

ECOAGRICULTURE PARTNER UPDATE
July 2003

Dear Ecoagriculture Partners,

There is a lot happening right now with Ecoagriculture Partners, and a lot of opportunities for you to get involved (for details, see below):

1. Hold the Date: **International Ecoagriculture Conference and Practitioners' Fair in Nairobi, Kenya, September 27-October 1, 2004**
2. Website coming on-line soon--Request for Materials
3. Formalize your Institutional Partnership in Ecoagriculture Partners
4. Special issue of ILEIA magazine on Ecoagriculture, December 2004
5. Collaboration with Equator Initiative and UNDP to document ecoagriculture systems
6. Adding names to the Listserv.

1. ECOAGRICULTURE CONFERENCE--HOLD THE DATE!

We are pleased to announce that the first International Ecoagriculture Conference and Practitioners' Fair will be held in Nairobi, Kenya September 27-October 1, 2004. The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) will be our host, with support from other local Ecoagriculture Partners. The Equator Initiative, UNDP and IUCN have already offered to co-sponsor the event, and we are looking for as many Partners as possible to step forward and become co-sponsors. Most importantly, we need to develop a high-calibre program, and to provide scholarships for as many community ecoagriculture innovators to participate as possible, from all around the world, as well as a diverse group of scientists, policy makers, agribusinesses, and rural development professionals with experience in ecoagriculture.

We anticipate that the 5-day event will have five strong and integrated components:

- * An inter-disciplinary scientific and policy Conference to assess the present state-of-ecoagriculture and the way forward
- * A Practitioners' Fair for practical information exchange among farmers and conservation groups working in the field
- * Field visits to documented ecoagriculture sites around Kenya, in different ecosystems and farming types
- * Working Groups to generate Action Agendas for research, extension, policy, etc., and
- * Strategies to disseminate information about ecoagriculture to the farming and environmental communities, policymakers and professionals, through a wide variety of publications, diverse media, etc.

Jeff McNeely and I (presently co-chairs of the Conference Task Force) will soon be seeking your participation in specific working groups to prepare for the Conference. We hope you will begin planning now to participate.

2. ECOAGRICULTURE PARTNERS WEBSITE--REQUEST FOR MATERIALS

Ben Dappen, a part-time summer intern with Ecoagriculture Partners, has been working hard to get our Website ready to go online by the middle or end of August. We hope this will become a valuable site for people around the world to find information about ecoagriculture, and to find practical links with new Partners.

If you would like to announce upcoming Conferences or workshops, an important publication, or other information or resources of interest to the Partners, please send that information (in brief form) to Ben at: bidappen@yahoo.com. Specific website links to resources will be especially appreciated.

3. PLEASE REGISTER OFFICIALLY AS AN ECOAGRICULTURE PARTNER

Many of you have been actively communicating with Ecoagriculture Partners, or participating in a Task Force, but have not yet officially registered as an Ecoagriculture Partner. For all member institutions, we would like to include the name, logo and website link on our website. Attached is a copy of the institutional Partner form that needs to be filled out. The criteria are minimal and obligations quite manageable for even small organizations. If you would like to be identified as one of our Partners, and be eligible to participate in setting the direction of the organization, please fill out this form and send it to me (by e-mail, fax or letter), along with your electronic logo. Thanks. Individual Partners are also most welcome, and that form too is attached.

4. SPECIAL ISSUE OF ILEIA MAGAZINE

I am very happy to announce that Ecoagriculture Partners and the well-respected Institute for Low-External-Input Agriculture will be collaborating to develop a special issue of their magazine *LEISA* for December 2004 on Ecoagriculture, focused on small-scale, low-input farming approaches. This magazine is targeted to field-level innovators--farmers, extensionists and local conservation groups. ILEIA has a related website called www.farmingsolutions.org that you may wish to see. Cases for the special issue will be identified as we prepare for the 2004 Conference and the ecoagriculture profiles. Note that over the coming year, we will be seeking to develop collaborations with publications aimed at a variety of other audiences as well (science, policy, etc.).

5. COLLABORATION WITH EQUATOR INITIATIVE ON ECOAGRICULTURE PROFILES

Ecoagriculture Partners are developing a template for briefly describing ecoagriculture practices and systems, which we hope can be completed for hundreds of systems around the world, and inputted into a searchable database. We hope to use these profiles in several ways: a) develop a way to reference them on the website, so that Partners and others can see the range of practices and identify groups they may wish to contact or visit; b) identify interesting, strategically important, or widespread ecoagriculture systems that would be high priority to document in-depth as "best practices"; and c) determine what types of information is and is not available about existing ecoagriculture systems. We want to use this information to help us plan the Ecoagriculture Conference.

I am pleased to report that Ecoagriculture Partners and the Equator Initiative have agreed to collaborate to jump-start this effort by reviewing available information from ecoagriculture systems identified in 2500 GEF small grants program and 1400 Equator Initiative submissions for the 2002 and 2004 Prizes. Other Ecoagriculture Partners will also be requested to complete Profiles for their ecoagriculture systems. We hope to have a template ready by the end of August, to begin assessment the grant cases in September.

If you would like to help design the standard template design team, or test it over the next few months with your own ecoagriculture examples, please contact me as soon as possible to provide feedback on the draft template (SScherr@futureharvest.org).

6. ADDING NAMES TO THE LISTSERV

If you would like to add the names of some of your colleagues to the Ecoagriculture Partners listserv, please send an e-mail to Robert Phares at SANREM (rphares@arches.uga.edu) with the following information: First Name, Last Name, E-mail address. Robert, thanks so much for your

support.

Best regards,

Sara

Sara J. Scherr, Ph.D.
Director, Ecoagriculture Partners
c/o Future Harvest Foundation
1225 Connecticut Avenue NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20036, USA
Phone: 202-223-1313, 703-758-2548; Fax: 202-223-3545
Email: SScherr@futureharvest.org