

Improving lives through sustainable bioinnovations

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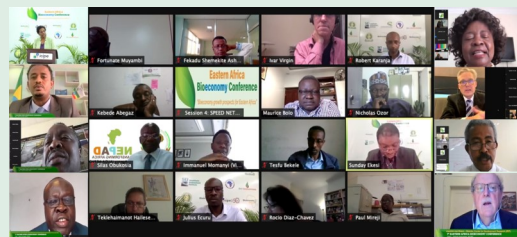
Kenya adopts new standards for edible insects products

1st Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference

The first Eastern African Bioeconomy Conference was held fully virtual on 21 – 22 October 2020, with the theme, "Bioeconomy growth prospects for Eastern Africa". The conference was organised by *icipe*/BioInnovate Africa together with the East Africa Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO) and partners, and brought together 400 regional, continental, and global participants comprising of high-level policy makers, academia, scientists, innovators, funders, investors, business professionals and the media. The conference rallied support for an Eastern African Regional Bioeconomy Strategy, developed by EASTECO and partners with support from BioInnovate Africa. Leaders in science and in policy shared a vision of a sustainable bioeconomy as the development pathway for the region. The leaders included: Dr Segenet Kelemu, Director General and CEO, *icipe*; Prof Måns Nilsson, Executive Director, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), Sweden; Hon Christophe Bazivamo, Deputy Secretary General, East African Community; Prof Dr Joachim von Braun, Chair, German Bioeconomy Council, and Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2020; Hon Dr Elioda Tumwesigye, Minister, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Uganda; and H.E. Hon Dr Ahmedin Mohammed, State Minister, Ministry of

Innovation and Technology, Ethiopia, among others. An East Africa [Bioeconomy Observatory portal](#) was launched at the conference. It is a knowledge repository, where advances in bioeconomy in the region can be monitored. Key recommendations from the conference were: the need to develop an implementation plan for the strategy and to support its nationalisation by the countries in the region; integrating digital economy and the bioeconomy; and extending the regional bioeconomy strategy approach to other regions of Africa.

Click [here](#) to visit the conference website, and [here](#) to watch the conference recordings.



ALSO IN THIS REPORTING PERIOD: ON THE WEBSITE



Photo of the month: December 2020

Announcement of a BioInnovate Africa Fellows Alumnae Network

BioInnovate Africa [Fellows Alumnae Network \(BA-FAN\)](#), which is an affinity-based community of women scientists, networking and actively collaborating on biological based research and innovation activities in Eastern Africa was announced officially during the first Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference. Dr Peggy Oti-Boateng, Director, Division of Science Policy and Capacity Building, UNESCO, France, and Prof Ruth Oniang'o, Founder and Director, Rural Outreach Africa and 2017 Africa Food Prize Laureate, who are both members of the BioInnovate Africa Programme

Advisory Committee (PAC), spoke at the launch and inspired women to participate more in bioscience research and innovation. "We need to mentor women in science to be able to take on science and engineering career opportunities, and also encourage partnerships with various actors to advance women participation in bioinnovation in Africa," said Dr Oti-Boateng. "We stand proud of our continent Africa and we should support our women into leadership," said Prof Oniang'o.

Global Bioeconomy Summit 2020

BioInnovate Africa and the EASTECO were the official partners from Eastern Africa at the third Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2020, which took place on 16 – 20 November 2020. The event was held virtually with its locus in Berlin, Germany. BioInnovate Africa featured in the opening video of the event, and Dr Julius Ecuru, who is the Head of BioInnovate Africa and serves on the International Advisory Council of the GBS, participated as a speaker at the plenary session of the event. Hon. Christophe Bazivamo, Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community responsible for social and productive sectors, to spoke on how the regional bioeconomy strategy in Eastern Africa will promote regional integration and trade in biobased goods and services; H.E. Dr Ahmedin Mohamed, Minister of State in the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Ethiopia (represented by Dr Kassahun Tesfaye Director General Ethiopian Biotechnology Institute), underscored Ethiopia's priority in integrating the digital economy with bioeconomy to drive the country's growth

strategy, and Hon Dr Elioda Tumwesigye, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Uganda, spoke about opportunities for bioeconomy investment in the region and in Uganda. The key message was that a sustainable bioeconomy in Eastern Africa is underpinned by innovation, and the need to develop sustainable industries, create employment and increase household incomes. BioInnovate Africa and high-level representation of the Eastern Africa region at the summit amplified Africa's voice in contributing to the global bioeconomy agenda.

