



BACKGROUND

Innovative strategies are needed for poverty reduction and increasing environmental sustainability in Africa which is home to some of the world's poorest people. Despite their importance and significant potential in the fight against poverty, non-timber forest products are hardly visible in the national economy statistics. In addition, the sector is mostly informal with an inappropriate legal and institutional framework, and lack of information and data on resources providing tree products and their role in household economics and food security. Indeed, the management of tree products is a complex endeavour involving technical and managerial skills from several partners and sectors. So far, capacities of smallholder producers to manage their resources effectively and commercialize tree products profitably and in a sustainable way are limited.

CONTEXT OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The conference is organised by the Agroforestry Tree Products for Africa (AFTP4A) project, financed by the Belgian Development Cooperation in Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The project contributes to improving participation and active involvement of poor farmers in agroforestry tree product value chains and markets in order to increase and diversify their incomes. The project follows the value chain approach and involves all economic actors who contribute directly to the production, processing, transport and commercialisation of a product up to the consumption stage. Ending the AFTP4A project, the organizing committee is proud to present the International Symposium on '*Tree Product Value Chains in Africa: Sharing Innovations that Work for Smallholders*', to be held in Yaounde, Cameroon from 26 to 28 November 2012.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The conference will be a forum for a wide group of (inter)national stakeholders to **learn and share knowledge, experience and innovations on emerging trends relating to the production, processing and marketing of tree products by smallholder farmers.**

Papers are invited from postgraduate scholars, scientists and researchers, academics, extension specialists, farmer organisations, NGOs, policymakers and other stakeholders who are interested or working in the field of the conference topics. The scientific program will consist of **lectures from invited keynote speakers, 15' oral presentations, and poster presentations.** There will also be an **exhibition** where small-scale tree product enterprises will showcase their products. Finally, the proceedings of presented papers will be edited and a selection will be published in a peer reviewed journal.

1st Call for Abstracts

If you wish to submit a paper or poster related to any of the congress themes, please download the abstract submission form at www.aftp-symposium.org

And send it to aftp-symposium@cgiar.org

before 30th May 2012

Abstracts are accepted in either English or French.

All abstracts will be evaluated by a scientific committee based on relevance for the conference theme, originality and overall quality.

Notification of abstract acceptance or rejection will be emailed to the corresponding author latest 31st July 2012.

Full papers for selected abstracts should be submitted by 30th September 2012.

For further information on the symposium, please see www.aftp-symposium.org or email aftp-symposium@cgiar.org

THEMES

Theme 1: Production, Harvest and Post-Harvest Techniques for Tree Products. How do we ensure the supply of quality products in sufficient quantities to meet consumer demand and sustain growing markets, without depleting the natural resource base? This theme will look at aspects of domestication, cultivation of trees, agroforestry systems, pest and disease control, small-scale processing techniques, quality assurance, etc.

Theme 2: Collective Action and other Organisational Mechanisms for Marketing of Tree Products. What mechanisms or institutional frameworks can allow smallholder producers to link up more efficiently with traders and the private sector? This theme will demonstrate experiences related to collective action, group sales, cooperatives, micro-credit, market information systems, contract farming, tree based enterprises, etc.

Theme 3: Policies and Institutions. How can local, national and international policies and institutions be shaped to provide an enabling environment for cultivation and commercialisation of tree products by smallholders? This theme will focus on policy analysis advocacy and dialogue, land and tree tenure, access to and control over resources, etc.

Theme 4: Tapping the Green Market. What policy tools and/or incentives are currently available to add value to the cultivation and commercialisation of tree products? This theme will address questions about how smallholder producers can benefit from emerging carbon markets, REDD programmes, eco-certification, fair trade, etc.

REGISTRATION

Symposium registration fee of 350 USD covers congress material, welcome cocktail, coffee breaks and lunches on session days. Complete instructions for registration and payment of conference fees, as well as conditions for limited sponsorship will be made available on the website shortly. Deadline for registration is 15th September 2012.

ORGANISATION

The symposium is organised by the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Institut de Recherche Agricole pour le Développement (IRAD, Cameroon), Institut National des Etudes et des Recherches Agricoles (INERA, RD Congo), Institut Facultaire d'Agronomie (IFA-Yangambi, RD Congo), Ghent University and Ghent Africa Platform (Belgium), with support from the Belgian Development Cooperation and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, Rome).