



July 2005 Newsletter

President's Message

We are pleased to make this Newsletter available to all of you and, once again, I recognize the efforts by Jerry Doll to put it together. He is blaming himself for being a bit late, but I also share some responsibility. I wanted to include important information about how we are getting organized for our next congress in Vancouver in 2008. You may think it is too early to begin working on the scientific program and local activities but we now have three years to be ready.



At the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) meeting in Hawaii earlier this year, we met with the WSSA Board of Directors to begin organizing the congress and to make some decisions. As our host, WSSA will be in charge of all local arrangements and activities, including pre-registration, registration, accompanying-person program, and everything related to actually running the congress. IWSS takes primary responsibility for the scientific program. In this respect, I am extremely pleased to announce that Dr. Karl Hurlle from University of Hohenheim, Institute of Phytomedicine, Herbology, Stuttgart, Germany has agreed to co-chair and lead the Scientific Committee.

Dr. Hurlle is a well known weed scientist with ample experience in the discipline, extremely eager to cooperate and easy to get along with. We are all honored to have him on board. He will be accompanied by two very renowned scientists co-chairing the committee. Dr. Dale Shaner (USDA-Colorado State University, USA), who kindly accepted being appointed for this task by IWSS and Dr. Christopher Hall (University of Guelph, Canada) appointed by WSSA. We certainly have a luxury committee guaranteeing an attractive and thorough program.

We have made some progress in appointing Regional Representatives. Dr. R. K. Malik, Dr. Gualbert Gbehounou, and Dr. Dionisio Gazziero are our representatives for India and South and Southeast Asia, West and Central Africa, and South America, respectively. Those for other regions will be appointed during this semester. If you would like to volunteer

In this issue you will find

- **President's message**
- **News from Regional Societies**
- **News from Regional Representatives**
- **FAO projects on weeds**
- **Editor's comments**
- **Coming Events**
- **And more**

yourself or nominate a colleague, please let me know. Beginning with this Newsletter, we will have a section where our representatives inform the society of new happenings in their regions. I would like to acknowledge the first contributions by Drs. Malik and Gbehounou.

Our website is now hosted by University of California at Davis and maintained up to date by our Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Albert Fischer. Please make sure you update your link. The new address is <http://www.plantsciences.ucdavis.edu/iws/>. There you will find useful information including our new service of secure on-line credit card payment of membership dues.

This has been a good year in terms of weed science international activities with several of our sister societies holding their main conferences and congresses. WSSA had their annual meeting in Hawaii, the European Weed Research Society (EWRS) had their 13th Symposium in Bari, Italy, and two regional societies will coincide in November with their conferences: the Asian Pacific Weed Science Society (APWSS) Conference in Vietnam and the Latin American Weed Science Society (ALAM) Congress in Cuba. For the last one, IWSS is sponsoring participation of three outstanding graduate students from that region. For details on how to apply for support, please contact Juan Carlos Díaz, President of ALAM (jcdiaz@inica.edu.cu).

Please remember that all of us at the Board of Directors are here to serve you, so let us know how we can improve the Society.

Regards,

Bernal E. Valverde, Copenhagen, Denmark

News from Regional Societies

ALAM to Meet in Cuba

The XVII Congress of the Latin American Weed Science Association (ALAM) and First Ibero American Weed Science Congress will be held in Varadero Beach, Cuba, from November 8 to 11, 2005. Delegates from this region and from other countries are welcome to attend and present oral or poster contributions in Spanish, Portuguese or English, but simultaneous translation throughout the Congress will not be available. The deadline to submit titles of presentations has passed so contact the Organizing Committee (jcdiaz@inica.edu.cu) if you have questions about the Congress. Travel and accommodation arrangements can be made through Universtur (universitur@umcc.cu) and associated travel agencies. Tourist visas can be purchased from Cuban consulates to attend the Congress. Juan C. Díaz

News from our Regional Reporters

Farmer Field School (FFS) for Striga control in West Africa

A regional Technical Cooperation Project on durable integrated Striga control, with financial assistance from the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture (FAO) was launched this year at Bamako in Mali where the planning workshop was held on the 13th and the 14th of April. Countries involved are Bénin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Sénégal and Togo. Two representatives (the national coordinator and national expert) of each of the six countries attended the meeting.

