



UNU-INRA Sparkle

Volume 2, Issue 4

Enhancing Capacity for Managing Africa's Natural Resources

In this Issue

Featured News:
Mitigating Global Volatility Effects on Growth

Special Feature on UNU-INRA PhD Intern

UNU-INRA Reaches Out to Students

UNU-INRA Shares Knowledge on Climate Change Projects

UNU-INRA Joined UG to Mark GIS Day

New Grant from IDRC

Upcoming Events

Mitigating Global Volatility Effects on Growth



Dr Elias T. Ayuk- UNU-INRA Director

Proper macroeconomic management can provide opportunities for many countries in Africa to manage price fluctuations in the extractive industries to achieve structural transformation and capital formation.

This is one of the key messages in a paper entitled “**Extractive Resources, Global Volatility and Africa's Growth Prospects**”, presented by Dr. Elias T. Ayuk, the Director of UNU-INRA at a two-day conference in Qatar, dubbed “*Investment and Governance of Africa's Resources for Economic Diversification and Development*”. The Qatar Foundation is providing support for this project.

The conference, which was organized by the Faculty of Islamic Studies of the Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar, in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts, Boston and University of Ottawa, Ontario, brought together representatives from 28 international organizations and universities.

According to Dr Ayuk, global volatility affects growth through a number of channels including terms-of-trade, investment and income distribution, inflation and exchange rates. He noted that major sources of global volatility include international price fluctuations, growth rate of per capita real GDP in the US, short-term real interest rate and stock market returns.

In exploring the volatility-growth nexus, Dr Ayuk noted that rents generated from extractive resources can play a central role in capital formation and structural change but fluctuating prices will lead to increases in uncertainty and risk thereby discouraging investment. He therefore called for the need to strike a balance between higher productive investment and better income distribution.

The UNU-INRA Director also urged policy makers in Africa to ensure macroeconomic stability by minimizing real exchange rate and price fluctuations. He also advised resource managers to promote equitable sharing of revenues for inclusive growth and improve transparency and accountability for the continent's development.



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An Apprentice in Green Economy: a Global Discourse



Nina Pius M., UNU-INRA PhD Intern

On the last day of August 2014, I arrived after midnight in Lusaka, looking forward to be at my new duty station, the Zambia Operating Unit (OU) of the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA), located at the University of Zambia (UNZA).

In the afternoon of my first day at the OU, I met my mentor, Dr. Jewette H. Masinja, to plan the way forward. A great idea of developing green economy research concept within Zambia's context emerged. Writing a research proposal was indeed strategic; as it gave me a head start in trying to comprehend what the green economy paradigm was all about. It was a great honour for me to prepare and deliver few lectures to students on a joint master's degree programme involving University of Cape Town, University of Zambia and University of Zimbabwe. In addition to the proposal and lectures, other outputs during the internship include preparing two papers and making two presentations at the school of Mines and School of Agriculture of the University of Zambia. Presenting my work in progress to the students elicited useful comments and academic discussions, which helped me very much to refine a working paper and a policy brief. The two documents are the final products of my research work on green economy during the PhD internship with UNU-INRA.

Indeed, my experience at the UNU-INRA OU was a great moment to connect with fellow students and scholars to learn. My mentor, Dr. Masinja, a well-connected and experienced professional, has been a great source of inspiration. I also received tremendous support from the Coordinator of the Zambia UNU-INRA OU, who is also the Vice Chancellor of the University of Zambia, Prof Stephen Simukanga. Equally helpful was the support from the Green Economy Fellow in Accra Ghana, Dr. Calvin Atewamba, whose timely communication was very encouraging.

As a matter of fact, the exposure at UNU-INRA has opened a new horizon into a career path, which in my humble opinion is worth pursuing with fervour. Africa in the 21st century is faced with numerous environmental issues, prompting the discourse on the development of initiatives that can promote a green

economy. Equipped with this understanding, I shall endeavour to continue working towards becoming more resourceful to my peers as well as to natural resource management institutions in Africa and beyond.

At the end, I was able to rediscover my academic potentials and refocus my intellectual energy towards more creative thinking and reflection on complex interacting factors in the management of natural resources in Africa. I appreciate the commitment of the community of multi-disciplinary scholars, who are actively involved in building synergies between UNU-INRA Operating Unit in Zambia and the OUs in other African countries and the headquarters in Accra, Ghana.

NEWS

UNU-INRA Reaches Out to Students



Mrs Praise Nutakor (right), Communications and PR Associate of UNU-INRA making a presentation on the work of the Institute

The United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) has joined other UN agencies in Accra, to share information on its work with students. The event, dubbed *UN4U*, was organized by the United Nations Association (UNA), in partnership with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Accra. Its aim was to present to students the work and role of the UN system in promoting development.

Held at the Accra Wesley Girls Senior High School, the event brought together over 200 senior high school students from Accra. These included students from the Accra Wesley Girls, Accra Academy, Osu Presec and Accra Girls. Representing UNU-INRA were two communications specialists of the Institute: Praise Nutakor; who made a presentation on UNU-INRA, and Karamzo Saccoh.

After the presentation, the students were given the opportunity to ask questions on the work of the Institute. The session indeed provided an opportunity for these students and their teachers to learn more about the work of UNU-INRA and the UN system as a whole.

