



## INTERNATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE WORKSHOP

### THE PROMOTION OF INDIGENOUS VEGETABLES IN AFRICAN URBAN AND PERIURBAN SPACES: PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION, POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND POLICY

Urban agriculture is widely practiced in many cities of the developing world, providing income, nutrition and often a safety-net function to the poorest sectors of society, and as such is an important, but underexploited vehicle for poverty alleviation. It makes productive use of undeveloped land, but is frequently not considered in urban land use planning and zoning processes and outcomes. Simultaneously, many small-scale farmers and market-gardeners in these cities and the surrounds propagate and make use of species largely overlooked by research and development agencies. The species are collectively termed “indigenous vegetables”, and represent a vital store of biodiversity for local, national and international gene pools. Within the last decade national and international agencies have realised that the neglected species offer significant opportunities for development of new varieties and crops, provided swift action is taken to conserve the local knowledge and genetic strains.

With this realisation has come a flurry of research activity over the last several years, including the European Union funded Coordination Action, *IndigenoVeg – Networking to promote the sustainable production of indigenous vegetables through urban and peri-urban agriculture in Africa* ([www.indigenoveg.org](http://www.indigenoveg.org)). The time is ripe to pull together the research effort to date, distil the policy implications and consider further research requirements for the next decade. This is particularly so on the African continent, where as yet there has been no informed synthesis of current knowledge and its policy implications. Hence the need for this workshop.

The specific purpose will be to:

- Bring together the African research and policy community, with international counterparts, who are interested in urban agriculture and indigenous vegetables.
- Highlight African contributions, research and challenges related to these topics within the context of international programmes and debates.
- Explore the synergies and opportunities between the fields of urban agriculture and indigenous vegetables.
- Distil key policy lessons from the research to date and prepare draft policy briefs for dissemination to international donor, development and aid agencies, governments, NGOs, and the private sector.

#### **DATES**

23 – 26 January 2008 (including a one day field trip)

#### **VENUE**

Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa ([www.ru.ac.za](http://www.ru.ac.za))



## FORMAT

The workshop comprises three main sessions.

Session 1 (January 23): The opening “state-of-the-art” session will consist of keynote presentations and posters on a range of topics (drawing on previous *IndigenoVeg* events and from researchers outside the *IndigenoVeg* network) to define the current situation of research in the area of overlap between indigenous vegetables and urban agriculture, highlighting the gaps and future research needs.

Session 2 (January 24): During this facilitated session scientists and policy research resource persons will work together to transform scientific ideas and concepts into policy recommendations relating to indigenous vegetable and urban agriculture research.

Session 3 (January 25): This interactive session will enable the working groups to present the policy recommendations developed during session 2 to invited policy makers drawn from the seven African partner countries. The policy makers are especially invited for this session to discuss these recommendations with the group of scientists and policy researchers.

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Display areas for exhibiting posters relating to indigenous vegetable production, marketing and consumption in urban and peri-urban areas will be provided. Interested parties are invited to submit a 350-word poster abstract no later than 15 November, 2007 to [m.pasquini@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:m.pasquini@bangor.ac.uk). A limited number of sponsored places may be available and will be allocated on a competitive basis to poster presenters. We especially invite organizations working in indigenous vegetable production, marketing and consumption in urban and peri-urban areas to share their successes and challenges with the participants of the workshop. Besides the “lessons to be learned”, we are interested in benchmarking research results directly related to our workshop topic.

## ORGANIZING AGENCIES

This conference is being organised by the *IndigenoVeg* Network, which is funded by the EU Sixth Framework programme, under priority FP6-2003-INCO-DEV-2. Partner details may be found on the website [www.indigenoveg.org](http://www.indigenoveg.org).

## CONTACT DETAILS

Further information may be obtained from the workshop host:

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