The aim of this 18-month pilot project is to achieve durable integrated Striga control. Basically, Training of Trainers in Farmer Field School and Farmer Field Schools (FFS) will be organized in each country in 2005. In 2006, additional FFSs will be organized and the project will be concluded. A longer term project will be drafted and submitted to donors for up scaling and out scaling of the results of the pilot project.

To my knowledge, this is the first time that FFS activities directed to Striga control will be implemented. Nice results are very likely! Technical management of the project is assured by Dr. Ricardo Labrada from the

Plant Protection Service at FAO and former President of IWSS.

G. Gbèhounou
Regional Representative for West and Central Africa

Latin America: Mexico Advances Invasive Weed Program

During the 25th meeting of the Mexican Weed Science Society (ASOMECEMA) in Nov. 2004 in Chalapa, Jalisco, 40 participants reviewed a 1999 phytosanitary policy on “preventing the introduction of quarantined weeds into Mexico.” Martha Aguilera lead the group as they assessed the possible addition of seven species to the list of quarantined weeds: *Euphorbia helioscopia*, *Brassica tournefortii*, *Cirsium vulgare*, *Matricaria discoidea*, *Senecio inaequidens*, *Abutilon theophrasti*, *Cardaria draba*, *Cynara cardunculus*, *Lepidium latifolium* and *Carduus tenuiflora*.

Drs. Heike Vibram and Alfredo Dominguez of the Autonomous University of Chapingo presented essential biological and technical information on each weed. The group concluded that a national eradication strategy is needed for species found only in limited areas. Part of this effort requires a technical manual on the high risk species to aid in early field detection. The importance of prevention and early detection of these species should be addressed in a workshop at the next ASOMECEMA Congress. In addition, all society members should receive a technical bulletin on the biology, habitat, economic importance and regulatory status of these species to expand the awareness of the national distribution of these weeds. Contact José Alfredo Dominguez Valenzuela (josev@chapingo.mx) of ASOMECEMA for the status of this effort and for a copy of the technical information on the invasive weeds of concern in Mexico, including excellent color photographs.

Asia. The major result of the crisis of herbicide resistance has been the evolution of zero-tillage in wheat. Zero tillage research which nearly dead in 1996 was taken up using farmers’ participatory approach. Farmers have had historical perception that frequent tillage is essential for high yields and the adoption of zero tillage was always hard to achieve. The farmers participatory approach proved to be an accurate guide to its subsequent adoption by farmers in the states of Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Bihar. The technology has evolved into something with far

broader appeal including cost, convenience, profitability and security.

The first phase of reforms in Haryana was possible through the participation of the Rice-Wheat Consortium, New Delhi; CIMMYT in Mexico; Australia; and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The spread of this innovation will require even stronger participation of International Agricultural Research System, international groups on conservation agriculture, donors and groups within National Agricultural Research System. The analysis based on three years of farmers surveys indicates that conventional tillage has no rational economic or social advantage. A profit-driven advantage of zero tillage technology has allowed small and medium farmers to gain confidence in this technology. With the accelerated adoption of zero tillage still taking place through national and international efforts, we anticipate that it will become a second green revolution after the green revolution of 1966.

R. K. Malik, Regional Representative for India & South and Southeast Asia

CD on CT from 2004 Congress Available

A very successful workshop on conservation tillage occurred during our 2004 Congress in Durban. This workshop, organized by CropLife International in collaboration with the IWSS, highlighted the increasingly important role that conservation technologies play in sustainable agricultural systems, and the contribution that crop protection technologies play in this.

The workshop presentations are now available to everyone on a CD-ROM. Should you be interested in receiving a complementary copy of the CD-ROM, please feel free to send me an email with your full contact details.

