



**12th IAALD World Congress
IAALD Africa Chapter – Panel Discussion
27th August 2008
Tokyo University of Agriculture, Astugi Campus
Tokyo, Japan**

Investing in Agricultural Science and Technology Information in Africa

Brief Background

Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have a long history of strong research in support of increased agricultural production and diversification. However, a principal challenge in most of the countries has been the need to improve on the accessibility of public domain information produced by all the institutional actors involved. The lack of adequate information sharing and communication between researchers themselves, and with other stakeholders in the various institutions represents a weakness limiting the uptake of outputs of national agricultural research systems. New technologies and new publishing paradigms (open access) offer options to address the need to identify, collect, process, and disseminate agricultural information and knowledge produced in the countries to support agricultural innovation systems, including research for sustainable development and food security in Africa. However, these new approaches require sound investments in institutional and human capacities, and in the enabling information and communication technologies. These investments should be guided by appropriate agricultural information communication and management (ICM) strategies and policies at both institutional and national levels.

Objective

The objective of the IAALD African Chapter session at the IAALD World Congress will be to share information and experiences on some initiatives in Africa on development and implementation of institutional ICM strategies and policies for investment in access to public domain information in agricultural sciences and technology. The session will review recent developments in case studies from Kenya (Kenya Agricultural Information Network - KAINet), Ghana (Ghana Agricultural Information Network System - GAINS) and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa's Regional Agricultural Information and Learning System (FARA-RAILS) initiative.

Panellists

- Joel Sam, Coordinator, GAINS and Assistant Director, Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (INSTI), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- Rachel Rege, Coordinator, KAINet Project Coordinator and Assistant Director, Information and Documentation Services, Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI).
- Myra Wopereis-Pura, Coordinator, FARA-RAILS.
- Justin Chisenga, Information Management Specialist, FAO and President, IAALD Africa Chapter.

The session will be moderated by: [*To be confirmed*]

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