



## **Report on Side Event**

# **Agricultural Biodiversity Initiative for Africa**

**(ABIA)**

**Africa Agriculture Science Week and FARA GA 2007  
11-16 June 2007**

# Side Event Recommendation

- Given the strategic importance to Africa, of Agricultural Biodiversity for present and future generations, and
- Given FARA's mandate for leadership and support to agricultural R&D in Africa:
- The Side Event recommended FARA should take steps towards development of an

**Agricultural Biodiversity Initiative for Africa**

# Agricultural Biodiversity

The side-event underlined the importance of agrobiodiversity for mankind, in terms of:

- securing sustainable agricultural production
- linking ABD to biotechnology and breeding
- improving the livelihoods of poor farmers
- contribution to nutrition and health

=>to achieving the Millennium Development Goals



**Intra-specific**



**Inter-specific**



**Ecosystem diversity**

# Loss of Agricultural Biodiversity

## **The side event expressed concerns:**

- Our ability to maintain and optimally use this diversity is increasingly in jeopardy.
- There is significant evidence of the growing loss of diversity in agricultural production systems;
- Dietary diversity is also affected:
  - Only three crops—maize, rice and wheat—provide more than 60% of the world's food energy.
  - Only five types of animal—cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry account for the vast majority of 'meat'

# The ABD Situation in Africa

- Weak knowledge base on ABD, including its value to society and development.
- Solitary emphasis on plants; leaving out other domains of ABD (AnGR, FiGR, MiGR)
- Over emphasis on ***conservation***; with little links to **use and management** for present and future
- Weak engagement in policy dimension of GR

Efforts being made, but generally uninformed, inadequate and uncoordinated.

- Less emphasis on issues of strategic analysis, and development of collaborative mechanisms.

# What is ABIA?

## **ABIA is proposed as a PLATFORM**

- to generate visibility, resources and collaborative engagement in support of ABD in Africa
- Beyond Coordination, to Strategic Development
- It will mainstream strategic AGB elements into country and regional programmes, and support countries in working together on ABD
- ABIA would go beyond plants, and will include other components of ABD, such as AnGR, etc.
- It will support existing regional and sub-regional initiatives on ABD



# Key FARA Value-Added Roles in the ABIA Initiative

- **Advocacy:**
  - Raise the visibility on issues of ABD at high levels of policy and governance (incl. AU-NEPAD/SROs/RECs/Countries)
- Provide Platform for interaction and collaboration on different areas of research on agricultural biodiversity
- Facilitate and support engagement of African stakeholders in global treaties and processes in relation to GRFA, some of which include ITPGRFA, CBD, GPA
- Support capacity development, and Information / learning platforms in ABD
- Resource mobilization in support of ABD in Africa

# Partnerships

- FARA should engage a broad range of partnerships and stakeholders in the development of the ABIA initiative
  - ABIA would involve SROs, NARS, and international organizations such as FAO, the CGIAR, and Advanced Research Institutions
- Bioversity International to provide technical backstopping to FARA in ABIA development.
- Other relevant initiatives and programmes
  - Platform on ABD Research (PAR)
  - Global Crop Diversity Trust
  - Regional Plans for Collective Action (WCA, ESA)

# Next Steps

- FARA should constitute a Focus Group of experts and stakeholders, to develop
  - a conceptual framework
  - implementation plan
  - Resource mobilization plan for ABIA.
- Plan towards the organization of a conference on Agricultural Biodiversity in Africa,
  - towards celebration of the UN International Year of Biodiversity, scheduled for the year 2010.



**Thank You !!**

