



IITA featured as CGIAR center at TROPENTAG 2015 Berlin

IITA and its research on natural resource management (NRM) were one of the main highlights during the Annual Conference on Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (**TROPENTAG**) held in Berlin, Germany, on 16 – 18 September. The event was intended for stakeholders involved in agricultural research and rural development in developing countries. IITA had a special session to present its research portfolio and an exhibition to showcase its work as a CGIAR research institution.

The theme of the conference was “Management of land use systems for enhanced food security—conflicts, controversies, and resolutions.” More than 1,300 registered participants from about 80 or more countries attended the 3-day conference, which provided a forum for discussion of important issues on sustainable food systems that could improve food and nutritional security in the tropics while preserving the natural resource base and vital ecosystems.

IFPRI Director General [Shenggen Fan](#), representing the CGIAR, was one of the keynote speakers during the opening plenary session on day 1. He talked about “Building a resilient global food system.”

IITA’s session on the second day on Land use management featured a lead talk by [Bernard Vanlauwe](#), R4D Director, Central Africa hub and for Natural Resources Management titled “Is integrated soil fertility management a viable pathway towards the sustainable intensification of smallholder farming systems in sub-Saharan Africa”; and four other papers delivered by [Danny Coyne](#), Soil Health Scientist, on “Enhancing legume productivity for sustainable intensification of maize-legume farming system in sub-Saharan Africa”; [Christine Kreye](#), Agronomist/NRM (CIM) expert, on “Increasing



Left: Bernard Vanlauwe delivers keynote talk for IITA on behalf of DG Nteranya Sanginga during the plenary session on day 3 of TROPENTAG 2015. Right: IITA exhibition.



cassava productivity in the context of sustainable intensification”; [Laurence Jassogne](#), Country Coordinator, Farming Systems Specialist, on “Climate-smart intensification of coffee and cocoa smallholder systems in Africa”; and [Alpha Kamara](#), Savannah Systems Agronomist on “Using cropping system models and geospatial tools to bring agronomy to scale in the savannahs of Nigeria.” The session was chaired by [Stefan](#)

[Hauser](#), Roots and Tuber Agronomist.

The interactive session provided a good opportunity to highlight IITA’s work on sustainable intensification and natural resources management research. Other scientists who made presentations during a session on Crop biotic stresses included Stefan Hauser on “Weed biomass production and cassava yields in varying cassava cropping systems”, [Juliet Akello](#),



DG Sanginga (second from left) with IITA staff (L-R), Stefan Hauser, Haruki Ishikawa, and Danny Coyne at the IITA booth.

Postdoctoral Fellow/Plant Pathologist, on “Developing an aflatoxin biocontrol product against aflatoxin-producing *Aspergillus* spp. in Zambia”, Kamara on “Assessment of level, extent, and factors influencing *Striga* infestation of maize in the dry savannahs of Nigeria.”

The plenary session on day 3 featured a presentation by Director General [Nteranya Sanginga](#) on “IITA, the lead research partner facilitating agricultural solutions to overcome hunger and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa; The critical role of appropriate soil fertility and land use management,” presented on his behalf by Vanlauwe.

Sanginga’s presentation emphasized the challenges in smallholder farming in sub-Saharan Africa, and how IITA is promoting sustainable intensification of smallholder agriculture and innovative approaches to ensure the acceleration of research impact on farmers and address the changing environments and conditions in the tropics.

Days 1 to 3 featured guided poster sessions with more than 35 IITA scientific posters on various topics related to the theme.

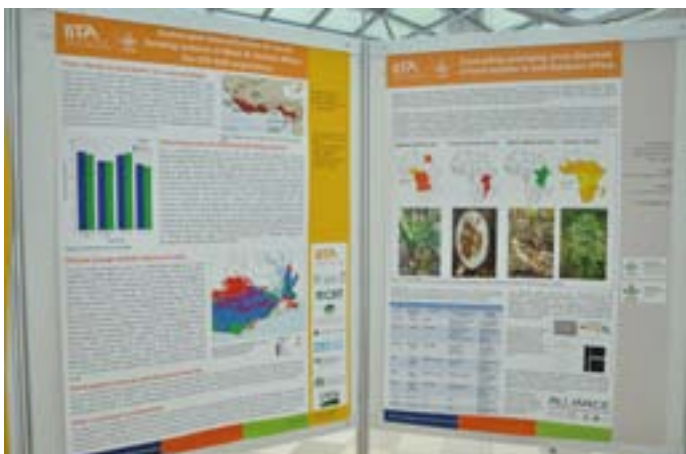
According to [Ylva Hillbur](#), DDG for Research for Development, “Overall, the conference highlighted very well

IITA’s research work on the theme of the conference and provided an opportunity for participants to know more about IITA and its work. We thank the German Government for providing CIM experts who are doing a great job in IITA, and [GIZ](#) and the conference organizers for inviting IITA as the featured center and for hosting the IITA and Friends socials.”