Click [here](#) to visit the GBS 2020 website and recordings.



Thank you for attending the
1st Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference
21 – 22 October 2020
"Bioeconomy growth prospects for Eastern Africa"
#EasternAfricaBioeconomy
@BioeconomyEA



Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference
"Bioeconomy growth prospects for Eastern Africa"



Media Statement: Sustainable bioeconomy will bring new growth prospects in Eastern Africa



BioInnovate Africa exhibits at *icipe*'s golden jubilee celebration

On 20 November 2020, *icipe* celebrated its 50th anniversary under the theme "Insects for Life". BioInnovate Africa participated at the exhibition of the event and showcased its biobased innovative products that are commercialised at the market. BioInnovate Africa is a regional innovation-driven bioeconomy initiative that is based at and managed by *icipe*, with support from Sida. The event took place at *icipe*'s Duduville Campus in Nairobi, under strict COVID-19 safety protocols, and was also streamed live for a larger virtual audience around the world. Dignitaries at the event included Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta, Cabinet Secretary Peter Munya (Kenya's Ministry of Agriculture), Cabinet Secretary Raychelle Omamo (Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Prof Dr Bill Hansson (Chair of the *icipe* Governing Council) and Dr Segenet Kelemu (*icipe* Director General and CEO) among others. Click [here](#) to watch the event.



President Uhuru Kenyatta's address during *icipe*'s 50th anniversary celebration

Bioscience Innovation Bootcamp for entrepreneurial scientists

On 26 November – 1 December 2020, BioInnovate Africa in partnership with Villgro Africa organised a regional bioscience innovation bootcamp for entrepreneurial scientists in eastern Africa. A total of 24 teams competitively selected from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia participated in the four-day virtual event, which comprised of biobased innovations in agroecology, food and feed, wastewater treatment, biopharmaceuticals, bioenergy, biomaterials, green chemicals and medical diagnostics. The bootcamp strengthened the capacities of the participants and inspired them to develop innovative and commercially viable biological-based ideas. Participants were also motivated to further refine their business models and prepare investor pitch decks to be further considered for customised acceleration coaching through support from BioInnovate Africa and the possibility for seed capital through Villgro Africa.



Acceleration for transition of projects into pilot commercial enterprises

A total of nine (9) BioInnovate Africa projects are receiving business acceleration support in collaboration with Growth Africa Foundation, to transition them into pilot commercial enterprises. These projects have market tested their products and validated their business models. The acceleration support aims at preparing the projects for product launch, pilot commercial

operations and investor readiness. The teams are developing actionable plans for their growth strategies, which they may use to scale their ventures beyond BioInnovate Africa funding period. The business acceleration support will run until March 2021.

BioInnovate Africa annual review meeting

On 24 November 2020, Dr Claes Kjellström from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), paid a visit to *icipe* Duduville Campus in Nairobi and met with *icipe* senior Management, including BioInnovate Africa Programme Management Team. The meeting discussed BioInnovate Africa implementation progress during the year and plans for 2021.



9th BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee meeting

The ninth BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held virtually on 27 November 2020. The meeting reflected on the first Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference and discussed how to take forward the recommendations from the conference. PAC also discussed the BioInnovate Africa progress during the year and plans for 2021.



News from the Network

Kenya adopts new standards for edible insects products

On 4 December 2020, new standards for edible insects products in Kenya were published on the Kenya Gazette Notice No. 10268. The standards were developed by the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS). They promote safe production and consumption of edible insects. It is a relief for many consumers of insects, as well as businesses venturing into insect enriched food. Edible insects, like crickets and grasshoppers, are a rich source of proteins, oils and essential micronutrients. They are also less polluting to the environment. The standards, therefore, will help partners in BioInnovate Africa, who are researching on methods to rear insects, and developing a variety of food

products enriched with edible insects. Click [here](#) to view ground breaking work on edible insects within the BioInnovate Africa network.

