

Platform for Agrobiodiversity Newsletter
March 2011 ISSUE No. 007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This is the 7th edition of the PAR newsletter with interesting articles on a diverse set of topics.
Enjoy!

In this issue you will find:

- [News from the Secretariat](#)
- [News Articles](#)
 - [Operationalizing Agrobiodiversity Assessment: Functional biodiversity in Agroforestry Systems.](#)
 - [Monkey kola: in need of domestication of the rich underutilized indigenous fruits of Southeast Nigeria.](#)
 - [Poverty alleviation and Sustainable Development in Cocoa Producing Communities.](#)
 - [An idea for adaptation to climate changes in villages adjoining the Teesta River at Lalmonirhat district, Bangladesh.](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [Forthcoming Events](#)
- [Resources](#)

For the next issue of our newsletter we request you to send us your contributions **by 15 April 2011** to platformcoordinatorATcgjar.org.

News from the Secretariat

Membership: Our interactive forum in the website is now fully operational. We encourage new members to join and our existing members to continue to contribute to the network. Please go to our [Community Area](#) and if there is any more information you need, please feel free to send an email to platformcoordinatorATcgjar.org.

News articles

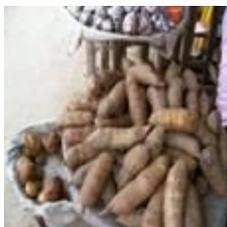
Operationalizing Agrobiodiversity Assessment: Functional biodiversity in Agroforestry Systems.

By Daniel Callo-Concha

A study has been conducted in an agroforestry system to assess functional biodiversity. The research site was the municipality of Tomé-Açú, Pará state in the Brazilian Amazon, a region known for its long-ago established agroforestry systems. The sample included 70 farms divided in three groups, defined based on the time of settlement, property size, technological know-how, organization and access to market. The results of the case study revealed that the most relevant factors supporting functional biodiversity in agroforestry systems are: (1) the farmers' technical qualification, (2) their preference for low impact techniques, (3) their capacity to adapt to environmental, social and political changes, (4) the diversification of species composition at plot level, (5) the increase in the use of perennial species, and (6) the financial profitability of the system. [Read the full article here](#)

Monkey kola: in need of domestication of the rich underutilized indigenous fruits of Southeast Nigeria.

By J. U. Ogbu, E. C. Umeokechukwu and B.A. Essien



This article reports on a research to assess the nutritional contents of the Monkey Cola in Nigeria. The study was conducted to answer the missing information about this highly known yet underutilised species. [Read the full article](#). Here a link on [wikipedia](#) about the [family Sterculiaceae](#) that accommodates these plants

Poverty alleviation and Sustainable Development in Cocoa Producing Communities.

By Tcharbuahbokengo Nfinn

Agrobiodiversity plays a major role in poverty alleviation in most households in Cameroon. One crop, cocoa, has proven to be one of the best crops to increase household income within forest communities in Cameroon. Its growth has contributed to increasing reforestation, reducing land degradation, promoting agroforestry, reducing open bush fires, contributing to sustainable development, increasing household income, thus the crop provides options for adaptation within the challenges faced in desertification and climate change effects. For more information send an email to feedarsecretariat@yahoo.com or visit the website www.feedar.interconnection.org.

An idea for adaptation to climate changes in villages adjoining the Teesta River at Lalmonirhat district, Bangladesh.

By Fardous Mohammad Safiul Azam

River bank erosion is one of the common phenomena in the northern part of Bangladesh, which includes Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Nilphamari and Kurigram districts. The villagers, (whose life mainly depends on agriculture) living beside the Teesta river that runs through in Lalmonirhat district, are one of the direct victims of such disasters. Landless farmers are increasing day by day in this region and they are also facing regular floods, cold spells and drought. In this regard, a project by one of the International Climate Champions 2010 by British Council Bangladesh has initiated in Lalmonirhat district to increase knowledge and awareness on impacts of climate change of the farmers, as well as proposing them to increase adaptability through cultivating more underutilized species. This is how they could increase crop diversity for adaptation to climate change and can alleviate their seasonal food crises and malnutrition. [Read the full article here](#). For more information please contact [Fardous Mohammad Safiul Azam](#).

Announcements

- **MSc in Climate Change and Policy at University of Sussex, UK.** The University of Sussex would like to invite applications for the MSc in 'Climate Change and Policy' for entry in 2011. This is unique course that aims to provide state-of-the-art training for the rapidly expanding market in climate change policy professionals within the public, private,

consultancy and not-for-profit sectors. For further information visit the [website](#).

