

International Genebank Specialists Discuss Strategies to Safeguard Genetic Resources



Agricultural Research Institute in Taichung put the spotlight on strategies to address risk factors in safeguarding genetic diversity and to discuss solutions.

permafrost conditions in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Spitsbergen, Norway, effective vegetable germplasm conservation has to work with a different set of approaches and solutions. “The risks to a genebank refer to numerous types of threats caused by physical factors, environmental and technical changes, human activities, and natural calamities,” says Ebert. “Risk management therefore includes different elements such as recognition of risk, assessment of risk, development of risk management strategies, and mitigation of risk using managerial resources.” Promising strategies comprehend the avoidance of risks, reduction of the negative effects of risk, and accepting some or all of the consequences of a particular risk. The event included a visit to the Center’s head office in Shanhua, southern Taiwan.

More information:

Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG) of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC): www.apec.org/apec/apec_groups/som_committee_on_economic_working_groups/agricultural_technical.html

The biological and agricultural diversity of our planet is crucial to sustaining human livelihoods. In fact, the improvement of food and agricultural production depends upon abundant genetic resources and the application of knowledge through research. However, every hour, three animal and plant species become extinct—an irreversible process.

Safeguarding genetic diversity in genebanks is vital, but there is always a high risk of loss, injury, erosion, or extinction of germplasm conserved in seed genebanks or in field genebanks due to numerous factors.

An international workshop organized by the APEC Agricultural Technical Cooperation Working Group (ATCWG) and held from 13 – 17 October 2008 at the Taiwan

The workshop on “Capacity Building for Development and Implementation of Risk Management Systems on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture” provided a forum for sharing expertise and exchanging views as well as networking with other key players in the sector. Among the high-profile participants: World Vegetable Center DG Dr. Dyno Keatinge, DDG-AS Dr. Yin-fu Chang, and Dr. Andreas Ebert, the Center’s new Genebank Manager.

With more than 56,000 accessions from more than 150 countries, AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center maintains the largest public-sector collection of vegetable germplasm worldwide. Although more than 7,400 accessions of this collection are safely stored under

The LIBRARY



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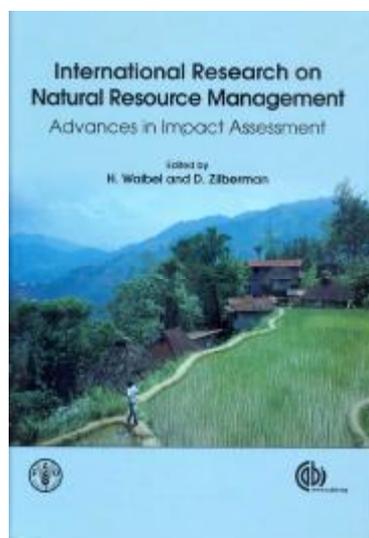
New publications

... from Center staff

Odedara, O.O., Hughes, d'A., Odebode, A.C., Odu, B.O. (2008). Multiple virus infections of lablab [*Lablab purpureus* (L.) Sweet] in Nigeria. *JOURNAL OF GENERAL PLANT PATHOLOGY*. v.74(4):322-325.

Odedara, O.O., Hughes, J.d'A., Tarawali, S.A., Odebode, A.C., Winter, S. (2007). Characterisation of a potyvirus from *Centrosema pubescens* Benth. *TROPICAL SCIENCE*. v.47(1):3-15.

... new book available



Waibel, H., Ziberman, D. (2007). *International Research on Natural Resource Management: Advances in Impact Assessment*. Wallingford: CABI. xviii, 270 pp.

— Fang-chin Chen, Editorial and Library

PEOPLE

Dr. I.R. Nagaraj, Director of Human Resources, HQ



Dr. I.R. Nagaraj has been selected as the new Director of Human Resources at AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center, commencing work on 16 February 2009. He has a unique blend of experience in science, management and technology with a BSc in Life

Sciences; postgraduate degrees/diplomas in social science, law, and labor administration; and a doctoral

degree with coursework in business policy, strategy, systems engineering, and organizational behavior, and thesis work on “strategic HR and organizational performance.” He has experience in the public and private sector and has been in his current position as Director of Human Resources and Operations at ICRISAT, India since 2001.

