
COMMUNIQUÉ

AGBIOSAFESEED2010: Kampala, Uganda 08- 11 March 2010- International Conference on Agro-biotechnology, Biosafety and Seed Systems in Developing countries.

This international conference has brought together over 120 stakeholders that included policymakers, scientists, government regulators, media and communication experts. The theme of this conference was; “Tapping Agro-Biotech Potential for Improved Seed Production and Utilization”.

Noted that:

1. High population growth rates particularly in SSA are placing a huge demand on available global natural resources. There is thus a need to quadruple our efforts in food production in order to cope with the current unfolding food crisis;
2. Various emerging challenges, including the increased need for sustainable energy and climate change and variability are further exacerbating the dilemma;
3. Biotechnology is a tool that offers immense potential for stimulating agricultural development in SSA;
4. There are a number of biotechnology research for developments efforts in Africa at various levels of development, and similarly a number of countries are at different stages of development their regulatory systems
5. There is need to improve communication of GM technologies through various strategies including improved packaging of information
6. Need for involvement of all stakeholders in research and dissemination of biotechnology products and related technologies
7. Most of the crops of economic importance to Africa are considered orphan crops by the developed world and African stakeholders need to ensure initiatives to harness their potential are pursued
8. Need to regularly update development partners / policymakers and other stakeholders on progress of research and development, particularly those that make use of biotechnology, to increase their involvement for policy making and implementation
9. Need for social and environmental audit of agricultural development projects
10. There is a need for substantial investment in capacity development for biotech and other related fields but there is continuous brain drain due to poor conditions of service

Agreed and recommended that:

1. African governments should operationalize the Maputo Declaration on investing 10% of national budget into agriculture
2. Biotechnology is one of the key tools in agricultural research for development that can positively contribute to agricultural growth to cope with the increasing population growth and the diversity of biotech and abiotic constraints
3. Need to build a critical mass of human resource and other competencies as well as infrastructure for the needs of cutting edge sciences
4. There is need for increased resources for undertaking basic research on biotechnology particularly GM technology in addition to support for technology evaluation
5. Careful and well thought dissemination of information packages on GM can significantly contribute to the acceptance and adoption
6. There is good political will for biotechnology advancement in many African countries. However, countries need fully functional biosafety frameworks backed up by appropriate legislations. For example, in Uganda, we request that the biosafety policy be brought to the Parliament for debate as soon as possible.
7. Need to improve on the remuneration and other incentives systems for scientists to minimize brain drain
8. Need to strengthen regional policy and technical collaboration to optimize resource use.

LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE

	Name	Institution
1.	Arthur Makara	SCIFODE (Co-Chair)
2.	Prof. Adipala Ekwamu	RUFORUM (Co-Chair)
3.	Dr. Moses Osiru	RUFORUM
4.	Dr. Theresa Sengooba	PBS
5.	Ruth Mbabazi Tugume	UNCST
6.	Herbert Oloka	PBS
7.	Gilbert Gumisiriza	UNCST
8.	Dr. Yona Baguma	NaCRRRI
9.	Dr. Andrew Kiggundu	NARL
10.	Peter Wamboga	SCIFODE
11.	Julius Ecuru	UNCST
12.	Brenda Nyadoi	SCIFODE