994. It is comprised of 11 member countries which include Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

The 11 ASARECA member countries cover an area of 8.5 million square kms with a total population of about 300 million people, most of whom are rural dwellers pursuing agriculture-based livelihoods. Roughly one-third (about 300 million hectares) of Eastern and Central Africa’s (ECA) total land area is devoted to agriculture. Agriculture contributes significantly to national economies of all the countries in the sub-region and accounts for 43% of the regional GDP.

Given that the bulk of the region’s population resides in rural areas and depends on agriculture for income and sustenance, and given the low levels of productivity growth in the sector, hunger and malnutrition have deepened in ECA in recent years. About 70% of Eastern and Central Africa’s cropland is in the areas with high and medium agricultural potential which indicates the great potential for our region to bring about economic growth and improved livelihoods.

Objectives of the 2nd ASARECA General Assembly and Scientific Conference

1. To provide a forum for the General Assembly members to meet and perform their functions as stipulated in the ASARECA Constitution.
2. To provide lessons learnt and identify success factors regarding agricultural transformation in ECA.
3. To develop and strengthen partnerships in transforming agriculture.
4. To develop and adopt an action plan to influence agricultural transformation in ECA.

The above objectives will be met by:

1. Reviewing progress and lessons learnt from the regional agricultural research development initiatives and chart the way forward.
2. Showcasing recent scientific advances in agricultural research for development in the ECA region.
3. Sharing recent developments in the implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) in the ECA region.
4. Stimulating the creation of innovative partnerships and networks.
Theme and sub-themes
The theme of the 2nd General Assembly and Scientific Conference: “Transforming Agriculture for Economic Growth in Eastern and Central Africa”, was chosen because ASARECA sees improved delivery and impact of scientific knowledge, policy options and technologies as powerful instruments to drive the sub-region towards economic growth, poverty reduction, eradication of hunger and enhancement of sustainable use of resources.

The theme and sub-themes of the 2nd ASARECA General Assembly and Scientific Conference are aligned to the shared vision of CAADP and the African Unions’ New Partnership for African Development (AU/NEPAD) to attain the Millennium Development Goals by facilitating agriculture to grow at an annual rate of 6% by 2015. Dynamic agricultural markets among nations and between regions; net export of agricultural products; making food available and affordable; and strategically leveraging on developments in agricultural science and technology and the sustainable use of natural resources, have been identified by ASARECA and the continental discourse as cornerstones that will enable the ECA region meet the MDG targets. There is no doubt, therefore, that the theme and sub-themes are strategically important.

Sub-themes
1. Improving investments in Agriculture.
2. Natural resource management.
3. Increasing agricultural productivity
5. Knowledge management for greater impacts.

Details on the above sub-themes can be obtained from the following site; www.asareca.org/generalassembly

Participants
ASARECA recognizes the following stakeholders and partners and invites them to participate in the 2nd General Assembly and Scientific Conference: National agricultural research associations and national agricultural research institutes (NARIs), sub-regional associations responsible for the coordination of agricultural research, extension and agricultural training and education and related associations; farmer’s associations; associations of processors of agricultural products; associations representing agricultural service providers; associations of agricultural products; associations of agricultural businesses and related marketing agents; consumer associations; organized women and youth groups working in agriculture; non-governmental organisations (NGO’s) and community based organisations (CBOs) working in agricultural research for development; investors and donors; international research centers belonging to Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR); universities and advanced research institutes and academies of science among others.
Conference Venue
Royal Palace Hotel is a Five Star Hotel located on Avenue du Large in Burundi’s capital city, Bujumbura.

Guests Accommodation
All ASARECA sponsored participants will be booked into the Royal Palace Hotel or a suitable alternative. ASARECA is also negotiating special rates with the Royal Palace Hotel and other hotels in the vicinity of the Conference venue for participants who will be paying for themselves. We will provide you further information on the rates and bookings in subsequent communications on the General Assembly and Scientific Conference webpage www.asareca.org/generalassembly

Conference conveners
ASARECA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Burundi and Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU)

Registration
Participants can register to attend the General Assembly and Scientific Conference online through the ASARECA/conference website www.asareca.org/generalassembly. Details on registration will be provided in the subsequent announcement.

Registration fee categories
• Individuals from national research systems, USD 100.
• Other individuals from regional and international organisations, USD 300.
• Participants who complete the registration process by July 31, 2013, will however, be offered an “early bird” discount of 20%.
• Sponsorship opportunities are available for the selected participants who will present papers.

