



# UNU-INRA *Sparkle*

Volume 6, Issue 3

Enhancing Capacity for Managing Africa's Natural Resources

### In this Issue

UNU-INRA Calls for the Adoption of Research Knowledge for Sustainable Development

UNU-INRA strengthens key stakeholder relationships

News Feature on Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC)

New Staff

## Adopt Research Knowledge for Sustainable Development



Participants at the lecture.

Newly appointed Director of the United Nations University's Institute for Natural Resources in Africa - UNU-INRA, Dr. Fatima Denton has emphasized the important role of research data in addressing Africa's natural resource management issues and broader development challenges. She called on governments to adopt research-based knowledge for informed decision making and sustainable development.

"We have to start locally and enable our research institutions to cater for our knowledge needs and align these with our development goals," she said, adding that "we have to use our research institutes as producers of knowledge, not only as contributors to research but as influencers of research outcomes."

Further, Dr. Denton underscored the need for strong partnerships in complementing individual efforts for improved outcomes. "Our task is huge and we cannot afford to be insular. We have to elevate science to economic literacy and anchor our work to respond to problems that our governments, farmers, pastoralists and vulnerable communities are wrestling with," she stressed.

She was speaking at a farewell lecture organized in honour of Out-going Director of UNU-INRA, Dr. Elias T. Ayuk. Her remarks followed a presentation by Dr. Elias T. Ayuk, on the topic "*Mineral Resources Governance for Sustainable Development: A New Framework*". The presentation proposed the adoption of the new robust mineral resources governance framework, the *Sustainable Development Licence to Operate (SDLO)* to address mining sector challenges and promote sustainable development.



Dr. Fatima Denton thanked Dr. Ayuk for a rich and informative presentation, describing him as a champion of natural resources management matters in Africa, who has made huge contributions to put UNU-INRA on the map.



Dr. Denton delivering her remarks

Focusing on UNU-INRA, Dr. Denton reiterated her commitment to build on the legacy of Dr. Ayuk, notably to extend and leverage existing networks with UN agencies, the University of Ghana, private sector, research institutes and like-minded institutions.

The lecture was attended by key stakeholders including heads of UN agencies in Ghana, representatives from the University of Ghana, members of the diplomatic corps and the media.

### **UNU-INRA Director calls on key stakeholders to strengthen partnerships**



Drs Denton, Dr Ayuk and Dr. Evans-Clock

The Director of UNU-INRA Dr. Fatima Denton paid courtesy visits to the Vice Chancellor (VC) of the University of Ghana, Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, and UN Resident Coordinator, Dr. Christine Evans-Klock. The visits form part of the newly appointed Director's introductory discussions with key UNU-

INRA partners and were aimed at further strengthening collaborative alliances.

At the Office of the VC, Dr. Denton highlighted her vision to nurture and strengthen UNU-INRA's relationship with the Office of the Vice Chancellor and the larger University community. She said she looks forward to exchanging ideas and building useful linkages with relevant departments and units of the University, leading to useful collaborations including joint projects.

On his part, Prof. Oduro Owusu congratulated Dr. Denton on her appointment and welcomed her into the University community. He expressed support for her drive to strengthen ties with the University, affirming that his doors are always open to UNU-INRA.

During the visit to the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Dr. Christine Evans-Klock, Dr. Denton reiterated her commitment to advance UNU-INRA's work with other UN agencies in Ghana and contribute actively to the work of the UN in Ghana. Discussions touched on a number of pertinent issues including how to improve the research-policy nexus and enhance research uptake for policy formulation and implementation.

### *In the spotlight – Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC), UNU-INRA project*

#### **GCIC – empowering green businesses, impacting Ghana's climate change mitigation agenda**



Ghana Bamboo Bikes factory - an employee works at bamboo frames for a bicycle

Located in Adum, a lush and sparsely populated area in the Ashanti region of Ghana, the main factory of Ghana Bamboo Bikes buzzes with activity as young women and men work enthusiastically creating bicycle frames from bamboo, for the local market and for export. As a green business, the SME's clean technology production methods and products play an

important role towards global efforts to green the transport sector and reduce its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

However, as is the case for many of Ghana's budding green businesses, Ghana Bamboo Bikes' journey in Ghana's clean technology terrain has been arduous, fraught with daunting challenges including a complex and challenging policy environment and lack of funding. Thankfully, the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC) project is helping turn things around, for the better, for green enterprises and the environment.

