

BiosafeTrain News

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It has been a busy first quarter for the BiosafeTrain team.

The BiosafeTrain Project was invited to a World Bank sponsored forum in Tanzania *Developing Agriculture and Food Industry Innovation in Africa* to present our project.

The project was also represented at the concurrent COP-MOP meeting in Bonn, Germany. This was later followed by an invitation to give a talk at the National Conference on Environment at Kenyatta University in Kenya.

We are currently co-organising the biosafety session at the 1st Biotechnology Conference to be held in September 2008.

I made a short trip to Denmark, to give a talk at a workshop on *A research communication point of view using BiosafeTrain as an example*.

In Tanzania our infrastructural facilities are completed and plans for an official launch are underway of the new glasshouse block at KARI, Kenya.

Most of our first group of students have submitted their Theses and have also started participating at national and international conferences.

See more details inside.

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Jane Tei M'Ringera and Serah Njeru about to complete their Theses

BiosafeTrain MSc students at the University of Nairobi are approaching a successful conclusion of their fellowship. Jane Tei M'Ringera has submitted her Thesis and is expected to defend it in June 2008, while Serah Njeru has submitted a final draft to her supervisor. Both have also submitted manuscripts based on their research to the African Journal of Agricultural Research (AJAR). The university now requires this as a pre-condition before the degree can be conferred to MSc or PhD students.

Jane's project is on *Competition between cultivated rice (Oryza sativa) and wild rice (Oryza punctata) in Kenya* and Serah's is *Interactive effects on morphology, phenology and growth of wild rice (Oryza longistaminata) ecotypes and cultivated rice cultivars*.

Christine Munduru's MSc Thesis completed



Christine Munduru, MSc student in Crop Science at Makerere University, supported by BiosafeTrain.

Christine Munduru has submitted her Thesis. Christine's project was on the *Diversity of cotton arthropods in 3 regions in Uganda*. Christine did her studies in North, Eastern and Central Uganda, and this research provided baseline information on arthropod biodiversity in cotton fields before the expected introduction of transgenic Bt cotton in Uganda.

Gerald Kyalo submits his MSc Thesis



Gerald Kyalo, MSc student in Crop Science at Makerere University, supported by BiosafeTrain.

Gerald Kyalo has submitted his Thesis. Gerald's project is on *Striga control with imazapyr resistant (IR) maize: A model for risk assessment of transgenic herbicide resistant maize*. He is expected to graduate later in the year.

Dennis Ndolo in Denmark



Dennis Ndolo from the University of Nairobi, one of the BiosafeTrain PhD fellows.

Dennis Ndolo from the University of Nairobi and one of BiosafeTrain's PhD fellows is currently in Denmark. During his stay, Dennis is planning to finalise his PhD Thesis. His month long stay will allow him to interact with his Danish supervisors, have easy access to literature and advance the writing. He is due to graduate later this year

New student fellowships announced

With most of our first cohort of students from Phase 1 almost done with their projects, BiosafeTrain will be announcing the next fellowship round Again, a total of 10 Msc & PhD fellowships in the area of biosafety risk

assessment are to be supported during this period. For more information please check our website:

www.biosafetrain.dk/Home/About/fellowship2008.pdf

BIOSAFETRAIN IN THE REGION AND WORLD-WIDE

Biosafety Level 2 Glasshouse completed in Tanzania



The Biosafety laboratory and Level 2 Glasshouse in the University of Dar-es-Salaam.

The Biosafety laboratory and Level 2 Glasshouse in the University of Dar-es-Salaam, another important infrastructural development funded by BiosafeTrain, is completed. The Glasshouse has been handed over to the department of Molecular Biology & Botany at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, though what is left to be fitted is the incinerator, sun screens and equipment. This is the first Biosafety lab of its kind in Tanzania whose main purpose will be on research on biosafety, biological control and physical containment of GMOs. The launch is expected in June 2008.

BiosafeTrain at COP-MOP 4 Meeting, Germany, 12- 16 May 2008

BiosafeTrain held a side event on biosafety risk assessment at the COP MOP 4 Convention in Bonn, Germany on 15 May 2008, from 13.15 to 14.45 in the Salon Arndt, Hotel Maritim. The meeting ran from 12-16 May 2008

BiosafeTrain acknowledges the support by the official Danish delegation to the COP-MOP and the CBD Secretariat. For more details see:

www.cbd.int/mop4/side-events/?mtg=mop-04.