The deadline for payment of registration fees is September 30th, 2013.
Additional information on other conference activities will be provided in subsequent announcements.

Registration for exhibition space
Exhibition booths of 3mx3m with display tables will be provided for participants in the following categories:
• ASARECA sponsored exhibitors - Free of charge
• Self sponsored individuals or organizations - in addition to the above registration fee, USD 100 will be charged per booth.
• Because there is limited space available, you are advised to reserve your booth(s) by filling a reservation form available on www.asareca.org/generalassembly lastest September 30th, 2013.
For ASARECA sponsored exhibitors, the materials should demonstrate activities undertaken by the partner institution with support from ASARECA.

**Call for abstracts**

A call for abstracts is now open. You are invited to submit abstracts of not more than 300 words. The abstract can be submitted on any of one or several of the six sub-themes:

1. Improving investments in Agriculture
2. Natural resources management.
3. Increasing agricultural productivity.
5. Knowledge management for greater impacts.

The abstract should show originality of ideas and should be able to spark interest of conference participants. Authors of abstracts selected for poster and oral presentations will attract sponsorship opportunities. The deadline for the submission of abstracts is May 31st, 2013. Abstracts must be written in English or French. A high-quality book of proceedings is expected to be produced. Detailed information on the call can be accessed on [www.asareca.org/generalassembly](http://www.asareca.org/generalassembly).

Scientists implementing ASARECA supported projects are particularly encouraged to submit abstracts.

**Highlights of important dates and deadlines**

- General registration to attend the General Assembly - September 30th, 2013
- Submission of abstract(s) - May 31st, 2013.
- Application to present poster and exhibition materials - September 30th, 2013.
- Prepare materials for exhibition centre - December 8th, 2013.

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Website: [http://www.asareca.org/generalassembly](http://www.asareca.org/generalassembly)
Background to ASARECA (refer to http://www.asareca.org)

Why ASARECA was established
The eleven ASARECA member countries established ASARECA:
• Conscious of the overriding need and determination to establish and promote their common welfare in the sub-region by furthering separate and collective action;
• Cognizant of the challenges and opportunities that must be addressed in order to improve agriculture in the sub-region;
• Noting the alarming environmental degradation, poverty and hunger;
• Understanding the benefits of identifying shared goals and the promotion of economies of scale and scope through collaboration, specialization and sharing of results;
• Recognizing that regional collaboration and collective action are indispensable for a better and more cost effective utilization of the available resources and the production of technology, knowledge and innovation systems as sub-regional public goods to be shared freely by all Member States of the Association;
• Realizing the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Agricultural Research and Extension System in the sub-region; and
• Noting that an intergovernmental association in the sub-region will complement at sub-regional level, the innovative activities of the national, sub-regional and Pan-African research institutions to deliver more responsive and effective services to stakeholders.

The main objective of the Association is to develop policies and programs aimed at widening and deepening co-operation among the Member States in agricultural research for development, extension and agricultural training and education, for the mutual benefit of all the stakeholders in the Agriculture sector. ASARECA values gender equality as one of the opportunities for social and economic advancement in rural and small scale agriculture.

The Mission of ASARECA is:
To enhance regional collective action in agricultural research for development, extension and agricultural training and education to promote economic growth, fight poverty, eradicate hunger and enhance sustainable use of resources in Eastern and Central Africa.

Super Goal
Increased economic growth and improved livelihoods in Eastern and Central Africa while enhancing the quality of the environment.

Goal
Competitiveness of appropriate Agricultural Systems improved.

Purpose
Equitable access and utilization of Agricultural Research and Development Innovations enhanced.
Functions of ASARECA:
1. Develop a shared vision and sub-regional goals;
2. Empower end-users of the programmes of the Association to ensure their meaningful participation in developing priorities for agricultural research, training, extension and education;
3. Coordinate collective action at the sub-regional level on agricultural research, training, extension and education;
4. Contribute to the development of appropriate knowledge, methodologies, information technologies, innovations and management practices;
5. Facilitate the transfer of knowledge, information and technology;
6. Mobilize and allocate resources for agricultural research, training and education;
7. Strengthen capacity for agricultural research extension and agricultural training and education for development;
8. Facilitate the efficient operation of National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems at the national level;
9. Facilitate sharing of research outputs and benefits among National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems;
10. Enhance the sub-regional reputation of the Association and its members in regional and international fora;
11. Work towards the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production;
12. Work towards the adoption of sub-regional policies with respect to agricultural commodity arrangements; and
13. Undertake such other activities that shall further the objectives of the Association as the members shall from time to time decide.
Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA)
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