

Collaboration on Science for Impact

Newsletter of the Ethiopia-Wageningen UR Collaboration Programme

Issue 3; November 2010

THIS ISSUE

We are pleased to send you issue nr. 3 of the Ethiopia-Wageningen UR Newsletter "Collaboration on Science for Impact". This newsletter with highlights, updates and other news on the multi-year collaboration programme between the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, the Universities of Addis Ababa, Haramaya, Hawassa, Jimma, Mekelle and Wageningen University and Research Centre is being published on a 6-monthly basis.

Highlights in this newsletter include the report of the celebration of the first anniversary of the Ethiopia-Wageningen UR Collaboration Programme, in July 2010 at Holeta Agricultural Research Centre, and the report of the Addis Conference on Agriculture and Climate Change, that was held in Addis Ababa in September.

Readers are kindly invited to submit relevant contributions for forthcoming issues of the newsletter. Also, all readers are encouraged to share this newsletter with colleagues and partners of their respective institutes. For your information, the current number of addressees of this newsletter is over 250.

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RE-LAUNCHING SEMINAR ON THE ETHIOPIA-WAGENINGEN UR COLLABORATION

Seminar

On 19 June 2009, an MoU for Collaboration and Science for Impact was signed between five Ethiopian Universities (Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Haramaya, Jimma and Mekelle), the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and Wageningen UR. Since the signing of this MoU, a number of thematic research projects are being conducted by the MoU partner-institutions but the collaboration programme was not officially launched, yet.

Therefore, on the 7th of July 2010, a one-day MoU-launching seminar was organized at the Holeta Agricultural Research Centre (HARC). The objective of the seminar was to celebrate and officially launch the first year anniversary of the Ethiopia-Wageningen UR collaboration and to review progress and interim results of the 6 thematic activities that are being implemented. The workshop was jointly organized by the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), Wageningen UR and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN). The Oil Seeds Programme of HARC (one of the thematic activities under the MoU-umbrella) kindly sponsored the workshop.

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AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE, 6-8 SEPTEMBER 2010, ADDIS ABABA

The African Union (AU) and the Ethiopian Government organized a conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change from 6-8 September in Addis Ababa. The Horn of Africa-Regional Environment Network (HoA-REC) at Addis Ababa University took up the practical and logistical organization of the conference. The conference was financially supported by the Netherlands' Ministry of Agriculture, the Norwegian Embassy in Ethiopia and by GTZ (see also: www.hoarec.org). The audience mainly consisted of the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries of Agriculture of AU member-states. In addition, several climate negotiators were represented, as well as international organisations and NGOs including the Dutch AgriProFocus Network. Representatives of member institutions of the Ethiopia-Wageningen UR Collaboration Partnership participated as well, including Dr. Fetien Abay of Mekelle University, Dr. Araya Asfaw of the University of Addis Ababa and Dr. Adefris Chere of EIAR. Wageningen UR participants were Dr. Jan Verhagen and Ir. Bette Harms.

[More about this conference...](#)

BE THE GUEST OF KLV WAGENINGEN ALUMNI NETWORK



Conference "How to feed our world?" in Addis Ababa, January 28, 2011

In 2011, KLV Wageningen Alumni Network (KLV: Royal Agricultural Society of the Netherlands) will celebrate its 125th anniversary with a number of different activities, ranging from conferences, online discussions and seminars to buffets and parties.

As its anniversary theme, KLV has chosen "How to feed our world?" as this theme lies in the heart of the mission of 'Wageningen UR'. Moreover, feeding the world is of all time relevance and it motivates young as well as older Wageningen alumni. In November 2011 KLV will organize an international main conference on this theme in Wageningen.

The conference in Addis Ababa will be special in respect of its participatory agenda setting. Our vision is that our alumni, living all over the world, have the best knowledge to provide us with relevant elements for the main conference. Therefore, within a few weeks from now, we will start an intensive process of "crowd sourcing" using social media. The information gathered in this process will be used as input to organize six preparatory seminars: three in the Netherlands and three international seminars in China, Brazil and Ethiopia respectively. These international conferences will be organized in close co-operation with our alumni networks in the three countries. In Ethiopia, the preliminary conference will be chaired by Professor Admasu Tsegaye, President of Hawassa University and it will take place on January 28, 2011 in Addis Ababa.



