The 2nd Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference was held on 10 –
11 November 2021, with a few invited participants attending
in-person at the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) in
Nairobi, Kenya, and a larger audience participating virtually. The conference
was co-organised by icipe/BioInnovate
Africa, the East African Science and
Technology Commission (EASTECO),
Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) -
Africa Centre, and the Biosciences east
and central Africa- International Livestock
Research Institute (BecA-ILRI) Hub
as partners. The theme was, “Building
a Sustainable and Resilient African
Bioeconomy.” The conference brought
862 regional, continental, and
global participants comprising of leaders
in science, private sector, and in policy, as
well as the media. The key note speakers
included: Dr Sunday Ekesi, Director
of Research and Partnerships, icipe
(representing Dr Segenet Kelemu, Director
General and CEO, icipe); Hon Christophe
Bazivamo, Deputy Secretary General,
East African Community (representing
Hon. Dr Peter Mathuki, Secretary
General, East African Community (EAC);
H.E. Caroline Vicini, Ambassador,
Embassy of Sweden in Nairobi, Kenya;
Prof Dr Christine Lang, Co-Chair
International Advisory Committee, Global
Bioeconomy; John Bosco, Executive
Director, East African Business Council;
Dr Kevit Desai, Principal Secretary,
Ministry of East African Community and
Regional Development, among others.
The main outcome was the appreciation
of bioeconomy as the sustainable
pathway for the region’s development,
and the need to increase investment
in bioeconomy research, capacity
building, and innovation, and foster
collaborations regionally and globally.
This way, the conference achieved its
main goal of building momentum for
adoption and implementation of the
Eastern Africa regional bioeconomy
strategy, and showcased achievements
of bioeconomy projects in the region.
Key recommendations of the conference
include: the need for awareness creation
and policy advocacy, targeting relevant
stakeholders in the bioeconomy value
chain, backed by research-based
evidence to address the disconnect in
demand and supply of bio-based products,
by promoting available bioeconomy
opportunities, and influencing consumer
preferences and behaviour with respect
to bio-based products; the development
of regulatory and institutional frameworks
to facilitate various aspects of the
bioeconomy such as (1) intellectual
property rights in technology development
(2) vibrant public-private partnership,
linking entrepreneurship, science
and societal aspirations for sustainable green
growth (3) standards harmonisation for
biobased product development including
sanitary and phytosanitary measures and
(4) open skies and movement of people
and goods across the borders; special
attention and support to the youth, not as
a passive demography, but as a key cog
in the advancement to a bioeconomy in
Africa, due to their technological ability
and growing desire and knack to lead
socio-economic change in the continent;
training and capacity building for small
and mid-size enterprises (SMEs) on
trade information, sustainable and green
business skills from social, economic
and environmental, and the development
of a symbiotic relationship between
government and private sector, and
regional and global partnerships for
a sustainable bioeconomy. Read the
conference communique here; watch
the sessions recordings here.

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On 21 September 2021, 15 scientists were competitively selected to participate in a 5-day Bioscience Innovation Bootcamp organised by BioInnovate Africa in collaboration with Biosciences eastern and central Africa – International Livestock Research Institute (BecA-ILRI) Hub. The scientists were from Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. The bootcamp was conducted from 11-15 October 2021 in partnership with Villgro Africa (an invention-based business support organisation in Kenya) and Inclusive Business (IB) Sweden. Participants were empowered to develop and package their ideas in an investable way and had an opportunity to virtually pitch their ideas to equity and impact investors. Read more about the bootcamp [here](#).

On 12 October 2021, 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 team. The meeting discussed the closure process of BioInnovate Africa phase II and preparation for phase III.

In this reporting period, BioInnovate Africa cohort III women fellows (a total of ten (10)) had successfully completed their four-to-six month fellowship initiative and safely returned home from their respective host institution and country. Click [here](#) to view profiles of the women fellows.

The eleventh BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held virtually on 16 September 2021, and the twelfth PAC meeting was held in-person at icipe Duduville Campus in Nairobi on 12 November 2021. Both meetings discussed BioInnovate Africa progress, strategic issues, and way forward for bioeconomy development in Eastern Africa, and the continuing role of BioInnovate Africa in fostering this development.

BioInnovate Africa cohort III women fellows successfully complete their fellowship

Selection of cohort II students: partnership with Dartmouth College on Technoeconomic Analyses (TEA)

BioInnovate Africa and the Thayer School of Engineering, Dartmouth College, USA, have partnered to build capacity for technoeconomic analysis (TEA) of innovation projects in Eastern Africa through a six-month tailor-made remote/online course. This December, a total of five students from BioInnovate Africa participating universities in Eastern Africa have been competitively selected by the Thayer School of Engineering, USA to undertake the course, which commences in January 2022. Click [here](#) to read a blog featuring the TEA experiences of cohort I students.

BioInnovate Africa is supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and managed by the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) in Nairobi, Kenya.