



IAPPS NEWSLETTER

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AGLE@RN: ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR ALL

The Asia-Pacific Regional Technology Centre (APRTC), Worldview and CropLife International share the vision of promoting sustainable agriculture in rural communities of developing countries. Jointly the partners have therefore submitted a Partnership Initiative to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, WSSD called: "Promoting Capacity Building for Sustainable Agriculture" referred to below as AgLe@rn.

AgLe@rn addresses the critical need for dissemination of information on sustainable agricultural technologies. Its online courses take advantage of modern information, communication and educational technologies. They give agricultural training professionals and trainers working with farmers in developing countries the up to date knowledge and skills they require to become more effective agents of change in their rural communities. The web-based courses are interactive, timed, and currently rely on collaborative relationships with a range of experts from universities, research and training institutes in Thailand, India, the UK and the Philippines.

AgLe@rn offers a comprehensive selection of online courses designed to improve participants' skills and knowledge related to sustainable farm management practices. Initial AgLe@rn courses deal with one of the cornerstones of sustainable agriculture - Integrated Pest Management (IPM). In addition to this introductory course, advanced courses on IPM in cotton, rice and vegetables and a course on Integrated Plant Nutrition (IPN) have been developed. Also being implemented is a course on responsible use of pesticides and one on digital literacy.

The courses, developed by acknowledged experts in the field, are primarily aimed at individuals who are best positioned to help farmers access the information and knowledge they need to reap the benefits of knowledge-intensive, sustainable management practices. The primary target groups include extension and development agents, NGO and farmer organizations, academics and employees of agri-food companies, as well as employees and distributors within the plant science industry. This does not, however, preclude participation of farmer's themselves that have access to the Internet.

The facilitated courses are run on specific dates and at nominal fees - details are available on the website www.aprtc.org. A scholarship fund has been established to enable non-industry and developing country participants to benefit from the courses.

Partnership arrangements between those interested in AgLe@rn could result in substantial benefits for each of the partners.

Some potential collaborative activities between partners and AgLe@rn could include:

- Promoting AgLe@rn more widely to involve more students - geographically, institutionally, and sectorally
- Increasing rural community access (including women) to ICT resources - addressing the digital divide
- Involving new partners personnel as resource persons in AgLe@rn courses
- Strengthening the existing AgLe@rn scholarship fund to allow greater participation
- Designing and developing new courses to meet identified priority educational needs
- Translation and facilitation of courses in local languages

If you have any further queries regarding course participation or becoming a partner please visit the website at www.aprtc.org or contact:

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THE PLANT SCIENCE INDUSTRY'S SUPPORT OF THE AFRICAN STOCKPILES PROGRAMME

The leading companies of CropLife International* have recently committed up to US\$30 million to the African Stockpiles Program (ASP) over the duration of the project, representing a doubling of the anticipated contribution

under the previous policy. The ASP is an unprecedented partnership between international organizations, non-governmental organizations, governments, industry, and multi-lateral funds to eliminate obsolete stocks of crop protection products from Africa and prevent further accumulation.

Details of the CropLife contribution to the ASP:

- Costs of incineration of stocks originally manufactured by CropLife International's leading companies
- Costs of making safe for later disposal, highly hazardous stocks threatening health or the environment
- Provision of funds for expertise from industry or consultants from other organizations
- Hosting of a Disposal Support Unit to assist African countries manage disposal projects and build capacity locally
- Accelerating obsolete stock disposal through resourcing in a cost-effective manner
- Annual review of progress with option to bring forward funding if rapid results are achieved

Obsolete crop protection products are those products that are unfit for further use or re-conditioning. Stocks of crop protection products become obsolete mostly because of poor long-term storage during which the product and/or its packaging degrades to a point where it is no longer useable and cannot be reconditioned cost-effectively. However, obsolescence may also arise because a product has been de-registered and no opportunity has been given to use up existing stocks in the owning country. Obsolete stocks have accumulated particularly in countries where procurement was governed by planned economies rather than farmers' needs. In Africa, many obsolete stocks of crop protection products are leftovers from donations provided under international development assistance programs, often decades ago. Much is the remainder of products bought for the control of locusts and other migratory pests, where emergency stocks of insecticides were held to combat sudden outbreaks of these major pests. In most cases obsolete stocks are owned by National Governments, or parastatal agricultural or public health organizations. A few are stocks abandoned when large agricultural co-operatives became bankrupt. Globally, these are not products still owned by manufacturers or their agents, who manage the disposal of any obsolete materials on a regular basis at their own cost.

In 1995, in order to provide a focus for industry support and to facilitate co-operation between industry, governments and other stakeholders, CropLife International formed a specialist Obsolete Stocks Project Team. This group contributes organizational and management expertise as well as technical knowledge to facilitate projects to dispose of stocks. The team members also provide training in areas such as stock management and responsible pesticide use in order to prevent further build up of obsolete stocks. CropLife International's companies make voluntary financial contributions for the destruction of stocks that they originally manufactured or supplied. In practical terms, they pay for the cost of incinerating these products. Obsolete crop protection products are classed internationally as toxic waste and most require incineration in specialized high temperature kilns, which are operated to strict international limits. The cost of incineration varies with the product being combusted but the cost in a specialized facility operating to EU standards is currently about Euro 800 -1000 per tonne of waste. There are very few such facilities in developing countries and none in Africa.

CropLife International publishes its position and details of the Country Projects with which it has been involved on its website www.croplife.org.

Details of ASP can be found on www.africastockpiles.org, which also has links to other sites with information about obsolete stocks.

*CropLife International is the global federation representing the plant science industry. It supports a network of regional and national associations in 85 countries, led by companies such as BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, Dupont, FMC, Monsanto, Sumitomo and Syngenta. It promotes the benefits of crop protection and biotechnology products, their importance to sustainable agriculture and food production, and their responsible use through stewardship.

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NEW IAPPS STRATEGY UNDERWAY...

The September 2003 IAPPS Governing Board meeting in Brussels (see IAPPS Newsletter VII) discussed the status and impact of IAPPS and highlighted many achievements of the association, particularly in the administrative and organizational areas. The Board also recognized that the technical and professional focus of IAPPS needed a

significant boost so that the society and its products are more visible and better heard by the wider public served by general membership. For this purpose, the Board asked Drs. Pierre Urech (Industry representative on IAPPS), Braima James (CGIAR's Systemwide Program on Integrated Pest Management, SP-IPM) and Manuele Tamò (International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, IITA) to review IAPPS goal, objectives, strategy and relationships, with particular regard to membership and internal policies. A first draft proposal is due to the Board end of October this year, while the final document will be ready for adoption by the Board at the end of the year. Subsequently, the strategy document will be available to all IAPPS members for discussion and adoption by the General Assembly at IPPC 2004, Beijing, China, 11-16 May 2004

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IAPPS Mission: to provide a global forum for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, integrating, and promoting plant protection concepts, technologies, and policies that are economically, environmentally, and socially acceptable.

It seeks to provide a global umbrella for the plant protection sciences to facilitate and promote the application of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to a the world's crop and forest ecosystems.

Membership Information: IAPPS has four classes of membership (individual, affiliate, associate, and corporate) which are described [here](#).

The *IAPPS Newsletter* welcomes news, letters, and other items of interest from individuals and organizations. Address correspondence and information to:

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