Participation at the DDRN research communication workshop, Copenhagen, May 2008

Joy Owango, BiosafeTrain's Communication Manager was invited to a workshop to present a talk on research communication for development, using BiosafeTrain as a case study in East Africa. The title of the talk was *A*

research communication point of view using BiosafeTrain as an example. The workshop was held in the University of Copenhagen, and was sponsored by the Danish Development Research Network, Danish Research Network International Health and the Danish Water Forum. For more information and presentations see: www.ddrn.dk/index.php?side_id=196.

BiosafeTrain at World Bank sponsored Forum 11-14 May 2006



The World Bank Forum of Developing Agriculture and Food Industry Innovation in Africa meeting in May 2008 in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

BiosafeTrain was selected by the World Bank to present the project as a model *Innovative Agricultural Development Project in Africa* at the forum on *Developing Agriculture and Food Industry Innovation in Africa*, that was held in May 2008 in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

BiosafeTrain was one of five selected projects (out of 30 candidate projects).

The selection was based on whether the case studies included the development, dissemination and application of agriculture, food industry, rural energy or physical environment technologies.

BiosafeTrain presented to the attendants how the project was implemented, what were our obstacles and factors of success, what has been the impact and how did we go about scaling up the use of the technology(ies).

BiosafeTrain at National Conference on Environment at Kenyatta University, 18-21 May 2008

Prof Jenesio Kinyamario, BiosafeTrain's Nairobi coordinator was invited to give a talk on *Why are biosafety tests of genetically manipulated plants necessary in the developing countries?* The conference that was held on 18-21 May 2008 brought together stakeholders on the environment from the East African region. BiosafeTrain had a stand where more information was given to the conference participants. The projects' PhD fellows James Kanya and Dennis Ndolo both from the University of Nairobi, presented posters on their research

Dennis Ndolo to give a talk at International Entomological Conference, Durban, South Africa, 6-12 July 2008

Dennis Ndolo, one of BiosafeTrain PhD students is to give a talk at the 23rd International Conference in Entomology to be held in Durban, South Africa 6-12 July 2008. The title of his talk is: *Effects of Chilo partellus Swinhoe (Lepidoptera: Crambidae) and Sesamia calamistis Hampson (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) sublethally fed on Bt maize on the biology of Cotesia flavipes and Cotesia sesamiae Cameron (Hymenoptera: Braconidae).*

BiosafeTrain on the Kenyan Radio

BiosafeTrain's Kenyan coordinator, Prof Jenesio Kinyamario was interviewed as a specialist on Biosafety Risk Assessment for the agricultural programme *Mali Shambani* (Wealth in farming). The interview will be aired over a period of eight weeks, covering different aspects of biosafety, relevant to farmers. The programme is aired on Mondays at 8:00pm by the national Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and has an audience of over 3 million farmers, also extending to Tanzania.

KARI Biosafety Glasshouse Block opening planned

Plans are underway on the opening of the new insect-proof glasshouse block at the Kenya Agriculture Research Institute (KARI), another part of infrastructural development supported by BiosafeTrain. Construction was completed in April and inspection and certification of the laboratory is meant to be done by May 2008 by Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS).

BiosafeTrain invited as organiser for the 1st Biotechnology Conference, 22-26 September 2008

BiosafeTrain has been invited as a coorganiser of the 1st All Africa Congress on Biotechnology which will be held in Nairobi on 22 - 26 September 2008 by the African Biotechnology Stakeholders Forum (ABSF). BiosafeTrain will be in charge of the biosafety session and biosafety related activities of the conference.

IMPRESSIONS FROM SPRING 2008



Dr. Flora Ismail presenting BiosafeTrain at the World Bank Forum on Developing Agriculture and Food Industry Innovation in Africa in May 2008 in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.



Discussions at the DDRN research communication workshop, Copenhagen, May 2008. Joy Owango, BiosafeTrain's Communication Manager was invited to participate and give a presentation.