



UNU-INRA Sparkle

Volume 2, Issue 2

Enhancing Capacity for Managing Africa's Natural Resources

In this Issue

**Feature Article:
Promoting Green
Economy in Africa**

**UNU-INRA
Director Holds
Bilateral Meetings
with International
Stakeholders in
New York**

**Namibia OU Hosts
1st African
Research
Discovery Camp**

**UNU-INRA
Deepens
Relationship
with African
Ambassadors
in Accra**

**GIS Capacity
Development
Training Held**

**UNU-INRA
Supports
National GHG
Inventory and
Reporting in
Ghana**

**Two Volunteers
from Australia
to Serve UNU-
INRA**

Promoting Green Economy in Africa

African economies are highly dependent on natural resources which form the basis of economic activities in many countries on the continent. The exploitation of these resources has fostered high rates of economic growth across the African continent. Despite these remarkable rates of economic growth in recent years, the continent still faces challenges of persistent poverty and low human development.

Issues of poverty, unemployment and under-employment, environmental degradation, including deforestation, soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, depletion of fish stocks and effects of climate change are among the many challenges confronting the continent.

Addressing these issues in a sustainable way calls for the need to rethink the current development pathways, hence the concept of Green Economy. Green Economy (GE) is an emerging concept within the international development community,

which aims at achieving Sustainable Development. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Green Economy is a state of development that results in improved human well-being and reduced inequalities, without exposing future generations to significant environmental risks and ecological scarcities. Green Economy is seen as one, whose growth in income and employment is driven by investments that reduce carbon emission and pollution, enhance energy and resource efficiency, and prevent loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.



Energy and Resource Efficiency can Promote Green Economy

Although the concept of Green Economy has gained popularity since 2008 in the context of discussions on the policy response to multiple global crises, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on how green economy strategies could effectively lead to growth in income and employment. For Africa in particular, the key question is how can the transition to a green economy improve prospects for economic development, support the structural transformation of the continent's economies to achieve more productivity and value addition, and address distributional impacts? Addressing this question requires actions on three fronts.

First, the economic importance of natural capital in wealth creation, employment, livelihoods, and poverty reduction in Africa must be recognised. This is because natural resources, including agriculture, provide a basis for the livelihoods of the poor and the most vulnerable, who primarily depend on nature for survival.

Secondly, Africa needs to tap into its vast endowment of natural resources to harness its industrial development that is supported by the deployment of clean, efficient, and resource-saving technologies.

Finally, driving green economic transformation also requires that African Governments take bold steps in building institutional capacity, developing necessary skills, integrating disciplines, promoting entrepreneurship and innovation, and establishing ongoing monitoring. This will imply that African Governments, with active participation of non-State actors, critically take actions on public investments, fiscal policies, regulations, government procurements, and market creation at national, regional and international levels.

Having recognized the important role that non-state actors can play in promoting green economy in Africa, the United Nations University Institute for Natural resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) has undertaken bold steps in promoting the concept of Green Economy for Africa's development. The Institute has adopted Green Economy as one of its key strategic programme areas, which aims include training stakeholders in a number of areas including payment for ecosystem service (PES) and greening businesses through biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The Institute is carrying out capacity development programmes, inter-disciplinary research projects and policy development activities in order to promote green economy in Africa.

As a natural resources management institute in Africa, UNU-INRA is also playing an active role in mainstreaming Rio+20 Green Economy Agenda into National Development Plans across the continent.

Indeed, promoting green economy as a sustainable pathway to development is very important to Africa as it will encourage pragmatic remedies to the continent's most pressing environmental and development challenges.

NEWS

UNU-INRA Director Holds Bilateral Meetings with International Stakeholders in New York

The Director of UNU-INRA, Dr. Elias T. Ayuk, during a working visit to the United Nations (UN) in New York held bilateral meetings with different international stakeholders to identify possible areas of collaboration

with UNU-INRA. The Director held meetings with the Rockefeller Foundation (RF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (UN-OSAA) and the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA).



Dr. Elias T. Ayuk, UNU-INRA Director

The meetings were coordinated by the United Nations University Office at the UN in New York (ONY). These meetings also served as a platform to provide information about the strategic position of the UNU Office in New York, emphasizing its role in identifying areas that UNU Institutes and Programmes can be of use to the UN System.

Dr. Ayuk seized the opportunity of this visit, to increase the visibility of UNU-INRA's work with the key actors and stakeholders, by sharing information on the Institute's operational modalities and priority programme areas.

The UNU-INRA Director also used the opportunity to hold a number of meetings with representatives of permanent missions to the UN in New York, especially those from Africa including Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and South Africa, who pledged to liaise with their respective Governments in exploring support for UNU-INRA.

Namibia OU Hosts 1st African Research Discovery Camp

The Operating Unit of UNU-INRA in Namibia, Sam Nujoma Marine and Coastal Resources Research Centre (SANUMARC) of the University of Namibia, hosted the 1st African Research Discovery Camp from the 3rd -25th March, 2014. The aim of the programme was to provide opportunities for advanced Master's students and creative PhD candidates to learn new developments in the scientific fields.



