

The need for integrated action to deliver sustainable agricultural intensification at the landscape scale has stimulated in 2012 the formation of the Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture (AIRCA, www.airca.org), a nine-member alliance focused on increasing food security by supporting smallholder agriculture and rural enterprise within healthy, sustainable and climate-smart landscapes. AIRCA members are CAB International, Crops for the Future, the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza, the International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology, the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan and the World Vegetable Centre. AIRCA Chair Professor Sayed Azam-Ali shares his views on AIRCA, its relevance and plans for the future [here](#)



HIGHLIGHTS FROM AIRCA MEMBERS



Five invasive pests cost African economy \$1 billion every year

New research by CABI reveals that just five invasive alien species are causing US\$0.9 - 1.1 billion in economic losses to smallholder farmers across six eastern African countries each year, equating to 1.8% - 2.2% of total agricultural GDP for the region. These losses are expected to grow to \$1.0 – 1.2 billion per year over the next 5-10 years, highlighting the urgent need for coordinated responses at regional, national and international levels. [Read more](#)

CABI- Invasive plants to devastate annual wildebeest migration

According to new research, scientists found that a number of invasive alien plant species initially introduced as ornamental plants at tourism facilities are now spreading rapidly throughout the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem, posing a major threat to wildlife, including the annual wildebeest and zebra migration as well as a range of other plant and animal species. [Read more](#)



CABI launches new Horticulture Compendium

CABI recently launched a new, unique encyclopedic resource of authoritative horticultural datasheets providing global coverage of temperate, tropical and subtropical horticultural food crops. The Horticulture Compendium joins CABI's critically-acclaimed compendia series, making a real difference to the working lives of people across the globe by bringing together a vast selection of information into one place. [Click here to find out more](#)

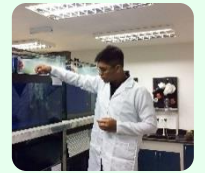
CATIE - New Platform is Launched to Intensify Sustainable Livestock Production



On April 12, in Washington D.C., the new Sustainable Livestock Production Platform: Higher Productivity with Lower Emissions of Greenhouse Gases, was presented. It is coordinated by CATIE (Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center), in collaboration with the Ministry for Primary Industries of New Zealand (MPI), the Global Research Allianca (GRA), and the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO). [Read more](#)

Crops For the Future awarded grant from the International Foundation for Science

CFF's FishPLUS research programme received a USD 15,000 fund awarded by the International Foundation for Science to conduct a two-year project titled 'Mitigation of climate change impact on tilapia aquaculture in Southeast Asia'. This project is a consortium of four countries with the total group funding amounting to USD 60,000. [Read more](#)



Crops For the Future: Agriculture meets modern technology

CropBASE, CFF's research programme which integrates qualitative and quantitative knowledge into decision support systems, has compiled over 9 million data on crops which is currently being integrated into different projects. One of which is the 'crop selection tool', designed for use locally in Malaysia as well as globally. [Read more](#)

The CONNECT Project, Crops For the Future

The CONNECT Project focusses on tracing the nutritional components of the bambara groundnut seeds and moringa leaves across the value chain - from farm to consumption. Both crops are drought-tolerant, thus excellent crops for climate change adaptation and mitigation [Read more](#)



ICBA's new pioneering leadership program for Arab women scientists

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) has joined forces with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) to pilot a novel leadership program for Arab women scientists in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Tamkeen is an initiative focused on addressing a wide range of challenges facing Arab women scientists, and empowering them to become future leaders in science. [Read more](#)

ICBA hosts first-of-its-kind drone training in Gulf region for remote sensing

Over 25 participants representing four countries, including 16 participants from the UAE, have recently completed a specialized training course on remote sensing and photogrammetry techniques using aerial images from unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), aka drones. [Read more](#)



ICIMOD - Promoting a Himalayan 'super food'

In households across the HKH, women have been unknowingly seasoning their chutneys with what may be the world's next 'super food'. But perilla – a herb high in vitamins and heart-healthy omega-3 – could be much more than that. The hearty and easy to maintain herb could also be a source of supplemental income for rural women living in the HKH, many of whom are already stressed for time and taking on new responsibilities as an increasing number of men migrate for work. [Read more](#)

icipe - Fruit fly bait production facility launched in Kenya

A facility to commercially produce a protein bait known as Fruitfly Mania™, a product developed through research by the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) for the control of fruit flies, has been launched in Kenya. The Fruit Fly Protein Bait facility has been constructed through a public private sector partnership between *icipe* and Kenya Biologics Ltd, on the latter's premises in Makuyu, Murang'a County. [Read more](#)



icipe Director General on the mind of the universe

The *icipe* Director General, Dr Segenet Kelemu, is among 30 renowned scientists who have shared their point of view and research, in mind of the universe, an international vpro documentary series exploring the human destiny and the world of tomorrow through the eyes of the greatest thinkers and scientists of our time. [Read more](#)

icipe receives grants for research on schistosomiasis and bee health

icipe and partners have received a research grant from the German Research Foundation (DFG), to conduct studies on Schistosomiasis, a neglected tropical disease, and another grant was awarded to *icipe and partners* from the Newton Fund to develop microbe-based strategies for improved bee health. [Read more](#)



