

# SARNISSA – Sustainable Aquaculture Research Networks in Sub Saharan Africa : A new era for strengthening African aquaculture



Would you like to find how catfish are currently being cultured in Nigeria? Who is researching tilapia feeds and nutrition in South Africa? Or how private fish hatcheries are developing in Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire? Wouldn't it be great to have all that information in one location at your fingertips? The EC funded SARNISSA project aims to link like minded individuals throughout Sub Saharan Africa and beyond for their mutual benefit.

A consortium of 8 partners from Africa, Europe and beyond<sup>1</sup> recently held the project inception meeting in Stirling UK. The team has a balance of considerable experience and expertise in the aquaculture research and commercial sectors, development and policy, and information technology, as well as an ability to work in different linguistic areas, and a track record in the implementation of activities at local to international level. The project focus is very much on initiating regular communication among stakeholders (researchers, commercial and market sectors, government agencies, NGOs, and others) in order that collaborations can be initiated and nurtured.

“So much of Africa’s relative underdevelopment in aquaculture is because of limited access to and exchange of information – we hope this innovative project will change this” highlighted Emmanuel Kaunda of Bunda College, an institution charged with supporting development of fish production in Malawi. Identifying and developing new initiatives for sub Saharan African aquaculture research will be critical to this process. These may be between researchers and commercial users, between Anglophone and Francophone regions, between Africa and Asia, and between Europe and Africa. Through the further development of the Aquaculture Compendium (covered on pages 16 & 17 of Aquaculture News issue 30, January 2004) the project aims to deliver a comprehensive interdisciplinary knowledge base required for Sub Saharan African aquaculture to develop in a sustainable way and so fulfil its potential to help increase farmers’ incomes and increase food security.

Language differences present a particular challenge. English speakers may be unaware of key contacts or unable to access the wealth of information from French-speaking countries and vice versa for French speakers. The three-year project will strengthen alliances between languages and across borders among experienced and emergent players in the African and wider aquaculture scene that will build on an existing knowledge resource base and exchange platform – the Aquaculture Compendium – <http://www.cabi.org/compendia/ac/index.asp> - which will be made available throughout the project period to all key project stakeholders who will help provide new materials related to sub-Saharan African aquaculture development.

If you are interested in being involved and feel that you can both benefit and contribute please contact:

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Je demeure à votre disposition pour toute information complémentaire (en français si vous voulez) à propos de notre projet.

<sup>1</sup> Bunda College of Agriculture (Malawi), IRAD (Cameroon), ETC Netherlands., CIRAD (France), World Fish Center (Egypt), CABI (UK), Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand), and Institute of Aquaculture, University of Stirling (co-ordinator, UK).

