Second Meeting of the Sub-Saharan Africa Forest Genetic Resources Programme (SAFORGEN) Working Group on Food Tree Species

**Tentative date:** 25-27 September 2007

**Venue:** Campus of the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), in Cotonou, Benin

Organized by the SAFORGEN Programme of Bioversity International

In partnership with

The Forest Research Center (CIFOR) of the Spanish Institute for Agricultural Research (INIA)

First Announcement

(April 2007)
Second meeting of the SAFORGEN Working Group on Food Tree Species

**Dates and Venue**

Bioversity International and CIFOR-INIA are delighted to invite all interested stakeholders and organizations to participate in second SAFORGEN Working Group meeting on Food Tree Species to be held on 25-27 September 2007 in Cotonou, Benin.

**General Information**

1. **Background and Rationale**

Food insecurity, poverty, malnutrition and environmental degradation are the major challenges that confront developing countries today. Concerning the first three concerns, it is acknowledged that local tree species can play a major role in the improvement of people’s livelihood as food and source of income. For instance, species like *Vitellaria paradoxa* (shea tree) with a high socio-economic value has an important local and international market. Given the growing importance of these species, a Working Group on Food Tree Species (FTS) was created by SAFORGEN network members. The FTS Working Group held its first meeting on 11-13 December 2000 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Six years later it is necessary to assess actions undertaken and progress made since that first meeting in order to define new directions for a better valorization of FTS for livelihood improvement in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries.

The Center for Forest Research of the National Institute for Agrarian and Food Research and Technology (CIFOR-INIA, Spain) and Bioversity International are collaborating to building capacity of national partners to conserve and sustainably use forest genetic resources both in the Latin American (LA) and in the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries. The objective of this collaboration is to provide support to the existing regional networking initiatives on conservation and sustainable use of forest and tree genetic resources (FTGR) under the framework of the two Bioversity networks, which are LAFORGEN for LA and SAFORGEN for SSA.

In SSA more specifically the joint efforts of two institutions is focused to reinforce the Working Group on food tree species (FTS) of SAFORGEN Network. The Working Group will enable partners to gather, process and exchange information.

This is the reason why Bioversity International and INIA are organizing this second FTS Working Group meeting. The meeting is jointly funded by the Spanish government (INIA) and Bioversity.
2. Meeting objectives

- **The Overall objective** of the meeting is to reinforce SAFORGEN FTS Working Group to be able to serve as a platform with other actors for information sharing on Food Tree Species (FTS).

- **Specific objectives**
  1. To assess the current status of research and knowledge on FTS in SSA
  2. To assess the major achievements of SAFORGEN FTS Working Group
  3. To define new ways and actors in gathering and disseminating information on FTS in SSA

3. Expected outcomes

  1. On-going activities and achievements on FTS, captured and actions listed
  2. Major achievements of SAFORGEN FTS assessed
  3. New direction and priority activities on FTS defined and shared among participants

4. Participation

All interested stakeholders are invited to participate in the meeting. The following categories are expected in the meeting:

- SAFORGEN member countries
- SSA experts on FTS
- International and Advanced research centers working on FTS
- Individuals and organizations working on Research and Development of FTS (including NGOs, Projects, Private sector etc.)

The budget of the meeting is limited. The organizing Committee will be able to sponsor only few selected participants among SAFORGEN member countries. The Committee strongly encourages interested persons and institutions to raise funds for their participation. A letter of support could be issued to participants who would like to request funding to other sources.

5. Language

English and French (without interpretation)

6. Registration

The application form is attached to the announcement. It should be filled and sent to the organizing committee as soon as possible.
The second meeting announcement will provide provisional meeting programme, guidelines for papers and country reports and information on travel/airs and hotel options in Cotonou.

For further information please contact the Organizing Committee:

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