IITA also showcased its work in a poster exhibition and publications and product displays. The tidbit snacks made from cassava and cowpea flour produced by the [IITA Youth Agripreneurs](#) was a big hit during the exhibition.



Left: Ylva Hillbur being interviewed by a journalist. Right: One of the student reporters from Oxford University interviews Alpha Kamara..



Left: IITA poster session. Right: IITA exhibition booth in the main hall set up by the Communication Office.



Left: Visitors at the IITA booth. Right: Laurence Jassogne answering questions from some students after the IITA session.

Senior Kenyan government officials, USAID conclude learning visit on aflasafe™

Nine senior government officials and two United States Agency for International Development (USAID) officials who have been very supportive in the promotion of the Aflasafe project in Kenya recently concluded a learning/familiarization visit to IITA to better understand the technology and production protocols of aflasafe™.

During the visit, 13-18 September, the delegates called on the officials of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as well as some AgResults implementers in Kaduna. They also spent time at the aflasafe™ production plant and laboratories in Ibadan.

Kenton Dashiell, DDG Partnerships and Capacity Development, welcomed the visitors and thanked them for their efforts in promoting the adoption of aflasafe KE01 in Kenya and described the collaboration with the officials as rewarding.

“IITA is very pleased to work with partners like you in ensuring that farmers become financially successful, and have unlimited access to technologies that ultimately improve health and nutrition,” he said. “We believe we are successful when we see improvements on the ground. This goal has required IITA to drive a model for entrepreneurs to invest in the business of producing the biocontrol—aflasafe™... our vision is to establish self-sustaining aflasafe™ factories throughout Africa that will produce aflasafe™ efficiently



Kenyan delegates with IITA staff during a round table discussion on aflasafe.

so that farmers can buy the product at reasonable prices,” he concluded.

In his presentation which highlighted the success stories of the biocontrol product across African countries where it has been piloted, tested, and adopted by farmers, Ranajit Bandyopadhyay, IITA Pathologist and Aflasafe project leader, underscored the need for good farming and management practices to reduce contamination risks. He also explained the biology of *Aspergillus flavus*—the fungus that produces and causes aflatoxin contamination and the biocontrol technology developed by IITA and partners for the control of the fungus.

One of the visitors, Raphael Wanjogu, Chief Research and Development Officer, National Irrigation Board, Kenya, corroborated the urgency of the need to control the spread and contamination of

aflatoxin in food crops in Africa. He said “An estimated 30,000 Kenyans die yearly from cancer-related issues caused mainly by the ingestion of aflatoxin-infested staples.” He therefore called on IITA to provide direct support for sensitization and training of farmers.

The delegates also urged IITA to tackle the aflatoxin menace in Africa as a regional issue because of the influx of food items from neighboring countries. They also expressed enthusiasm to work with the Institute in promoting other technologies such as NoduMax—an inoculant for legumes.

Given the plan of the Institute to establish a low-cost sustainable aflasafe™ producing factory in Kenya, the delegates proffered suggestions on how the Institute can comply with the various governmental regulations for setting up such factories.

N2 Africa holds workshop on data collection for staff, students, & extension agents

To introduce researchers to contemporary methods of data collection, N2 Africa-Nigeria has organized a 1-day workshop for staff and postgraduate students of the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (SAAT). The workshop took place at the School of Agriculture on the main campus.

Declaring the workshop open, the Dean SAAT, Prof Reuben Jiya Kolo said the School is committed to quality and cutting edge research that would impact on the society.

Prof Kolo expressed his happiness in seeing a university alumnus, Emmanuel Sangodele, Country Coordinator of N2 Africa, working with an international organization and for conducting training for staff and students that would enhance learning and research.