UNU-INRA Shares Knowledge on Climate Change Projects



Dr Euphrasie B.H Kouame, in the presentation session at the conference

Three Research Fellows of the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) shared knowledge with stakeholders on the Institute's climate change related projects. This was at the 4th Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA-IV), held in Marrakech, Morocco from the 8th-10th October, 2014, under the theme *"Africa Can Feed Africa Now: Translating Climate Knowledge into Action"*.

In a presentation entitled **"Green Farming Practice for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation: Experience with Usual Practice and Vetiver Technology"**, Dr Oku, Senior Research Fellow for Land and Water Resources, called for the adoption of vetiver buffer strips as a green farming technology on steep land. This is to reduce soil, water and nutrient losses so as to increase crop yields and create climate resilience.

Also presenting at the conference was Dr Gessesse Dessie, the Capacity Development Fellow of the Institute, who prepared a poster presentation on UNU-INRA's flagship curriculum on **Sustainable Development Diplomacy with specializations in Water Diplomacy, Bio-Diplomacy and Climate Diplomacy**. The main objective of this curriculum, according to Dr Dessie, is to develop a critical mass of Africa's diplomats that can reinforce sustainable natural resources management through peace building, partnership and prosperity. The course, he noted, will be a two-years on campus postgraduate programme in a multi-country and multi-campus environment.

Dr Euphrasie B.H. Kouame, Post-doctoral Research Fellow for Green Economy, also made a presentation at the conference on a paper entitled: **Risk Aversion and Agricultural Decision Making under Weather**

Uncertainty: Evidence from Rural Cote d'Ivoire". She underscored the need to address the individual barriers and design problems that work as disincentives to farmers' participation in weather insurance program, urging stakeholders in the agriculture value chain to pay more attention to farmers' risk aversion.

In a side event organised by the African Climate Policy Centre of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ACPC/UNECA), Dr Kouame made another presentation on the Institute's project on **Climate Change, Agricultural Trade and Food Security in ECOWAS**. The project, which is being implemented jointly with ACPC/UNECA aims at assessing whether agricultural production systems and trade policies in ECOWAS can be adjusted to alleviate the impact of climate change on food security, and promote sustainable development.

As part of its core activities, UNU-INRA continues to encourage knowledge sharing and transfer to disseminate information on its projects to the benefits of stakeholders.

UNU-INRA Joined UG to Mark GIS Day



Mr Kwabena O. Asubonteng making his presentation

UNU-INRA joined the Department of Geography and Resource Development of the University of Ghana (UG) to mark GIS Day under the theme **"Developing the Ghana We Want through the Power of GIS"**. The event held on 19th November, 2014, under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, Ghana, brought together stakeholders from academia, public and private sector.

Representing UNU-INRA at the event was the Institute's Geo Information Fellow, Mr. Kwabena O. Asubonteng, who made a presentation on the topic

“Application of Geospatial Tools in Identifying Local Areas of Deforestation: Practical Demonstration”. The presentation focused on a research project that identified areas with high deforestation rates in the Ejisu-Juabeng District in Ghana and linked them to socio-economic drivers using hotspot identification procedures in a forestry context. Mr Asubonteng called on resource managers and policy makers to study deforestation at their local hotspots to understand the drivers in order to develop targeted solutions to mitigate them.

New Grant from IDRC



IDRC | CRDI

International Development Research Centre
Centre de recherches pour le développement international

The United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) has received a 200,000 CAD grant from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to carry out a research project on **“Improving the Development Outcomes of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Agriculture and the Environment”**.

The aim of the project is to review and assess the state of PPPs in agriculture in a representative number of Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries so as to guide further research, policy development and targeting of private and public funds for partnership development. This would provide empirical evidence on how and in which conditions PPPs in SSA agriculture can provide benefits to society and the environment.

Based on both qualitative and quantitative methods, drawing from six country case studies and situational analysis, and using sex-disaggregated data, the project will also assess the potential of PPPs to foster gender equality in SSA. For each country, UNU-INRA will prepare thematic reports and policy briefs that address the landscape of PPPs in agriculture; the effects of PPPs for agriculture on inclusive growth and food security; and the effects of socio-political and economic contexts on agricultural PPPs feasibility, models and performance.

The project is expected to be implemented within 12 months.

Upcoming Events

- ✚ Special Seminar on *Future Challenges to Environmental Risk Management* by *UNU Vice Rector, Prof Jacob Rhyner*
 - *Date: 23rd January, 2015 @10am*
- ✚ **GIS Training for Professionals in Natural Resources Management**
 - *Date: 26th-30th January, 2015*
 - *Registration: Contact: 0244-669048 / email asubonteng@inra.unu.edu*
- ✚ 13 in-Country National Validation Workshops on *Country Assessment Studies on Climate Change, Agricultural Trade and Food Security in ECOWAS*
 - *Date: 29th January – 28th February, 2015*
 - *Countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo*
- ✚ **Green Business Training Workshop for Francophones**
 - *Date: 9th -13th February, 2015*
 - *Venue: Accra, Ghana*
- ✚ **Methodological Workshop on the project “Climate Change, Agricultural Trade and Food Security in ECOWAS”**
 - *Date: 1st Week in March, 2015*
 - *Venue: Accra, Ghana*



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About UNU-INRA

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

Although UNU-INRA is an institute of the United Nations University (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 African Union (AU). On this strong political and moral support, UNU-INRA was established in 1986.

Sparkle is a quarterly newsletter of UNU-INRA.

It is an acronym for Sustainability through Partnership in Africa where Resources are optimally utilized using Knowledge that is holistic, Leadership that is inclusive and Economy that is green