Firdaous Allou <firdaous@croplife.org>
CropLife International
Avenue Louise 143, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium

FAO Projects on Weeds

Parasitic Weeds

FAO is executing two regional projects on integrated management of parasitic weeds. One is in collaboration with ICARDA, Aleppo, Syria, on *Orobanche* management in leguminous crops, which includes countries from North Africa and the Near East. The second project started recently deals with *Striga* control in six francophone countries of West Africa. The main objectives of these projects are to strengthen management capabilities of technical field staff and farmers; to establish a sustainable network for collecting and disseminating information on new control alternatives of parasitic weeds, and to enhance public awareness of the problem. The main activities of the project are training those who work with farmers and farmers. In each country, one Training of Trainers has already been implemented with an average participation of 25 farmers in the school for two cropping seasons. The curriculum includes training on eco-biology of the parasitic plants (including life cycle and importance of the soil seed bank) and control methods (rotation, post-emergence herbicide treatments, and preventing parasitic plants from flowering). Both projects also include training on biological control and are conducted by capitalizing on the expertise available in the countries and in the region.

Weedy Rice

Weedy/red rice infestations in rice are one of the major weed problems in rice in several Central and South America countries. For example, most of Colombia's 320,000 ha of rice are affected by weedy rice. Many of Costa Rica's rice fields are contaminated with either *Oryza latifolia* or red rice (*Oryza sativa*), and the Chiriqui province of Panama is also seriously affected by weedy rice. In Cuba, infestations of up to 240 plants of weedy rice plants/m² and 39 biotypes are found. In Nicaragua, weedy rice and *Oryza latifolia* can reduce yields 10 to 40%. In Venezuela, there are three *Oryza* species affecting rice production: *O. sativa*, *O. rufipogon* and *O. latifolia*.

To address this situation, 18 countries attended an FAO workshop on this topic in 1999 in Cuba. The conclusions emphasized that there is no simple method to control weedy/red rice. Only through an integrated control approach reduction of weedy/ red rice

infestation can this be effectively achieved; any control measure should attempt to reduce the seed bank of weedy/red rice.

The workshop resulted in a request by several Central and South American countries and the Caribbean for FAO technical assistance to implement a regional project. The project started in 2003 with the objective of implementing pilot training activities, including two Farmer Field Schools in each participating country. Through the participatory approach of farmer training, participants were taught to understand the yield losses caused by weedy rice, the need to use clean seed free of weedy rice seeds, the importance of reducing weedy rice seed bank in soil, identify biotypes of weedy rice, and to implement appropriate control measures. In most cases, a pre-planting application of glyphosate to the early emerged plants of weedy rice gave effective control. In Nicaragua, farmers obtained more than 25% yield increase using such a method.

At present FAO, in collaboration with specialists from various institutions working regularly on weedy/red rice ecology and control, is preparing a book on this issue.

Invasive Weed, *Prosopis juliflora*

Over-exploitation and poor management of natural resources have contributed to accelerate the rate of land degradation and erosion in many countries, making it increasingly difficult to sustain the demands of a growing population. This problem is most apparent in arid and semi-arid areas whose ecology is fragile and natural woody vegetation stock has been destroyed or gravely depleted over wide areas. The need to conserve these lands to ensure self-sufficiency in forest resources and to avert the shortages of wood-fuel and other wood products has been recognized and addressed by various governments through massive tree planting programmes.

Various tree species were introduced in several countries of Africa and the Near East to combat soil degradation and erosion, including *Prosopis juliflora*. This plant is considered as a suitable source of fodder and fuel wood. Its pods are nutritious, palatable and form an important component of livestock feed, especially during the dry season.

However, its rapid spread also presents a number of social, ecological and economic concerns. Its vigour and competitiveness makes it a formidable invader of other land use systems, particularly along rivers, lakes, swamps, farmlands and ponds, causing devastation of

these important habitats and ecosystems through intensive and aggressive colonization. *Prosopis* ecosystems are now characterized by dense impenetrable thorny thickets with little or no grass cover and other vegetation beneath, to the extent that livestock and farmers have virtually been displaced in many areas. Recent studies have shown that ingestion of *Prosopis juliflora* pods by livestock causes tooth decay and death through indigestion in absence of supplementary feeds in the dry season.

