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## A Letter from the SGI Chairman

Dear colleagues and funders to *icipe*,

*It is my pleasure that we can report in the current SGI Newsletter about two new grants from Canada's International Development Research Centre. In honour of the late Prof. Thomas Odhiambo, founder of *icipe* and the Centre's 1st Director, *icipe* launched in January 2012 the Thomas Odhiambo Distinguished Research Fellowship. Read about who was awarded the inaugural prize. Partnerships are of paramount importance for a research institution like *icipe*. We can report in this issue about an important new partnership with the African Agricultural Technology Foundation.*

*icipe was among 450 delegates from a diverse background in Research and Development who attended the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) general assembly. Last but not least you will read about *icipe*'s cutting edge research published in the Journal of Chemical Ecology and about private sector commercialisation of *icipe*'s biopesticide.*

Enjoy reading!

**Dr Wolfgang Kasten – GIZ, Chairman SGI**

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## Major Funding Event

*icipe receives two new grants from IDRC to implement prevention and control of Rift Valley fever, as well as to address pertinent issues in post-harvest losses at different levels of the supply chain*

In January 2012, *icipe* initiated a project under the auspices of IDRC, Canada's International Development Research Centre, to improve our understanding of the environmental, biotic and socio-economic drivers of emergence of Rift Valley fever (RVF) and other arboviruses and the viable control options in the arid/semi-arid North Eastern (NE) Province of Kenya, a major hotspot area of this dreaded human and livestock disease.

The project seeks to understand in-depth the ecosystem parameters and the socio-cultural settings of the pastoralist communities in NE Kenya, to analyse their vulnerability to RVF, and to develop and adapt mitigation strategies. Scientists will study how ecosystem components influence the abundance, survival and competence of key RVF vectors, and explore cultural and socio-economic factors contributing to disease emergence, such as settlement structures, livestock movement and cultural behaviour. Findings will be used to identify and test feasibility for possible multi-



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*icipe is awarded two grants under the auspices of IDRC, Canada's International Development Research Centre*

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stakeholder development modalities that translate into enhanced prevention and control of RVF in this region. A multidisciplinary team with capacity in medical anthropology, vector ecology and virology, veterinary epidemiology, socio-economics and geospatial science will conduct the study.

The second grant signed in February 2012, aims to evaluate and provide evidence on current post-harvest losses in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and to help decision-makers in government to optimise their post-production policies and strategies to prevent post-harvest food losses at different levels of the supply chain. Current estimates of post-harvest losses in SSA are often highly inaccurate. Without systematic empirical evidence on the real losses, the arguments over the potential for reducing global food losses as a contribution to feeding 9 billion people by 2050 will remain largely rhetorical in the context of developing countries, and measuring progress against any global reduction target will be impossible. Hence the need for true quantitative evidence of post-harvest losses in SSA and beyond is crucial.

## Recognition

**icipe launches an honorary prize in recognition of Prof. Thomas Odhiambo's outstanding research work**

In honour of the late Prof. Thomas Odhiambo, founder of *icipe* and the Centre's 1st Director, *icipe* launched in January 2012, the Thomas Odhiambo Distinguished Research Fellowship, an international award recognising the achievements of individuals who have made advancement in the field of entomology that improve the quality of the livelihoods of the beneficiaries by enhancing food security, health and environmental sustainability. The Prize recognises scientific contributions in any field principally involving entomology. The Prize emphasises the importance of improving the overall health status of peoples of the tropics by developing and extending management tools and strategies for harmful and useful arthropods, while preserving the natural resource base through research and capacity building.

Prof. Zeyaur Khan, through his leadership in development and wide-scale implementation of the widely reputed push-pull technology ([www.push-pull.net](http://www.push-pull.net)), a pro-poor scientific innovation for enhancing food security, incomes and environmental sustainability among smallholder farming communities in Africa, and for building human capacity in Africa and beyond, was awarded the inaugural prize.



## Important New Partnership

**AATF and *icipe* sign a partnership agreement on Integrated Striga Management in Africa (ISMA)**



African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) Executive Director, Dr Denis T. Kyetere and *icipe* Director General, Prof. Christian Borgemeister after signing a Partnership Agreement on Monday, 5th March 2012 at *icipe*'s Duduville Campus in Nairobi

The recently appointed new Executive Director of African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) Dr Denis T. Kyetere and *icipe* Director General, Prof. Christian Borgemeister signed a Partnership Agreement on Monday, 5th March 2012 at *icipe*'s Duduville Campus in Nairobi.

This partnership has been developed under the Gates Foundation-supported 'Integrated Striga Management in Africa (ISMA)' project and aims to undertake a survey on integrated striga management. Striga is a highly destructive parasitic weed that attacks cereal crops and poses a serious challenge to food security in many affected regions of Africa.

Dr Kyetere was very impressed by *icipe*'s achievements in the development of sustainable and environmentally friendly crop management techniques for smallholder farmers in Africa, and expressed interest in closer collaboration between AATF and *icipe*. More information at <http://www.icipe.org/news/573-important-new-partnership-with-aatf.html>

## Important Research Finding

***icipe* publishes its cutting edge research in Journal of Chemical Ecology (JCE)**

A recent study published in the *Journal of Chemical Ecology* (JCE) by scientists from *icipe* and Rothamsted International showed that maize varieties popular with smallholder farmers in East Africa, when attacked by stemborers, produce volatiles that attract the pests' natural enemies. Moreover, the cover of the March 2012 issue of JCE shows a farmer's push-pull field from Kisumu district in western Kenya.

More information at <http://www.springerlink.com/content/776505p2840862w2/>



## Major Institutional Event

### icipe participates in the 1st ASARECA General Assembly

icipe was among 450 delegates from a diverse background in Research and Development who attended the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) 1st General Assembly in December 2011. The delegates included Ministers from some of the member states of ASARECA, national representatives from each member country representing farmers, the private sector, civil society, agricultural extension, universities, national agricultural research institutions and ministries of agriculture, and other strategic partners such as development partners and international agricultural research institutions.

The delegates convened to deliberate on the timely theme "Feeding our Region in the 21st Century." The theme was chosen because more than ever before, feeding an increasing population and attaining food security at the national, regional and global levels is one of the most important and pressing challenges of the 21st century.

icipe participated in both the presentations as well as the exhibitions. Under Sub-Theme III: Partner Institutions Perspective, icipe's DG gave a plenary presentation on the Centre's R&D activities in agriculture, highlighting some of its flagship programmes like push-pull and the tsetse repellent technology.



ASARECA General Assembly delegates visit the icipe exhibition booth.

## Private Sector-icipe Involvement

### Private sector commercialisation of icipe's biopesticide

On 13th February 2012, icipe signed a second Commercialisation Agreement with Real IPM ([www.realipm.com](http://www.realipm.com)), a Kenya-based producer of biopesticides, for the *Metarrhizium anisopliae* ICIPE 78 isolate. This isolate has been intensively studied by icipe scientists who found it, among others, effective against spider mites like *Tetranychus evansi* and *Tetranychus urticae*. Real IPM has taken it up for commercialisation against these and other key pests of vegetables and fruits. In early 2011 icipe already signed a similar agreement for the *M. anisopliae* ICIPE 69 isolate, which has in the meantime been registered for control of mealybugs in papaya in Ghana, and which is additionally in the registration process for microbiological control of other pests in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and the Republic of South Africa. More information at <http://www.icipe.org/news/572-commercialisation-agreement-with-real-ipm.html>



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