[More about this conference...](#)

RURAL INNOVATION SYSTEMS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: SCALING-UP IN ETHIOPIA

After China, Ethiopia has one of the largest public-supported agricultural extension services in the world. This reflects the enormous emphasis the Ethiopian government is putting on agriculture as a driver for economic growth, development and food security. However, putting all the pieces of the jigsaw together – technology development; market and road infrastructure; micro-finance; enterprise development; extension; marketing mechanisms; input supply and business services – in a way that enables real innovation remains a significant challenge for Ethiopia, as it does for many other countries.

The Government of Ethiopia has flagged market-linked agricultural development as a key element of its new Economic Transformation Programme (ETP). An important part of this is an emphasis on increasing entrepreneurial skills of producers and of women and youth who do not have access to land but who could be engaged in micro-agribusiness. This development of the agriculture sector will be backed up by coordinated donor investments through the Agricultural Growth Programme (AGP).



Consultant Bezabih Emana (right) discusses with a farmer and a extension officer the success of a participatory approach to developing and marketing new potato varieties. In this case the farmers say that this innovation has shifted them from a food insecure situation to one where they are able to afford new housing. The initiative is backed up by a strong farmers organization and close collaboration with the local research centre.

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IPM PARTNERSHIP ETHIOPIA-WAGENINGEN UR

Many growers in the Ethiopian horti-/floricultural sector acknowledge the need to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in their ventures. With the endorsement of a wide range of stakeholders (horticultural growers, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Organization and the Ethiopian Horticulture Development Agency) it was decided to conduct, in the course of 2009, an on-farm trial in a crop other than roses and to investigate the efficacy of biological control of thrips and whitefly in cuttings under Ethiopian conditions. Up-scaling in terms of acreage and crops are anticipated future developments.

The on-farm trial started in November 2009 in a greenhouse at Koka, with eight herb cuttings, and continued up to the crop's harvest by July-end 2010. Based on the results obtained so far we conclude that thrips levels in the herbs are substantially lower upon the release of the predacious mite *Amblyseius swirskii*, than if full chemical control is applied (63 applications in total). Whitefly levels, however, are higher than if full chemical control is applied (twice a week in total 44 applications). This resulted in a recommendation to MoARD to accept the predacious mite *Amblyseius swirskii* in the control of thrips. Farm managers now consider to test a combination of this mite, with another parasitic wasp in combination with limited applications of a 'soft' chemical (ovicide/adulticide) against whitefly. Implementation thereof will be monitored and backstopped by EIAR jointly with Wageningen UR.

[More about this partnership...](#)

DAIRY VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

Since 2008, Wageningen UR-Livestock Research (LR), Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation (CDI) and Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI), part of Wageningen UR, are involved in the development of the commercial dairy value chain in Ethiopia. This activity is funded by the Netherlands' Ministry of Agriculture through the BOCI Programme (International Policy Support Research).

Research questions underlying the dairy value chain were formulated in cooperation with the Netherlands' Agricultural Counselor, Mr. Geert Westenbrink while the project is being implemented in collaboration with the BOAM Program of SNV-Ethiopia. BOAM (Business Organizations and their Access to Markets) supports the development of a number of commercial value chains, including dairy. In Ethiopia, the commercial dairy value chain is still in an infant stage of development, and only 2-3 percent of the national total milk production finds its way to formal market channels. Most of this milk is collected from small-scale farms in the peri-urban area of Addis Ababa. The demand for good-quality dairy products in cities like Addis Ababa is growing whereas local supply is limited, still.

[More about this activity...](#)

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE CENTRAL RIFT VALLEY

Research on natural resources management in the Central Rift Valley focuses on five topics: (i) support to the smallholder horticultural sector, (ii) water quality monitoring, (iii) tourism development, (iv) development of buffer zones along the western shoreline of Lake Ziway and (v) analysis of climate risks for agricultural production.

A first training for 23 horticultural extension officers from both the Agriculture and Rural Development woreda Offices and the private sector has been provided by project staff of Wageningen UR in Ziway, October 22-23. Focus of the training was on aspects related to 'Good Agricultural Practices' with an emphasis on soil fertility management. The training comprised a theoretical part as well as hands-on work including the use and demonstration of Nitrachek, a method to quickly measure soil nitrate contents. A second training session, for yet another group of extension officers, will most likely be given early 2011.



