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1. News from the President



ICA members represented in the international arena:

7th GCHERA Conference (Global Consortium of Higher Education and Research for Agriculture)

In June ICA will promote with APLU the **7th GCHERA Conference** hosted by the Institute Polytechnique LaSalle Beauvais www.gchera.com. The conference focuses on the enhancement of the strategic role of Universities of Agriculture and Life Sciences as a driving force in sustainable rural development at the local level in areas worldwide, and in contributing to global initiatives.

The conference themes will discuss the crucial need to develop university education to provide graduates with the essential competences to support the development of a sustainable environment, research and innovation partnership strategies with local and regional stakeholders and conclude with a discussion of the strategic positioning of universities and agriculture and life sciences in supporting the greening of the global and local economy.

There will be 12 keynote speakers from across the globe and more than 40 contributed papers have been accepted. For full details and online registration see www.gchera.com. The Conference will be opened by a presentation by Dallas Tonsager, Under Secretary for Rural Development, US Department of Agriculture.

I look forward to welcoming you all to LaSalle Beauvais to this Conference at a time when food, energy and water security are so high on everyone's agenda. It is essential that agricultural and life science universities are well placed to contribute to these discussions.

GCHERA towards a Confederation

In January we held a meeting in Rome of the GCHERA Executive Committee to which were invited representatives of higher

education associations for the agricultural and life sciences worldwide. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposal to move GCHERA to a confederation of higher education associations. At the meeting a communiqué was signed by nine associations confirming their commitment to

"... support the proposal that GCHERA should develop as a Confederation of Regional Associations of Higher Education Institutions relating to the Agricultural and Life Sciences. We agreed the mission of the Confederation is to encourage mutual understanding and global co-operation of the Regional Associations and their institutions in supporting innovation, and providing leadership in education, research and outreach.....".

More details can be seen at the [GCHERA website](#). This proposal will be further discussed at the GCHERA Executive Committee meeting on Sunday 26 June, and if the new statutes are agreed there will be an election for the members of the GCHERA Board to replace the existing GCHERA Executive Committee at the first GCHERA General Assembly. I believe that this is an essential development to strengthen GCHERA and to give voice to universities of agriculture and life sciences on the world stage in addressing the security of food, energy and water worldwide.

ICA Rectors and Deans Forum 2011

An innovative event for European Rectors & Deans from Life Sciences Universities

On November 3 and 4 2011 in Gent, Belgium ICA will host the ICA Rectors and Deans Forum to discuss Life Science Universities and Faculties: Meeting Challenges and Expectations.

Agricultural and Life Science Universities/Faculties are increasingly challenged by other disciplines in their leading position with respect to new developments characterised by innovative applications of biomass, globalisation and transition of the rural economy. Therefore, the issue for Universities/Faculties of Life Sciences is to know which unique contributions they can make to these developments and how they can respond to the challenges faced in these sectors they serve in terms of training and research. Institutions of life sciences should thus reflect on how they should develop in future to strengthen their position at the cross road of natural and social sciences and engineering, and to capitalise on this locally, regionally and worldwide

The Forum will reflect on these issues by inviting key speakers from stakeholders involved and by roundtable discussions led by Rectors and Deans from ICA member institutions. More details to follow but **please mark this event in your diary now**. This forum will also offer an unique opportunity to further discuss the issues raised at the GCHERA conference in an European context and to exchange ideas about the role ICA can play in this respect.

Philippe Choquet
ICA President, and Directeur Général,
Institut Polytechnique LaSalle Beauvais,
France



2. News from the Secretary General

ICA General Assembly 2011

The ICA General Assembly 2011 will be held on Monday 27 June at 14.30, at Institut Polytechnique LaSalle Beauvais, France. The General Assembly will be followed by the Opening Session of the [GCHERA Conference](#) with a keynote by Dallas Tonsager, Under Secretary for Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture. The Agenda will be sent to members on 13 May 2011.

There will also be a meeting of the ICA Council preceding the ICA General Assembly. The ICA council brings together representatives of the ICA Standing Committees and the ICA Board to discuss opportunities for collaborative activities.



Water Policy 2011 Conference, 11 – 14 September 2011, BOKU, Vienna, Austria

ICA with APLU (Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities) and CFAVM (Canadian Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine), is promoting this conference at BOKU (The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna). This conference follows the successful Water Policy 2009 conference held at CULS (Czech University of Life Sciences).

