



## New Year Message from DG Hartmann

Dear IITA colleagues:

Another year has come and gone. It has been, thanks to you, another year of accomplishments in research productivity and institutional efficiencies.

Sadly, after years of consistent growth, we fell short in our efforts to win contracts in 2010. We will have to watch our pennies closely, i.e., more than normal. Your help to protect unrestricted funding, as you promised during the R4D Week, will go a long way. If a cost center starts with a 'one' (i.e., 1xxx) it's unrestricted, so it is the one to protect.

Our Executive Team – Bramel, Menon, and Sholola – is already executing plans on how to manage and survive this tight time in all three IITA groups – R4D, R4D Support, and Finance. Of course, just survival has not been a pursuit of IITA. Like we did in 2001, when we hit a rough patch, we want to come out of this one stronger. As Sholola reminds us, there is a silver lining in the clouds. One of IITA's strength is its ability to learn and adapt.

The good news is that the wind is behind us. The plans launched



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some years back are now underway and we should start benefiting from them. As the consolidation of IITA personnel in fewer stations progresses, the scientific synergy they add, plus the cost savings, and more efficient support they bring, will translate into greater productivity via better services, more or better staff support, conferences, training, and in particular, investments in key R4D

infrastructure, like more bandwidth and computing power.

We also start 2011 with a new Board-approved 2011-2020 Strategy and, later in the year on October 31, IITA will have a new Director General in place. So it is a dynamic time with new beginnings.

Thank you for being with IITA and for all your efforts to help fulfill its mission.

## Welcome Holger Kirscht, new social scientist



Kirscht

IITA has appointed Holger Kirscht as Qualitative Social Scientist. He joins the IITA team in Cameroon.

Prior to his appointment, Kirscht—a German—was a Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology in the

Department of Anthropology and African Studies at the University of Mainz, Germany. He has an MA in Social Anthropology from the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt. He obtained his PhD in 1999, also in Social Anthropology, from the same institution.

In the last 10 to 15 years, Kirscht has also worked on projects in Morocco and north eastern Nigeria.

Kirscht could be contacted via his email address [H.Kirscht@cgiar.org](mailto:H.Kirscht@cgiar.org); office telephone number: +237 22 23 74 34; or mobile: +237 95 90 61 07.

### Announcement

The Consortium for Improving Agriculture-based Livelihoods in Central Africa (CIALCA) and the CGIAR Consortium Research Program (CRP) on the Humid Tropics will hold an international conference on the 'Challenges and Opportunities for Agricultural Intensification of the Humid Highland Systems of sub-Saharan Africa' in Kigali, Rwanda from 24-27 October 2011. For further details on how to submit abstract, kindly contact: [cialca-conference@cgiar.org](mailto:cialca-conference@cgiar.org) or visit [www.cialca.org](http://www.cialca.org).

### Help conserve electricity!

Before leaving the workplace at day's end, make sure that you have:

- (1) Powered off all unnecessary electrical office/lab equipment;
- (2) Turned off air conditioners; and
- (3) Switched off all lights.

# 'IITA taught me how to fish' - Kilani

For Steve Kilani, the outgoing President of the Management Staff Association, working for IITA has been the most rewarding experience in his life.

"The institute taught me how to fish and I remain grateful," he says during a farewell party organized for him in Ibadan.

Kilani, who spent 18 years at IITA, rose through the ranks. He first came in as a casual laborer but rose to become a manager in the soil science unit.

More importantly, he earned a PhD before resigning his appointment.



*Kilani (fifth from right) pose for a group photo with colleagues*

His case is one among many and it exemplifies the several opportunities/capacity building that IITA offers to African scientists.

Kilani said but for IITA, he wouldn't have attained such a height in life.

Over the years, IITA has provided a platform for training and offering of opportunities to African researchers. So far, thousands of youths ranging from undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students have directly or indirectly benefited from the institute's capacity building programs.

Sikuade Opeyemi, IITA Clinic Head; and Olu Babasanya, Personnel Manager, commended Kilani for his humility and commitment to duty while at IITA.

## Two new rust-resistant soybean varieties released in Nigeria



*Improved rust-resistant soybean ready for harvest*

Nigeria has released two rust-resistant soybean varieties—TGx 1987-62F and TGx 1987-10F—to help overcome the menace of rust, a devastating fungal disease that if left unattended to could destroy as much as 80% of infested crops.

The varieties were bred by scientists working at IITA and further field tested in collaboration with the National Cereal Research Institute (NCRI).

Released by the Nigerian Variety Release Committee in December, 2010, TGx 1987-62F and TGx 1987-10F gave an average grain yield of 1670 kg/ha and 1630 kg/ha, respectively, in a two-year multi-location on-station trials in Nigeria, according to Hailu Tefera, IITA Soybean Breeder.

During the two-year period that was funded by the Tropical Legume II project, TGx 1987-62F and TGx 1987-10F gave 58% and 54% more grain yield as compared to TGx 1485-1D—an early maturing variety popular with farmers but highly susceptible to rust.

The new varieties also surpassed the recently released rust-resistant variety TGx 1835-10E by 22-33% in grain yield in the 2009 on-station trials. The varieties mature in 96-97 days on the average and are capable of producing 2.6 t/ha fodder under on-station trial conditions.

"Besides giving high grain yield, these varieties are resistant to soybean rust and other foliar diseases and adds to the arsenal of farmers' fight against the disease," says Ranajit Bandyopadhyay, IITA Pathologist.

In the 2009 multi-location trials, only 1-2% leaf area of these two varieties were damaged as compared to 22% in the susceptible variety TGx 1485-1D l.

On-farm trials in four states (Kaduna, Benue, Kano and Niger) of Nigeria by 175 farmers showed that TGx 1987-10F and TGx 1987-62F yielded 1626 kg/ha and 1567 kg/ha, respectively, adds Mohammed Ishaq, NCRI Soybean Breeder.

The new varieties surpassed TGx 1485-1D by 5-9% in terms of grain yield under farmers' conditions and provide insurance against rust. They are preferred by many farmers because they smother weeds and reduce the cost of weeding, mature early; give high yield and have attractive seed colors.

In 1996, the Asian soybean rust first arrived in Africa and has rapidly spread through Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, causing significant yield losses in badly-affected fields. The disease was first noted in Nigeria in 1999.

For most African farmers, using resistant varieties is the most viable method to control the disease as applying fungicides proves very costly.

Large scale production of these new varieties is expected to boost soybean production in Nigeria—a country that accounts for 43% of soybean in Africa—in particular, and the continent in general.



*Susceptible varieties sandwiched by rust-resistant soybean varieties*