



e-newsletter

Fostering a sustainable bioeconomy in Eastern Africa

2nd Eastern Africa Bioeconomy Conference

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*/BiInnovate 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 together 625 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);



BiInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee members, EAST-ECO, SEI-Africa Centre and Deputy Secretary General EAC discuss scientific and research cooperation within the EAC, and policy issues.

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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Bioscience Innovation Bootcamp 2021

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](#).



Close out of cohort II Biobusiness Bootcamp

BioInnovate Africa cohort II biobusiness acceleration programme was completed on 30 October 2021. The programme had five BioInnovate Africa projects that were identified to receive business support in collaboration with Growth Africa Foundation. The one-to-one biobusiness acceleration sessions were conducted virtually with each of the projects. The teams developed and validated their business models making them investor ready and move their innovative biologically based products and processes towards market launch.

BioInnovate Africa cohort III women fellows successfully complete their fellowship



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.

BioInnovate Africa annual review meeting

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.



11th and 12th BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee meeting

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.



Pictured left: PAC and BioInnovate Africa team during 11th PAC Meeting. Pictured right: PAC and BioInnovate Africa team during 12th PAC Meeting.

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.