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READY FOR REDD

Deforestation and forest degradation are the second-leading cause of global warming, being responsible for about 15% of global greenhouse gas emissions. This makes the loss and depletion of forests a major issue with respect to climate change. To stop this process the REDD mechanism (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) was introduced at the UN Climate Conference in Bali, Indonesia in 2007. REDD is a system that rewards reduced deforestation rates in developing countries by carbon credits, which can be sold on the international carbon market. In this way rich countries pay poor countries for not chopping down

their forests. It is foreseen that the REDD mechanism will be formalized in 2012. Thereafter the issuing of marketable carbon credits will start.



The Ethiopian Government has committed itself to implement REDD in Ethiopia. Currently, Wageningen UR/Alterra and project partners Ecofys-Germany and the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) are jointly supporting the Ethiopian Government to become 'ready for REDD'. This implies that (i) a widely-supported national strategy against deforestation has to be developed and (ii) a monitoring system has to be established, which can measure objectively the past deforestation rates (reference scenario) and future

improvements. The World Bank is funding this initiative through its Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. Information on the resulting REDD Readiness Preparation Plan (R-PP) can be found on the [FCP website](#)

[More about REDD...](#)

ENSET: EFFICIENT NUTRIENT SUPPLY IN EAST AFRICA

Following the announcement of the ENSET project in our previous Collaboration Newsletter, ENSET is now well on its way. In the pilot study sites (Holeta, Melkasa, Jima, Assosa and Pawe) surveys on soil fertility management practices, input supplies and socio-economic conditions have been completed and trials on phosphate-fertilization, liming and acid soil reclamation have started. In these trials different mixtures of organic and inorganic fertilizers are being applied to three major crops (maize, wheat and teff) in four treatments.

Replicates of these trials are being tested on 9 'case study farms' in the five pilot sites. These on-farm experiments will provide data for the evaluation of impacts of Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) technologies on crop yield under farmers' socio-economic and ecological conditions. The performance of the case study farms is being monitored using the MonQI toolbox for which, in April 2010, a training workshop was provided, at EIAR Headquarters in Addis Ababa, by Mrs Christy van Beek of Wageningen UR.



Foto: Participants of the MonQI Toolbox Training Workshop at EIAR HQ, Addis Ababa, April 2010

[More about the ENSET project...](#)

WAGENINGEN AND THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

On 4-5 October 2010 Wageningen UR and the African Union Commission (AUC) jointly organised, in Addis Ababa, a first meeting under the African Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP). ASBP is an initiative of the AUC and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), that was endorsed by the African Heads of State in 2007. At the Addis meeting, seed specialists from public, private and civil society met in order to discuss an integrated approach to seed policy development.

Currently, most African governments concentrate their policies (and investments) on supporting the formal seed system. These however, only supply about 5% of the total amount of seeds used in crop production in Africa. An integrated approach is required that takes account of the informal sector as well, and of the various ways to link the two. The Addis meeting agreed to a follow-up process involving multi-stakeholder meetings and seed policy assessments in Ethiopia, Mali, Malawi, Southern Sudan and Uganda before meeting again in Addis in 2011. The process will not only inform policy processes in these countries, but it will also contribute to the implementation of the ASBP.

For an update of local seed business activities in Ethiopia, please click on the picture next to this article.

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PPP-OILSEEDS MISSION VISITS THE NETHERLANDS

In the framework of the Ethiopia-Netherlands Public-Private-Partnership on Oilseeds, a delegation from Ethiopia, headed by H.E. Dr. Yaekob Yalla, State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), visited the Netherlands from 23-28 August, 2010

The Netherlands' Product Board for Margarine, Fats and Oils (MVO) supports the PPPO programme in which, in addition to the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) and the Ethiopia Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices Producers Association (EPOSPEA) also the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Development Cooperation is engaged, through the Netherlands Embassy in Addis Ababa. Aim of the oilseeds collaboration programme is to increase the production of oilseeds in Ethiopia in order to obtain both, a stronger export position as well as better availability for local uses. Ethiopia is currently the world's biggest sesame exporter and avails of abundant possibilities for the production and export of other oilseeds, linseed in particular.

[More about this visit...](#)