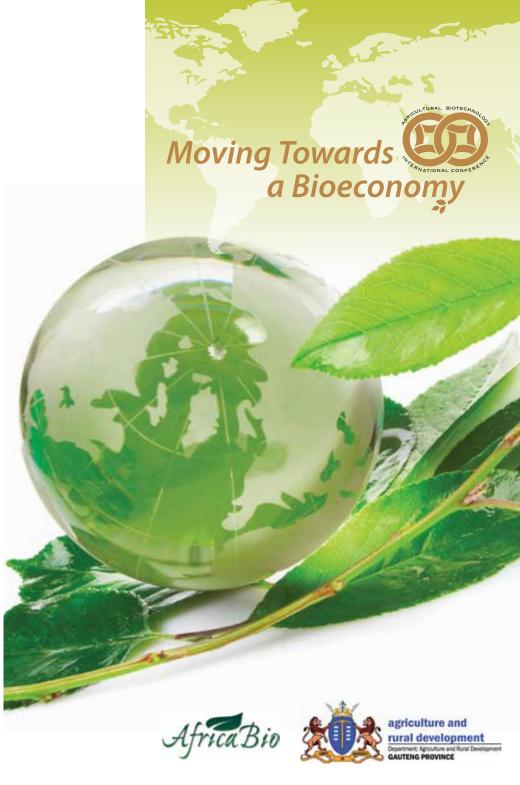
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Important Dates

6 June 2011

Closing date for early registration

28 August 2011

Closing date for pre-conference registration
Delegates may only register at the conference from this point

6 September 2011

On-site registrations

Please visit the conference website to register and/or submit an abstract: www.abic2011.co.za

Message from the conference chairperson



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Agricultural Biotechnology International Conference 2011 (ABIC 2011) to be held in the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

ABIC is an essential annual event for industry leaders, investors, policy makers, scientists, researchers and other

professionals working in the area of agricultural biotechnology. ABIC provides a unique forum where the latest scientific advances in agricultural biotechnology are presented, and where future directions of the technology are highlighted and discussed. ABIC conferences inform stakeholders of advances, barriers and action options which may influence science and business endeavours on a global scale. The annual conferences provide an opportunity for international stakeholders to learn more about options, opportunities and dealing with challenges through direct exchange of information between stakeholders. The conference provides a forum for agbiotech organisations to demonstrate their capabilities and to seek investment, technology transfer and sales opportunities.

The theme for ABIC 2011 will be "Agricultural Biotechnology for Economic Development". Agricultural Biotechnology is no longer viewed as just part of the agricultural sector. It is now recognized that agricultural biotechnology can play a significant role in economic development at the community, provincial, national and international levels.

ABIC 2011 will address these issues in the following ways:

- Arrange speaker sessions that allow leading international experts to exchange ideas and stimulate innovation;
- Provide informative and educational speaker sessions that highlight the benefits of an AgBio economy to the non-scientist;
- Hold forums that address key policy and risk management issues such as commercial trials;
- Provide an opportunity for AgBio companies and research organizations to meet with industry partners; and
- Bring major investors in the AgBio sector together with AgBio companies and research organisations seeking funding to develop their innovation.

We hope you enjoy it!

Warm regards

Prof. Jennifer ThomsonProgramme Committee Chairperson

Prof. Diran MakindeDeputy Chairperson

Supplementing the conference theme are 5 themes, namely:

Theme 1 - Bioeconomy

Bioeconomy refers to the set of economic activities relating to the invention, development, production and use of biological products and processes. Globally, biotechnology has applications in several areas, including human health and care, animal health and production, crop and plant production, forestry, industry, mining and the environment.

Theme 2 – Genomics for Improved Agriculture

The use of genomic tools could be broadly categorized into those that pertain to crop enhancement and those that relate to improvement of food quality or safety. Genetic modification (GM) is applying knowledge generated from genomic studies to improve crops. Small-scale and large scale agricultural improvement implies potentially greater productivity, reduced yield losses, improved nutrient content, and many more advantageous traits. Functional genomics of crops can also allow us to study natural tolerance to pests and diseases and abiotic stress.

Theme 3 – Bio- based Industrial Products

Bio-based industries are expected to be a cornerstone of the "green economy" of the future where reliance on fossil hydrocarbons for fuels and industrial raw materials, and the corresponding emission of green-house gases, is reduced. Alternative fuels such as ethanol

and biodiesel, which at this stage have entered the market largely as blends with the current conventional fuels of petrol and diesel, are increasing their market share of global transport fuels.

Theme 4 – Biopharming

Biopharming is the application of genetic engineering on living organisms to induce or increase the production of pharmacologically active substances such as proteins and chemicals. Biopharming is applicable to plants and animals, and in plants, expression of end products can be achieved through stable or transient expression.

Theme 5 – Environmental and Food Safety Evaluations - The New Frontier

The products of modern biotechnology techniques such as recombinant DNA (rDNA) undergo intensive research for feed, food and human safety as well as potential environmental impacts. These foods have been shown to be as safe, if not safer than their conventional counterparts.

Speakers for the ABIC Conference 2011 include

Prof. Marc van Montagu: Challenges and Responsibilities for Public Sector Scientists

Dr. Clive James: Global Perspective of Biotech/GM Crops and Future Prospects

Prof. Lawrence Kent: Biotech Approaches to Crop Improvement for the Poor within the Grant Portfolio of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Prof. James Dale: Bananas for the 21st Century: a genetically modified future.

Dr Florence Wambugu: The Role of Biotechnology in Contributing to Sustainable Agricultural and Economic Development, while Mitigating the Impact of Climatic Change in Africa

Prof. Rainer Fischer: Pharmaceuticals in Plants

Prof. Emile van Zyl: University of Stellenbosch: Bioenergy potential in sub-Saharan Africa

Prof. Diane Hildebrand: University of the Witwatersrand: Gate Project (Garbage-to-Energy Project)