Most of the countries affected by *Prosopis* have major troubles in irrigation canals during the dry period. Physical removal (mechanical or manual) is carried out and once it finishes there is a need to restart the process. The efficiency of the irrigation networks in such dry-climatic countries is seriously reduced with the presence of *Prosopis*.

So the *panacea* became a terrible invasive weed 20 years after its introduction, and at this point, the question is: what to do?

Australia has an ongoing eradication programme, while in South Africa major efforts are made to control the plant combined with its utilization. *Prosopis* control requires heavy inputs for mechanical removal as it was practised in several agricultural schemes of Sudan.

Recently FAO started a project in Baringo area, Kenya, to implement a control programme (physical removal, chemical control as well as the introduction of pod feeders from South Africa) combined with its utilization for various purposes. The project also trains farmers on control methods and uses of the plant as the way to prevent its further spread to other areas.

This case shows clearly the importance of risk assessment before the introduction of any new species, and countries need assistance to develop appropriate quarantine protocols.

Water Weed Control in Asia

Water weed problems persist in various regions of the world. Introduced water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) and water fern (*Salvinia molesta*) are the most serious problems in several tropical countries in Asia, Africa, Central America and the Caribbean.

Heavy water hyacinth infestations exist in **China**. The plant, introduced in the 1960s, was not a weed problem until China started its economical reforms. Due to its

rapid growth, it has been largely used for feeding pigs, but with the development of alternative feeds, water hyacinth is no longer used and the plant proliferates and infests large water bodies. Under these conditions, water eutrophication has become more intensive in recent years, where the weed grows much better creating serious ecological concerns for agricultural production, fish production, navigation, and the environment. Water hyacinth is now among the ten most harmful weeds in China and is found in 19 provinces. Large infestations are localized in water bodies of the Yangtze River basin and south of this river. The removal of water hyacinth consumes large amounts of labor especially in Zhejiang, Guangdong, Yunnan, Fujian provinces.

To address this situation, Chinese authorities requested FAO assistance to implement new control strategies, mainly the development of biological control combined with mechanical harvesting of the weed. A pilot project was launched in Haining City, which has 25 large and small rivers (total area of 3500 hectares) with about 80% of the surface covered by water hyacinth. The local government devotes much effort to hyacinth control, but only 60% of the infested area can be cleaned. For biological control, *Neochetina* weevils are in China but have yet to be released in areas around Haining City. In addition, China hopes to increase the efficiency of some biogas stations using residues of water hyacinth. The FAO project covers all these areas and the experience gained in Haining City will also be used in other affected areas like neighboring Huangpo River in Shanghai. The project is executed by national experts backstopped regularly by international consultants.

Sri Lanka is another country also affected by water weeds. Floating plants as water hyacinth, salvinia and pistia (*Pistia stratiotes*) create problems in waterways, irrigation systems, lakes, rivers, lagoons and reservoirs by affecting water quality, water delivery, fisheries, and power generating schemes, native flora and fauna and rendering fertile fields unproductive. *Salvinia* was introduced into Sri Lanka in 1939 for experimental purposes, and initial infestations were first seen in the field in Colombo area in 1943. Fortunately, some years ago, the biological control agent *Cyrtobagous salviniae* was introduced and in several areas have seen good control of the weed. However, in some polluted areas the agent does not seem to be as efficient.

Water hyacinth is the most serious water weed problem. Four years after being introduced in 1904 for ornamental purposes, it was causing sufficient problems in the lowlands of the country to stimulate proclamation of the Water Hyacinth Ordinance. Infestations remained widespread, numerous and flourishing throughout the 1990s and present estimate is about 3000 sites infested throughout the country. Its spread to new areas in Sri Lanka has been largely due to human action and regular flooding.

Another important weed is *Limnocharis flava*, an emergent aquatic weed introduced by the Royal Botanical Gardens in Sri Lanka as early as 1898.

An ongoing FAO project in Sri Lanka tries to strengthen and coordinate the integrated management of aquatic weeds, as well as national capabilities for rearing, releasing and monitoring biological control agents, increase the capabilities of field staff to undertake biological control work, and raise public awareness of the problem for preventing further spread of aquatic weeds to unaffected areas. This includes the introduction of some effective biological control agents for the control of water hyacinth, establishing a unit to rear biocontrol agents, and training national personnel on biocontrol techniques and other control strategies.