- [A major new initiative to support collaborative crop research by scientists from sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the UK](#). This important new opportunity has been announced for transnational teams of researchers to address abiotic and biotic constraints to food crop production in developing countries. These partnerships are to be comprised of at least one researcher from the UK and one from sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) or South Asia (SA). This new initiative is being managed by the [UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council \(BBSRC\)](#). Deadline for application is March 31, 2011
- **Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) Comparative Research Networks 2011**. CODESRIA supports researchers in African universities and research centers through funding for Comparative Research Networks. The network should address priority research themes within CODESRIA's strategic plan, including: (i) Water and Water Resources in the Political Economy of Development and Citizenship; and (ii) Ecology, Climate, and Environmental Sustainability in Africa (among many other themes). Deadline for applications is 15 June 2011. [Find out more](#)
- [Terra Viva grants latest update](#). Visit this website for the latest updates on funding opportunities

Forthcoming Events

- [Putting Article 6 into practice - Development opportunities in sustainable use of plant genetic resources](#)
- [European Plant Genetic Resources Conference 2011 Wageningen, The Netherlands April 5-7, 2011](#)
- [Fifth International Conference on Community Based Adaptation \(CBA5\) Dhaka, Bangladesh, 24-26 March 2011](#)
- [First International Symposium on Wild Relatives of Temperate and Subtropical Fruit and Nut Crops, University of California, Davis, USA, 19-21 March 2011.](#)

You can find more events clicking [here](#)

Resources

- The **Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty** has recently published the [Scoping Report](#) from its three-day [scoping workshop](#) held in Písaq, (Cusco) Peru. This report is a record of the decision-making process. More information can be found [here](#).
- **Africa Adapt Symposium, Addis Ababa 2011**
Indigenous knowledge intergration, traditional knowledge, participatory approaches, knowledge sharing, documentation are some of the words that came up during the Africa Adapt Symposium held in Addis Ababa on 9-11 March 2011. Over 120 participants attended this informative and exciting event. The Platform presented a paper on '[The use of agrobiodiversity by indigenous and traditional agricultural communities in adapting to climate change](#)'. Find out more about the event by visiting the [AfricaAdapt website](#).
- [Agrobiodiversity Management for Food Security: A Critical Review](#) by **J M Lenné, and, D Wood**. This book presents key concepts of agrobiodiversity management, critically reviewing important current and emerging issues including agricultural development, crop introduction, practical diversity in farming systems, impact of modern crop varieties and GM crops, conservation, climate change, food sovereignty and policies. More information can be found [here](#).
- [Understanding climate change from below, addressing barriers from above. Practical experience and learning from a community-based adaptation project in Bangladesh](#) by **M. Sajid Raihan, M Jahedul Huq, Nana Gerstrøm Alsted and Manja Hoppe Andreasen**. A study report on community based adaptation. This study practical learning and experience from one of the first community-based climate change adaptation interventions in Bangladesh, 'Assistance to Local Communities on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction', piloted by ActionAid Bangladesh and funded by the Embassy of Denmark. Find out more about the publication [here](#).
- **FAO Crop calendar**. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) has launched a *crop calendar* that advises when to plant specific crops in a variety of agricultural zones for 43 African countries. This reference tool is aimed at donors and

agricultural extension workers and covers over 130 crops. [Read more](#)

- [Seminar on Agrobiodiversity and Ecosystems Services](#). The presentations and much more from the seminar *Biodiversity benefits organic agriculture and organic agriculture benefits biodiversity– true or false?* that took place in Washington DC on 16th December 2010 are available together with short summaries of each of the presentations.
- [IIED](#), [Asociacion ANDES](#) and partners have prepared a short paper on "**Farmers' Rights under the FAO Treaty on PGRFA: the need for a broad approach based on Biocultural Heritage**". The paper will be distributed at the Treaty's 4th Governing Body meeting in Bali. [Read more](#)

PAR's goal: Is to enhance the sustainable management and use of agrobiodiversity by improving knowledge of all its different aspects. It seeks to promote research and integrate, mobilize and share research findings on the sustainable management of agrobiodiversity.

The PAR Newsletter is published by the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research and distributed to members and other subscribers. The Secretariat welcomes news, letters and other items of interest from individuals and organizations.

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