Participants of the Discovery Research Camp

The three-week research programme on “*Geochemistry, Ecology and Diversity of marine Micro-organisms in Ocean Upwelling Systems*”, received students and scientists from eight countries from all over the world. The initiative was sponsored and supported by the Agouron Institute through the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR), as part of their initiative on Graduate Education in Oceanography in countries that offer opportunities for students to study global environmental topics in marine ecosystems.

The introduction of the Research Discovery Camp is in fulfilment of SANUMARC’s goal of offering training opportunities to students to develop the use of the aquatic resources in a sustainable manner in order to provide food, employment, income and recreational resources for people in the Southern African Development Community.

UNU-INRA Deepens Relationship with African Ambassadors in Accra

UNU-INRA, the leading natural resources management Institute of the UN University in Africa, has engaged a number of African Ambassadors in Accra to present key Policy Briefs and other knowledge products to them. The visit, which also aimed at improving the Institute’s working relationship with African Governments, was used to brief the Ambassadors on UNU-INRA’s programmes so as to identify possible areas of collaboration.

The UNU-INRA delegation, led by the Director of the Institute, Dr. Elias T. Ayuk, separately called on the Angolan Ambassador, Ana Maria TELES CARREIRA, the Nigerian High Commissioner, who was represented by the Minister Counsellor / Head of Chancery, Mr. Oluropo Obasola OSASONA, and the Chargée d’Affaires of the Equatorial Guinea Embassy, Madam Margarita OYONO OBAMA, who was the officer-in-charge at the time of the visit.

The Institute seized the opportunity to appeal, through the Ambassadors, to the Governments of African countries that are yet to contribute to UNU-INRA’s Endowment Fund, to honour the resolution taken by African Heads of State at the 21st ordinary session of the

then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1985, to contribute to the Fund, to enable the Institute fulfil its mandate.

The Institute has also used the visit to inform the Embassies on some of its flagship programmes including training modules on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and a proposed post-graduate programme in Sustainable Development Diplomacy.

The Embassies visited have pledged their support to UNU-INRA.



The Director of UNU-INRA, Dr. Elias T. Ayuk and Her Excellency, Ana Maria Teles Carreira, Angola Ambassador to Ghana (Both in the middle). The others are Mr. Benjamin Turkson and Mrs Praise Nutakor (All of UNU-INRA.)

UNU-INRA Supports National GHG Inventory and Reporting in Ghana

UNU-INRA Research Fellow, Mr. Kwabena Owusu Asubonteng, represented the Institute in a group of experts drawn from academia, civil society, and government agencies to conduct an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions/removal for the agriculture, forestry and land use sector of Ghana. This is in support of Ghana’s obligation as a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to develop, publish and regularly update national emission inventories.

The expert team, led by the Climate Change focal point of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has submitted its second order draft report which is currently being reviewed. The team is now assessing various national mitigation actions and their long term effects in identified key categories in the sector. The report when ready will be submitted to the UNFCCC as part of the country’s 3rd national communication report as well as a key document for greenhouse gas (GHG) emission mitigation planning for Ghana.

GIS Capacity Development Session for Researchers & Students Held



Mr. Kwabena O. Asubonteng, UNU-INRA Research Fellow, Facilitating the GIS Training

UNU-INRA, as part of its Geographical Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing training programme, organised a 10- day GIS short course, from the 12th -23rd May, 2014, in Accra to enhance the capacity of natural resource managers and researchers in GIS and remote sensing applications.

The participants were taken through theoretical background to GIS and hands-on applications in collecting natural resources related data with GPS and Satellite imagery and processing them with ArcGIS and Erdas Imagine into maps suitable for decision making.

The GIS training is organised every quarter by the Institute.

Two Volunteers from Australia to Serve UNU-INRA



Amber Johnston-Billings



Karamzo Saccob

In April 2014, UNU-INRA received two volunteers, sponsored by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to work with the Institute for one

year. Karamzo Saccob, working with UNU-INRA's communication unit, holds a Master's degree in International Relations, while, Amber Johnston-Billings, who is attached to the Green Economy research team, holds a Master's degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- *First International Conference on Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change and Ecosystem Changes in Semi-arid Africa @ UDS Campus, Tamale on August 6-8, 2014*
- *Board Meeting – August 11-12, 2014*
- *Staff Retreat – August 12-15, 2014*



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY
UNU-INRA
Institute for Natural
Resources in Africa

Location: Second Floor, International House, Annie Jiage Road, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana

Address: Private Mail Bag, Kotoka International Airport, Accra, Ghana

Email: inra@unu.edu

Tel: +233 302 500396

Website: www.inra.unu.edu

About UNU-INRA

UNU-INRA enhances the capacity of African researchers to conduct research on natural resources management so as to inform policy formulation and implementation.

Although UNU-INRA is an institute of the UNU system, it was an African concept developed by some committed top African scientists. Its establishment is supported by the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the Organization of African Union (OAU). On this strong political and moral support, UNU-INRA was established in 1986.

Sparkle is a quarterly newsletter of UNU-INRA.

Sparkle means Sustainability through Partnership in Africa where Resources are optimally utilized using Knowledge that is holistic, Leadership that is inclusive and Economy that is green