New FAO Publications on Weeds

1. Weed Management for Developing Countries, addendum I, edited by R. Labrada. 2003. Plant Production and Protection Paper No. 120, p. 277. Rome. In *Eng., Sp.* The book comprises three chapters that contain valuable information on weed eco-biology, problem weeds and details of various control strategies.
2. Procedures for ecological risk assessment of Herbicide and Insect- Resistant Crops- Focus on Weed Aspects. 2003. FAO. P. 21 In *Eng., Sp., Fr.*
3. Report, FAO Expert Consultation on Weed Risk Assessment. Madrid, Spain, 11-13 June 2002. p. 116. Only *Eng.* Copies can be obtained directly from R. Labrada.
4. Procedures for Weed Risk Assessment. 2005. Rome, 16 p. *Eng., Sp.*
5. Management of Problematic Aquatic Weeds in Africa. 002. Rome, 28 p. *Eng., Fr.*

Recent Publication

Crop Fertility and Volunteerism. This new book (2005) edited by Dr. Jonathan Gressel, former IWSS President, is now available. Developed after a meeting of leading scientists at the Rockefeller Foundation Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy, in May 2004, sponsored by the OECD Cooperative Research Program, the book covers agronomic, genetic, and molecular biology aspects pertaining feral and volunteer crops. Most of the twenty-five chapters also deal with the socioeconomic importance of feral and volunteer crops, the challenges in implementing tactics to control them and the implications of gene flow from transgenic crops to weedy and wild relatives. The book synthesizes the state-of-the-art knowledge about domestication, de-domestication, weediness, and gene flow in several crops including rice (to which six chapters are devoted), beets, oil seed rape, sorghum, soybeans, maize, wheat, rye, radish, millets, ornamentals, and sunflowers. The book also covers transgenic mitigation, assessment of the environmental risk of transgenic volunteer weeds, and regulatory aspects. Additional details about the book and ordering information can be obtain from the publisher (<http://www.crcpress.com>). Until 5 Nov. 2005 you can obtain a 20% discount (please contact Dr. Gressel at jonathan.gressel@weizmann.ac.il or any book co-author to obtain a discount form).

Editor's Comments

First of all, my apologies for this edition appearing a month later than expected. Professional duties and personal travel delayed my attention to this issue.

President Valverde has revived our regional reporter network. I thought our members would like to see the charge given to these individuals. Here is the message they received:

“As President of IWSS, I would like to count on a group of collaborators that would help the Executive Committee and BOD achieve the goals of IWSS. Areas in which I would expect heavy involvement of RRs are:

- Disseminating information and promoting the Society activities in their own regions.

- Recruiting new members.

- Organizing and finding sponsorship for IWSS-supported training activities at a regional level.

- Contributing relevant information from their region for the IWSS Newsletter. I am going to suggest our Newsletter Editor, Dr. Jerry Doll, to have a section in each issue in which each RR brings news and reports from regions around the world

- Supporting the Scientific Committee and Main Topic Organizers in preparation for the next congress in Vancouver.

- In due time, promoting and helping select suitable candidates (mainly graduate students or young scientists in real need) for financial support to participate in our Congress (provided we obtain enough funds)

Reporters will represent these regions: Central America and Caribbean, South America, Eastern Europe, Middle East and North Africa, West and Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Central Asia.”

IWSS members should contact their regional reporters with suggestions for newsletter articles and any other issues that relate to their region and the IWSS.

I'm impressed that several weed science societies are celebrating milestone anniversaries within the year. This includes the 50th anniversary of the Weed Science Soc. of America, 60th of the North Central Weed Sci. Soc. and 40th of the Asian Pacific Society. Congratulations to all and to others that I failed to recognize.

As always, I invite your contributions to and suggestions on how to improve the Newsletter. I work for you and welcome your comments.