Sangodele said the workshop was geared towards moving away from the pen and paper method of data collection

to technology enhanced data collection and analysis. He stated that the mobile phone method of data collection would



L-R: Daniya Emmanuel (partner), Joot Van Heerwaarden (N2Africa research coordinator and data management specialist), Akim Osunde (partner), Reuben Kolo, Emmanuel Sangodele (N2Africa country coordinator), and Bassey Ukem (N2Africa).

assist farmers and extension workers to do their work and enter data for processing much faster and easier.

The special guest, Prof Akim Osunde, a former DVC (Academic), said that the

workshop would help the university in making more impact in its immediate community, adding that it would open researchers' eyes to alternative methods of data capture and transfer for analysis from any part in Niger State

to IITA in Ibadan and other countries. He further said that the workshop would strengthen the existing memorandum of understanding between IITA and the University.

SARD-SC project 'Cassava Day' held in Bukavu, DRC

The [cassava value chain](#) team of the [SARD-SC](#) project held a "Cassava Day" to raise awareness about the crop among the populace of the South-Kivu Province, DR Congo. The two-day event was held at Lycee Wima, Bukavu, 28 to 29 August.

The Cassava Day was held to educate the people on the many uses of cassava crops as a way to reduce poverty, popularize the various interventions carried out by the SARD-SC project, and promote and nurture interactions among the various stakeholders of the cassava value chain.

The carnival-like event had exhibitions of various types of crops, cassava by-products, agricultural inputs, farming implements, improved seed varieties, and many other things. Motorcades and convoys of motorcycles paraded in the streets announcing the event. Drama sketches were staged by well-known, local comedians to raise awareness and echo—with a touch of humor—important messages on the merits of cassava.

Eminent people graced the occasion, including the Provincial Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, Adolphine Muley, a representative of the governor, representatives of universities, research institutes, state technical services, and NGOs.

The Provincial Minister of Energy, Mines and Hydrocarbons, Adabert Murhi-Mubalama, who represented the Governor of South-Kivu, declared the event open. He said: "The SARD-SC project of IITA is very important in the South-Kivu Province because through its processing component, the population has become aware of the potential products, and thus income that could be generated from cassava in addition to fufu and chikwange which are common basic staple foods. We must work harder and hand-in-hand to fill the gaps and capitalize on the SARD-SC project's achievements. We pledge to maintain the momentum in efforts to improve the agricultural sector, especially with regard to cassava growing."

Throwing more light on the significance of the day, [Marie Yomeni](#), the SARD-SC project Commodity Specialist, said its objective was to create awareness about the crop to enhance its cultivation in the country. "Cassava is a major staple food in 80 percent of households in Bukavu. The project is therefore committed to solve the problems affecting cassava cultivation with the goal of boosting productivity, curbing imports, and reducing poverty in households managed by women farmers," she said.

[Paul Dontsop N'guezet](#), who represented the Head of IITA-Kalambo station, said, "We are developing strategies that have the potential to move women out of their low financial status. So we have done a lot to promote cassava that was once threatened by [Cassava Mosaic Disease](#) (CMD) and [Cassava Brown Streak Disease](#) (CBSD). Cassava is getting healthier and providing various products and by-products for consumption and sale."

Some of the project's partners in attendance at the event were INERA, SENASEM, IPAPEL, UEA, UCB, SARCAF, ISANDA, 8em CEPAC BDR, ADVS, and ACOSYF.



Different cassava roots on exhibit at the Cassava Day.

Announcements

- Africa RISING Program Strategy Workshop, Mali, 6-8 October.
- Third Annual CEO Forum, private sector and government assembly to end poverty and hunger in the world by 2030 in line with the overall aim of the Sustainable Development Goals, 7 October, Offices of Ford Foundation Lagos.
- Open Day, IITA Ibadan, Nigeria, 14 November.
- R4D Week, IITA Ibadan, 22-28 November.
- Joint World Cowpea and Pan-African Grain Legume Research Conference 2016, co-organized by IITA and the Feed-the-Future Legume Innovation Lab, Zambezi Sun Resort Hotel, Livingstone, Zambia, 28 February to 4 March 2016. For more information, visit the conference [website](#) or download the conference [announcement](#).

Got a story to share? Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org), Jeffrey T. Oliver (j.oliver@cgiar.org), Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org), or Adaobi Umeokoro (a.umeokoro@cgiar.org).