The **objective of this conference** is to bring together water managers, scientists and representatives of the interested public to analyse and to discuss water management strategies in different institutional/cultural environments. There is an urgent need to improve the water use efficiency, transboundary cooperation and to ensure a sustainable use of resources.

Strategic measures to improve water use efficiency are usually taken at the national or transnational level while physical measures often refer to the local or regional scale. Harmonisation of strategies, planning and implementation across these levels is required.

The Conference will **bring together researchers and policy makers** from these different levels to share experience and understanding.

The **key themes** of the conference include:

- improving water use efficiency at different scales
- satisfying human water requirements at different scales
- bridging the gap between institutional settings and scientific knowledge
- new strategies for sustainable water management
- scientific approach to the implementation of water management strategies

It is not too late to submit an abstract for a contributed paper! [More details and register online](#)

MODERN Platform Project

ICA has recently become an Associate Member of ESMU's [MODERN Platform project](#). The details of the next MODERN Platform Conference and Workshop are given under item 6 of this Newsletter

Simon Heath, ICA Secretary General

3. News from ICA Standing Committees



SECOND AGRIMBA-AVA CONGRESS

The second AGRIMBA-AVA congress will be held in Wageningen, The Netherlands from 22 – 24 June, 2011.

The 1st bi-annual congress of AGRIMBA, the international ICA-network for the MBA in agribusiness and rural development, was organized successfully by the University of Debrecen in 2009 by the name of AVA-Congress. AGRIMBA's board decided to organize its 2nd bi-annual congress in Wageningen under the name of AGRIMBA-AVA Congress.

Agribusiness and rural development are both fast developing research areas, especially in the numerous universities for Life Sciences in Europe and beyond. AGRIMBA's 2nd bi-annual congress in Wageningen will pay attention to both agribusiness and rural development. Especially the international aspects of these areas require attention. The 2nd AGRIMBA-AVA Congress includes scientific and policy contributions as well as visits to farms and agribusiness firms in the rural areas of the Province of Friesland in the Netherlands. More information see <http://www.aep.wur.nl/uk/agrimbacongress> or contact agrimba@wur.nl

Wim Heijman
Chair Organizing Committee



CASEE CONFERENCE 2011

CASEE, the ICA Regional Network for Central and South Eastern Europe, will hold its 2011 CASEE Conference, **The EU Strategy for the Danube region with specific emphasis on Land and Water Management and the Environment**, from April 28 – 29 April, 2011, at St. Istvan University. Gödöllő, Hungary. The Conference is held under the patronage of Dr. Johannes Hahn, EU Commissioner for Regional Policy.

Margarita Calderon Peter
CASEE Secretary General



15TH IROICA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The time flies, and this year we will hold the **15th IROICA Annual Conference**. During those 15 years we have participated in many interesting conferences, exchanged our experiences and implemented interesting projects together. We will have the opportunity to intensify our cooperation and celebrate the anniversary at Warsaw University of Life Sciences from 14 - 17 June 2011.

The conference will be preceded by one day workshop on Do's and Don'ts of ECTS label and the main focus of the conference will be strategic partnerships and internationalization strategy. Further information on the detailed programme, registration form etc. is

available on the [website](#)

We hope to see you in Warsaw!

Margarita Calderon Peter
IROICA President



SILVA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Silva Annual conference will be held from 14 to 16 September, 2011 in Saint Petersburg, Russia. The Conference will address **The Bologna Cycles 1 To 3 and Higher Forest Education: Objectives And Reality** –Click here [for more details](#)

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT



QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMMES: ADOPTING GOOD PRACTICE

The European Accreditation Agency for the Life Sciences will hold this International Workshop on 22 and 23 September 2011 at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb

This workshop will provide a forum to share good practice for the quality assurance and enhancement of Master degree programmes. The workshop will address the quality assurance of Master degree programmes aimed at national students, and the additional requirements to meet the expectations of international students. It will also address the specific needs for the quality assurance of joint Master degree programmes delivered by two or more universities.

The Workshop programme will encompass the whole quality assurance and accreditation process; taking account of the need to have in place effective internal quality assurance processes and the process to be followed in preparation for an external review. Particular emphasis will be placed on the critical issues to be addressed to ensure a successful outcome for an external review of a degree programme.

