

Biocontrol agents released against water hyacinth on Benin's Mono River system



Part of the Mono River infested by water hyacinth around Grand-Popo. In the boat from left, Koudiko Didier a member of the local community, Adanve Gregoire and Houessinon Priam staff of the Department of Agriculture, releasing adult weevils on water hyacinth mat.

The Republic of Benin has increased efforts to reduce water hyacinth infestations so as to free water ways for fishing and transport by boat.

On 30 July 2010, two biological control agents, the weevil *Neochetina* and *N. bruchi* that eat only water hyacinth were for the first time released on the Mono River systems in Grand-Popo.

The Department of Agriculture, the National Coordination Unit of the Benin ECOWAS water weeds project, the local communities and IITA participated in the release exercise. This is part of the ongoing African Development Bank (AfDB) funded ECOWAS integrated project for the control of aquatic weeds, involving physical removal, utilisation

and biological control methods. The weevils released were mass produced by the Department of Agriculture in Porto-Novo using start-up colony supplied by IITA who also provided technical assistance.

Part of the Mono River system is in the neighbouring Togo and until 2000, was free of water hyacinth and might have been infested through human activities. It is not connected to the Oueme River that is linked to the neighbouring



Adult weevils

Nigeria, where previous efforts led to successful control of water hyacinth in many locations after eight years. Impact of the weevil in the Mono River system in the years ahead will be monitored by regular field visits involving the collaborating institutions.

CGIAR consortium board member sees better prospects for IITA under reforms

Lynn Haight, a member of the CGIAR Consortium Board, held talks with IITA staff in Ibadan.

The meeting offered an opportunity for staff to seek clarifications on the changes within the CGIAR.

Haight hinted that the Institute would be better off under the reform which seeks to emphasize clear lines of accountability and balances the partnership between those who conduct research, on the one hand, and those who fund it, on the other.

The Consortium Board member emphasised that "no one will do research in Africa without IITA."

After the meeting, there was a renewed hope that IITA would have a prosperous future in the years ahead.

In the opinion of Hartmann, IITA Director General, "things are really looking up at IITA and we should be looking confidently to the long term future."



Lynn Haight, CGIAR Consortium Board member, addressing IITA staff at the Conference Center.

Benin Republic gets two additional cassava processing centers



Women rejoicing over a new cassava processing center in Lanta, Republic of Benin

The Cassava Value Chain Development Project has inaugurated two additional processing centers in Lanta and Adjahonmey in Benin Republic, bringing the total number of processing centers in that country under the project to

four, thanks to the Netherlands-based Common Fund for Commodities (CFC)—the initiator and financier of the project.

The additional two centers will help resource-poor farmers in Benin to add value to the root crop and create more

markets for its products.

In 2009 the Cassava Value Chain Development Project, which is being implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, commissioned two cassava processing centers in the Republic of Benin. Impressed by the work done, CFC approved the upgrade of two additional processing sites for the smallholder communities.

Beneficiaries of the project commended IITA and CFC for citing the project in their communities.

Kodo Lydia, a women leader, whose group benefited from the project at Lanta said the processing center was a dream come true.

“When we were told of the assistance, we never believed but today we are glad and the processing center will ease our burden and increase our incomes,” she said.

The commissioning attracted the attention of policy makers, non governmental organizations, and other stakeholders.

Coordinators from other CFC-West Africa countries; Nigeria and Sierra Leone also attended the commissioning and thereafter, participated in the experience-sharing meeting among the countries.

The three Country coordinators lauded the Common Fund for Commodities for the livelihood-boosting project.

Supply Chain gets new head

IITA has announced the appointment of John Last as the new Head of Supply Chain.

He takes over Mr. Vince McCabe who resigned some couple of months ago.

Last is from the United

Kingdom and prior to joining IITA was the Senior Purchasing Manager for three years at the University of Cambridge, also in the UK. Last spent many years



John Last

working in procurement and supply chain management both in the public and private sectors in Europe and the Middle East (Sultanate of Oman).

He completed an MBA at Trinity College UIC University in Delaware, United States of America and, more recently, an MA at the University of Cambridge. Last is a member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (MCIPS) and the Institute of Logistics and Transport (MILT).

He arrived with his wife Sheela. They have two grown up children and four grandchildren who remain in the UK and USA.

Last's office is in the Supply Chain Unit, room 33 where his extension is 2208. Last and Sheela live at 5 IITA Drive where their extension is 2523.

Library update

Access to Ulrich's Web

The Library is pleased to announce that IITA stations can now access Ulrich's web – the global serials directory. The access is by IP authentication at www.ulrichsweb.com

Ulrich's web:

- makes journals search and discovery easy and effective.
- provides in-depth information on journals.
- helps to identify journals in which to publish or which support various research interests.
- helps to identify peer-reviewed journals.

Energy conservation tips:

Power down computers, monitors, and peripherals when not in use; and make use of natural light whenever and wherever possible.

Obituary

With heavy hearts and deep sense of loss, we announce the death of Mrs. Gbambola Oluwatoyin Bolanle, a Purchasing Assistant/ Expediter in



Late Gbambola

Supply Chain Unit.

She died on 14 August 2010 after a brief illness and was buried on 15 August 2010, according to Muslim rites.

Mrs. Bolanle, who hailed from Ibadan in Oyo State, Nigeria, was aged 47 years. She was a diligent and hardworking staff during her life time.

May her gentle soul rest in perfect peace.