2008 IWSS Congress

The next International Weed Science Congress will be held in Vancouver, Canada, 23 to 26 June 2008. The Board would like to receive your suggestions and to know if you would like to volunteer time in organizing sessions or symposia. Please contact President Bernal Valverde (bev@kvl.dk or ideatrop@racsa.co.cr) or any other IWSS officer and be part of this major effort.

Coming Events

2005

- Aug. 21-26 4th World Congress on Allelopathy.** Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia. Contact Andrew Hennell, Allelopathy Secretary, C/o Rural Events, P.O. Box 6010, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650, Australia. Email: allelopathy@ruralevents.com.au; web site: <http://www.csu.edu.au/special/allelopathycongress/>.
- Sept. 21-24 4th International Symposium of Pesticides in Food and the Environment in Mediterranean Countries.** Organized by Bornova Plant Protection Research Institute, Izmir, Ege University, Izmir ;and the Mediterranean Group of Pesticide Research. Venue: Pine Bay Holiday Resort, Kusadasi, Aydin, Turkey. Further information at: <http://www.mgpr2005.com>
- Oct. 31-Nov. 2 BCPC International Congress - Crop Science & Technology.** SECC, Glasgow, UK . <http://www.bcpc.org/>; Email: becky.dyer@bcpc.org
- Nov. 8-11 17th Latin America Weed Association (ALAM), 4th National Weed Congress of Cuba and the 1st Iberoamerican Weed Science Congress.** Centro de Convenciones, Plaza America, Varadero, Matanzas, Cuba. Contact Dr. Juan Carlos Diaz, President of the Organizing Committee; Email: jcdiaz@inica.edu.cu Web: <http://grec.ifas.ufl.edu/Weed%20Science/Alam/Web%20page/ALAM01.htm>
- Nov. 7-11 20th APWSS Conference – Rex Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Dr. Duong Van Chin, Chair,** Organizing Com. 20th APWSS Conf., Dept. of Weed Science & Farming System, Cuulong Delta Rice Research Institute, Omon Cantho, VIETNAM. E-mail: duongvanchin@hcm.vnn.vn. Full details at: <http://www.clrri.org/en/index-en.htm>
- Nov. 16-18 Mexican Weed Sci. Society.** 26th annual meeting. Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Contact Enrique Rosales-Robles, rosales.enrique@inifap.gob.mx; www.agronomiayciencias.uat.edu.mx/asomecima
- Nov. 28 Canadian Weed Science Society** symposium on “Transgenic Herbicide Tolerant Crops: Agronomy, Environment and Beyond” to address issues of international trade, agronomy and the environmental impact of this technology. Sheraton Fallsview Hotel in Niagara Falls Canada. Full details at: Canadian Weed Science Society at: www.cwss-scm.ca
- Dec. 5-7 Second International Conference on Parthenium Management,** Bangalore, India . Contact Dr. T.K. Prabhakara Setty, Organizing Sec. (Intnat. Conf. on Parthenium) & Director Research, Univ. Agric. Sci., GKVK Campus, Bangalore 560 065, India; Phone: 080-23330206; 080-23330153 to 23330158 Extn. 215; E-mail- p_setty@rediffmail.com or mjpad1in@yahoo.co.in

2006

- Feb. 13-17 Weed Science Society of America.** 50th annual meeting. Marriott Marquis on Broadway, New York, New York. contact Joyce Lancaster, jlancaster@allenpress.com; <http://www.wssa.net>

2007

- Sept. 17-21 9th International Conference on the Ecology and Management of Alien Plant Invasions.** Hyatt Regency Perth, Western Australia. Further information at: <http://www.congresswest.com.au/emapi9/>

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**The IWSS Newsletter is available on the
Internet at:**

<http://www.plantsciences.ucdavis.edu/iws/>

The **IWSS Newsletter** is published in January and July to foster communication among and give information to our members and others around the globe interested in Weed Science.

Thanks to these contributors to the July 2005 issue: Bernal Valverde, G. Gbèhounou, Firdaous Allou, R. K. Malik, Albert Fischer, Ricardo Labrada, and Jerry Doll.

Deadline for items for the next Newsletter is 15 December 2005

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Name: _____

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Checks, bank drafts, or money orders in US\$ should be made payable to: International Weed Science Society.