At the end of the workshop, it is expected that participants will:

- be familiar with the terminology and principles of quality assurance,
- recognise the need for annual monitoring and review as a central theme,
- understand quality enhancement as an ongoing process,
- define the pre-conditions for the academic accreditations
- be able to compile the evidence-base required for peer review, and
- utilise a framework for the evaluation of a Master programme by external peer review.

The workshop is intended for Vice Rectors for Education, Deans, Quality Assurance coordinators, Master degree programme coordinators.

Full details and registration form can be found on the EAALS website www.eaals.eu or contact [Simon Heath](#)



5. News from ICA members

NEW DOUBLE DEGREE M. SC. PROGRAMME “ORGANIC AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS (EUR-ORGANIC)”

Unique Education in Organic Food Systems – from Field to Fork in Europe

Farmers and consumers are increasingly interested in the quality of food and of the circumstances of its production. Environmental, health and social questions ask for solutions. For this reason, a growing amount of food is produced and processed according to the standards of Organic Farming. Organic farming is based on a holistic approach and thus the processing and marketing of organically grown food requires special skills and knowledge.

To meet this demand, four leading European universities in the field of Agriculture and Life Sciences have developed the M.Sc. Programme “Organic Agriculture and Food Systems” (EUR-Organic). The programme offers an education related to all aspects of the organic sector (organic crop production, organic animal husbandry, organic farming in the tropics, organic food chains & networks, influence of European policy on the development of the organic sector, consumer demands, organic market development in different European countries etc.) plus the possibility to specialise in the distinct profiles offered by the partner universities.

Students completing the Master in Organic Agriculture and Food Systems at two of the partner universities will be awarded a full Master Degree from both universities. Students can also choose the single degree track option and complete the whole Master programme at one university.

EUR-Organic is offered by the following universities:

- UHOH - Universität Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany
- BOKU - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria
- WULS-SGGW - University of Life Sciences Warsaw, Poland
- AU - Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark

UHOH, BOKU and WULS-SGGW are members of the Euroleague for Life Sciences, a network of seven universities with focus on joint teaching and learning, student and staff mobility and quality assurance.

For detailed information about the [EUR-Organic programme](#)

NEW INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT: - CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

A new academic/professional journal will be launched during 2011, published jointly by the Institute of Agricultural Management (IAgrM) and the International Farm Management Association (IFMA). The International Journal of Agricultural Management (IJAM) will combine the resources and expertise of the Journal of Farm Management (first published in 1967) and the Journal of International Farm Management, while extending their depth of content and geographical coverage. Publication, through the Charlesworth Group and Publishing Technology (Ingenta Connect)

will be quarterly online, with an annual print volume for subscribers.

The purpose of the new journal is to provide an international forum and source of reference for those working in agricultural management and related activities, including social, economic and environmental aspects of food production and rural development. Its objectives are:

- To survey and report agricultural business management in its widest sense, including the application of existing and innovative methodologies to the analysis of production, marketing and agricultural merchandising throughout the whole supply chain, and the diverse use of agricultural resources to support and supplement rural household income and the rural economy.
- To encourage the transfer of agricultural management principles across geographical, cultural, social and national boundaries, to the benefit of rural populations in both poor and rich economies.
- To report developing pressures on agricultural and rural resources around the world; the challenges arising from those pressures; and the consequent opportunities for managers of land-based industries.

The provisional editorial team is seeking contributions which are relevant to those objectives and invite expressions of interest to join the Editorial Board – contact editor: ijam@gmail.com

6. Other News Items

MODERN KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP

The MODERN Knowledge Exchange Conference and Workshop will be held in Milano between 11 and 13 May 2011.

In the context of the “Innovation Union” – a flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 Strategy – structured cooperation between higher education institutions, companies and other stakeholders is becoming increasingly important to design new multidisciplinary curricula and equip the new generations with the right mix of knowledge, competences and transferable skills, ensuring a wider employability for graduates and nurturing their ability to generate future economic growth.

We invite you now to share your experience and spice up the debate on how universities can modernize towards interdisciplinarity, entrepreneurship and stronger business partnerships, how they can better address the innovation gaps by becoming entrepreneurial entities.

Further details are available on our MODERN website (www.highereducationmanagement.eu) or email programmes@esmu.be expressing your interest