



Scientists Call for Systems Research in Agriculture to Realize the Sustainable Development Goals

IBADAN, NIGERIA, March 9, 2015 – For one week, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) hosted the global systems research and development community at the **International Conference on Integrated Systems Research for Sustainable Intensification in Smallholder Agriculture**. Social and agricultural scientists participating in the conference are stressing the importance of agricultural research to be done with a holistic systems perspective, and for better links between research on improvements in specific commodities and natural resources management.

Dr. Frank Rijsberman, CEO of the CGIAR Consortium, comments, *“The conference focused on one of the trickiest problems in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): it’s not just about coming up with single technologies, but how those can come together to provide livelihood opportunities for farmers, give them access to markets, as well as maintain and improve the ecosystems and the soils that provide the basis for them. A key element of this is research to address yield gaps that exist in several major commodities produced within farming systems.”*

Participants advocated for strong partnerships and stakeholder involvement through mechanisms such as Research-for-Development and Innovation Platforms as essential ingredients for enabling the scaling out of systems approaches for the benefit of millions of farmers.

“This gathering of scientists from over 30 nations demonstrates our commitment to help farming families tackle poverty, hunger and environmental degradation by using a fully integrated systems approach that develops and tests, with farming households and development partners, feasible combinations of technical, market, governance and policy options capable of improving agricultural livelihood systems”, says **Dr. Kwesi Atta-Krah**, Director, Humidtropics, a CGIAR Research Program.

Dr. Nteranya Sanginga, Director General of IITA, says, *“In order to build the hunger-free world we want, with its finite natural resources and continuing population growth, the world needs to urgently implement sustainable intensification solutions through integrated systems research for development”*. He called on the CGIAR Research Programs, especially those focused on systems research, to work together with partners, for the enhancement of sustainable intensification of agricultural systems.

The conference was organized by the CGIAR Research Program on Integrated Systems for the Humid Tropics (Humidtropics), in partnership with the CGIAR Research Program on

Aquatic Agricultural Systems (AAS) and the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems (Drylands). <http://humidtropics.cgiar.org/international-conference-integrated-systems/>

ENDS

NOTES TO MEDIA

About Humidtropics

Humidtropics is a CGIAR Research Program led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). It seeks to transform the lives of the rural poor in tropical America, Asia and Africa, and uses integrated systems research and unique partnership platforms for impact on poverty and ecosystems integrity. Research organizations involved in core partnership with Humidtropics are AVRDC, Bioversity International, CIAT, CIP, FARA, *icipe*, ICRAF, IITA, ILRI, IWMI, and WUR. humidtropics.cgiar.org

About AAS

AAS, the CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems is a multi-year research initiative designed to pursue community-based approaches to agricultural research in farming and fishing systems where the annual production dynamics of natural freshwater and/or coastal ecosystems contribute significantly to the household livelihood, including income and food security. At a global level, AAS is led by WorldFish on behalf of CGIAR together with International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and Bioversity International. aas.cgiar.org

About Drylands

The CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems brings together eight CGIAR Centers and numerous international, regional and national partners to engage in integrated agricultural systems research and unique partnership platforms to ensure improved food security, equitable and sustainable natural resource management and better livelihoods in the world's dry areas. The program is led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), a member of the CGIAR Consortium. DrylandSystems.cgiar.org

About CGIAR

CGIAR is a global agricultural research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by the 15 research centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. www.cgiar.org

For more information

Videos of the following speakers and keynotes are available on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/humidtropics/videos>

- **Dr. Nteranya Sanginga**, Director General, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA): *Welcome Address*
- **Dr. Kwesi Atta-Krah**, Director, CGIAR Research Program on Integrated Systems for the Humid Tropics (Humidtropics): *Welcome Address*
- **Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo**, Executive Director, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA): *Opening Address*
- **Dr. Frank Rijsberman**, Chief Executive Officer, CGIAR Consortium: *Opening Address*
- **Ann Tutwiler**, Director General, Bioversity International: *Opening Address*

- **Prof. David W. Norman**, Professor Emeritus, Kansas State University: *Historical Trajectory of Farming Systems Research: Past, Present and Future*
- **Dr. Bernard Hubert**, President, Agropolis International: *Systems Thinking toward Institutional Innovation and Change*
- **Cynthia McDougall**, Senior Scientist, Gender & Equity Theme Leader, WorldFish and GGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems (AAS): *Gender in Integrated Systems Research*
- **Dr. Marie de Lattre-Gasquet**, Senior Foresight Scientist, CGIAR Consortium: *Facilitating Changes in Complex Humid Systems: the Role of Foresight*
- **Dr. Dennis Garrity**, UN Drylands Ambassador & Senior Fellow, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF): *Understanding African Farming Systems as a Basis for Sustainable Intensification*
- **Dr. Linley Chiwona Karlun**, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU): *Systemic Nutrition Security Solutions for Transformative Change*
- **Dr. Fergus Sinclair**, Systems Science Leader, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF): *Systems Science at the Scale of Impact: Reconciling Bottom Up Participation with the Production of Widely Applicable Research Outputs*

View conference pictures at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/humidtropics/> and conference presentations at <http://fr.slideshare.net/ValriePoir>

For more information or to set up media interviews, please contact Valerie Poire, Communication Officer, Humidtropics, v.poire@cgiar.org, +234 803 978 4256.