– Human Resources

Mr. Paschal Werema Chambiri, Logistics and Protocol Officer, Tanzania



Mr. Paschal Werema Chambiri from Tanzania joined AVRDC in Arusha on 15 October

2008 as a Logistics and Protocol

Officer. Mr. Chambiri has considerable experience in procurement and associated logistics, having worked with international relief and development organizations for the past 15 years.

Paschal joins AVRDC from Norwegian People’s Aid, based in Dar-Es-Salaam. He is married, with one child. He can be contacted at paschal.chambiri@worldveg.org

– Dr. Abdou Tenkouano,
Director, AVRDC-RCA

Ms. Bernadette Metoh, Administrative Assistant, Cameroon



Ms. Bernadette Metoh will join AVRDC’s vBSS program in Cameroon as Administrative

Assistant on 17 November 2008.

Ms. Metoh has a BA in Psychology

and Communication from the University of Dschang. Before joining AVRDC, Bernadette served for more than five years as Administrative Officer of the West and Central Africa Office of the Bioversity International Programme in Cameroon.

Contact Bernadette at bmetoh@yahoo.fr

– Dr. Christophe Kouamé
vBSS Project Liaison Office in Cameroon



SKETCH



Name: Dörthe Musmann

Home: Hannover, Germany

Position: I am a PhD student in plant biotechnology/horticulture from the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz University of Hannover and I'm here for three months of training.

Why you do what you do:

I always felt connected with plants because my father is a forest officer, and we lived near a forest.

Whenever I had free time I went into the forest to study nature. That's the reason why I started studying plant biotechnology in Hannover. After finishing my master of science I heard about the GTZ- funded project and was very interested in working with heat

stress in tomato and its molecular and physiological analysis, because of the importance regarding climate change all over the world.

Why do you do it at AVRDC?

I came to AVRDC because of my PhD project. It is the perfect place to analyze heat stress because of the tropical climate and the good research environment. So I was glad when they invited me to do some research here.

Research

My previous work focused on gene expression analysis in roses after infection with powdery mildew. I was able to introduce a new high-throughput method called cDNA-AFLP at the Institute of Molecular Plant Breeding. Currently I work on the GTZ- funded project "Genetic, physiological and molecular approaches to improve heat and drought tolerance of tropical tomato." My part in this project is to analyze the effect of heat stress on traits like pollen amount, pollen viability, stigma exertion, fruit shape, yield or parthenocarpy and to identify QTLs linked to heat stress.

What's next?

When I'm back in Germany I want to do another greenhouse trial and keep on doing my molecular analysis. Hopefully I will identify some QTLs soon.

Your favorite Taiwan experience

It was a nice experience to get to know another culture. In comparison to Germany, Taiwan's culture is so different. For example, the night markets with unfamiliar food like duck heads—I've never seen that before. And I was very impressed by the beautiful temples everywhere. I liked them a lot and took many pictures of them. So I'm glad that I got the chance to see this nice country.

Your favorite vegetable?

I think I like every kind of vegetable, but of course tomato is one of my favorites. You can use it for everything.

CORNUCOPIA

Upcoming meetings at AVRDC-CAC, Uzbekistan

The AVRDC – Central Asia and the Caucasus office will host two meetings from 25-27 November 2008 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Organized by Regional Coordinator Dr. Ravza Mavlyanova, the "Review

and Planning Meeting on Vegetable Variety Selection and Adoption in Central Asia and the Caucasus" and "The Second Steering Committee Meeting on Central Asia and the Caucasus Vegetable Research and

Development Networks" will bring together country representatives and partners for progress reports and discussions.

— Dr. Ravza Mavlyanova,
AVRDC Regional Coordinator for CAC