Established in May 2016 with a grant from the Governments of Denmark and the Netherlands through the World Bank, and managed by a consortium comprising Ashesi University, Ernst and Young, SNV Ghana and the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa, GCIC is a pioneering business incubator with a mission is to develop and support an exceptional set of transformational ventures and entrepreneurs who are pioneering adaptive and mitigating solutions towards climate action in Ghana.

Ghana Bamboo Bikes belongs to the first cohort of green enterprises to enrol at the GCIC. For Bernice Dapaah, CEO of Ghana Bamboo Bikes, the launch of GCIC is auspicious. "My GCIC experience has been very beneficial...it felt wonderful to join a community of people who shared my goal of environmental conservation and climate change mitigation, and to share and learn together," she said. "The support has contributed considerably to making Ghana Bamboo Bikes more viable, it has made it possible for us to navigate an uncertain business landscape quite confidently, and empowered us in our resolve to work for a greener environment," she added.

Conscious that the lack of a favourable policy environment presents a big barrier to the expansion of clean businesses and technologies, the GCIC has, since its establishment, convened several policy dialogues to discuss policy and legislative solutions to support green businesses and promote clean technologies in Ghana. These dialogue sessions are driven by UNU-INRA, which is leading the policy and regulatory framework component of the GCIC project.

Within the quarter, two policy dialogues – a multi-stakeholder engagement on Climate Smart

Agriculture (31 July) and an Investment Forum on Bamboo (18 September) – were convened by UNU-INRA, bringing together key government ministries and relevant stakeholders to discuss and agree to recommendations aimed at fostering a favourable policy environment where green enterprises will thrive, prosper and make more meaningful impacts on climate change mitigation efforts.

Dr. Eric Twum, UNU-INRA Policy Fellow (Climate Change and Sustainable Development) and GCIC project lead said UNU-INRA is pleased to support the GCIC project, noting that UNU-INRA's work under the project is consistent with the Institute's Green Economy programme area.



At the Bamboo Investment Forum - Dr Twum (middle) flanked by colleagues from UNU-INRA

GCIC has a target to contribute to Ghana's National Climate Change Policy by supporting 100 green businesses (with seed financing, market connections, technical and business training and policy interventions) and mitigating up to 660,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions over the next ten years.

### Our New Staff

#### Fatima Denton (PhD), Director

Dr. Fatima Denton is an accomplished senior leader in the UN system, respected across the research and



implementation branches of the organization. She has depth of expertise in natural resource management, as well as deep knowledge of research, policy development, and the African region.

Prior to joining UNU-INRA, Dr. Denton had worked with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Ethiopia since 2012. Her roles included Director of the Natural Resource Management Division and Coordinator of the African

Climate Policy Centre. Before that Dr. Denton was a Programme Leader with the Canada-based International Development Research Centre (IDRC), where she managed high-impact action research, including a major climate change adaptation research programme involving over 100 action research initiatives encompassing 40-plus projects across 33 countries in Africa.

She is an IPCC Lead Author and a current member of the advisory board of Future Earth and a trustee of UK-based International Institute on Environment and Development (IIED), and has written more than 50 peer-reviewed articles, reports, and books.

**Vicentia Quartey, Communications and Public Relations Associate**

Prior to joining UNU-INRA as Communications and Public Relations Associate, Vicentia worked as Programme



Manager at the High Commission of the Commonwealth of Australia in Ghana, where she was responsible for managing the Direct Aid Program (DAP), the Australian

Government-funded development assistance program spanning nine countries including six francophone countries. She also worked as Communications and Publications Officer at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana where she played an instrumental role in reviving and re-organizing the Institute’s communications program.

**Elysee Koudou Kouessi, UN Volunteer**



Prior to joining UNU-INRA, Elysee worked with UNHCR as interpreter/ translator. He holds an MA in Bilingual Translation from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

**Key Publications in the Quarter**

Policy Brief	Agricultural Green Innovation: constraints and opportunities. Available at: <a href="http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6622">http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6622</a>
	Promoting Neglected and Underutilized Plant Species for improved Food Security Available at: <a href="http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6621">http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6621</a>
Working Paper	Constraints and Opportunities for Innovation in Green Enterprises: Implications for Land and Water Management in Rural Uganda Available at: <a href="https://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6618">https://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6618</a>

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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 State and Governments of the African Union (AU). On this strong political and moral support, UNU-INRA was established in 1986.

*UNU-INRA appreciates the continued contributions from the Governments of Cameroon, Ghana and Zambia to its endowment fund. The Institute is also grateful to the following organisations for the funding support to carry out specific projects:*



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