IFDC - Woman-Led Field School Reaches African Youth

In a small greenhouse in Nigeria, young agricultural entrepreneurs from all over the country gather around an unlikely teacher to learn about vegetable production and farm management. Yinka Adesola, though trained at the master's level in geology, is committed to solving Nigeria's food security issues by empowering the next generation to grow and sell more food with the tools and knowledge she learned from IFDC's 2SCALE project. [Read more](#)

INBAR: Bamboo & Women – livelihood impacts of bamboo

Mira Das received training on incense (*agarbatti*) stick making from Tripura Bamboo and Cane Development Centre (TRIBAC), a network organisation of the Centre for Indian Bamboo Resource and Technology (CIBART – established by INBAR) which is operational in Tripura State of North Eastern India. The incense sticks project has led to a dramatic rise in household incomes of up to 150 per cent for beneficiaries who engaged in part-time, and 450 per cent for full-time, incense stick rolling works. [Read more](#)



WorldVeg - Trapping Tuta

Karnataka is one of the leading horticultural states in India and one of its largest and most advanced tomato producers. An invasive pest is devastating its crops, but WorldVeg staff have found a solution that has the enthusiastic support of farmers and government alike. "Tuta is now infecting crops during all three tomato cropping seasons," warns Kumar Nagaraju, who leads the WorldVeg field team for the Bhoo Samruddhi project funded by the Karnataka government. He and his team have been tackling Tuta, with some amazing success. [Read more](#)

From the AIRCA secretariat



ICIMOD hosts second annual AIRCA M&E meeting

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) hosted the second annual meeting of the AIRCA CoP on MEL Group from 1-3 March 2017 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Monitoring and Evaluation experts from seven out of the nine AIRCA member organizations participated in the meeting. The theme of the second annual meeting was 'Complexity-aware Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment Approaches'. [Read more](#)

AIRCA meets FAO Director General

The annual meeting of the Director Generals (DG) of AIRCA (Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture) was held on 10 February, 2017 at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters in Rome, Italy. The AIRCA members also attended a high-level meeting with the FAO Director General, Dr José Graziano da Silva, and discussed the need to diversify the global food basket beyond the world's major staple crops. [Read more](#)



AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS



In May this year, our AIRCA Ambassador Dr. Dyno Keatinge received an MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) for his "services to tropical agriculture and the reduction of both poverty and malnutrition in the developing world" from Queen Elizabeth II on 5 May 2017 at Buckingham Palace in London.

CABI's Plantwise wins the [2017 St Andrews Prize for the Environment](#), worth \$100,000 USD. The Prize is a joint environmental initiative by the University of St Andrews and ConocoPhillips which recognises significant contributions to environmental conservation. Since its launch in 1998, the Prize has attracted 5,200 entries from around the world.



[CABI's Plantwise wins the 2017 Bond Development Award for Innovation](#)

The award showcases organisations, coalitions or initiatives that are taking inventive approaches as they chart a course through a complex and changing external environment in international development.

Dr. Ismahane Elouafi, Director General of the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), has won a [prestigious Arab Women of the Year 2016](#) award in recognition of her long-term commitment and contribution to promoting science and innovation, especially among Arab women. The award recognizes women who are advocates, visionaries or trailblazers in a science-related field.



[ICBA receives strategic partner award by UAE Ministry of Energy](#)

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) was recognized as a strategic partner by the Ministry of Energy of the UAE during a special awards ceremony in Abu Dhabi on 22 December 2016. Held under the patronage of H.E. Eng. Suhail bin Mohammed Faraj Faris Al Mazrouei, the awards ceremony was held to strengthen relationships between the Ministry and its strategic partners.

[Dr Segenet Kelemu, icipe Director General, has been appointed a member of the National Science and Technology Council of Rwanda](#)

Established in June 2015, NCST's core mandate is to provide strategic advice to the Government of Rwanda on all matters pertaining to the development of science, technology, innovation and research as drivers for rapid national socio-economic transformation and growth, in line with the Rwanda Vision 2020.



[icipe has been granted a Certificate of Registration](#), jointly endorsed by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and the Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Kenya. The certification signifies *icipe's* compliance with the Science, Technology and Innovation Act (No. 28 of 2013), which in part, mandates NACOSTI to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector.

[WorldVeg prize-winning photo promotes home gardens, seed saving in Tanzania](#)

A photograph of home gardener Bibi Mwanaidi and her grandson with African nightshade seeds Mwanaidi harvested from her garden in Tanzania claimed second place in the [Feed the Future 2017](#) photo contest! Photographer Rhiannon O'Sullivan, a communications volunteer from [Australian Volunteers International](#) who worked at WorldVeg Eastern and Southern Africa in Arusha, Tanzania in 2016, took the photo. Mwanaidi will plant these seeds next season.



[WorldVeg staffer wins postharvest award](#)

The [Postharvest Education Foundation](#) recently awarded WorldVeg Eastern and Southern Africa Postharvest Research Associate/Nutritionist **Roseline Marealle** with the 2016 Kader Award for Postharvest Training. The Board of Directors of The Postharvest Education Foundation presents the award to an outstanding graduate e-learner or a team of e-learners after the successful completion of a year of training on commodity systems assessment, small-scale postharvest handling practices, postharvest demonstration design, postharvest training program design, and cost/benefit analysis.