African Genetic Biocontrol Consortium

GenBio News

AFRICAN GENETIC BIOCONTROL NEWS

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BIODIVERSITY DAY 22 MAY

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United Nations

#BiodiversityDay

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY:

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY - 22 MAY

The International Day for Biological Diversity was marked on 22 May to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.

The purpose of the day is to raise awareness about the environment and all species that live on this planet. It also encourages people to recognize and address similar concerns and issues. The main global drivers of biodiversity loss are climate change, invasive species, over-exploitation of natural resources, pollution and urbanization. This day is extremely significant in today's world, given the type of lifestyle we lead. It is biodiversity that not only provides a home for many of the world's species, but also serves as a source of food, water, and other resources that we rely on to thrive. This year's theme was "Building a shared future for all life". The rationale for selecting this particular theme was to continue building momentum and support for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the upcoming UN Biodiversity Conference #COP15.

Biological diversity is often understood in terms of the wide variety of plants, animals and microorganisms, but it also includes genetic differences within each species and the variety of ecosystems that host multiple kind of interactions among their members. Biological diversity has played a fundamental role in building civilizations over the years. However, loss of biodiversity threatens all, including our health. It has been proven that biodiversity loss could expand zoonoses but if we keep biodiversity intact, it offers excellent tools to fight against pandemics like those caused by coronaviruses. Since there is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a global asset of tremendous value to future generations, the number of species is being significantly reduced by certain human activities. Given the importance of public education and awareness about this issue, the UN decided to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity annually.

> *Genetic biocontrol tools such as genetic engineering have been applied in upholding biodiversity.*

Genetic biocontrol tools such as genetic engineering have been applied in upholding biodiversity. There are many possible applications of genetic biocontrol across public health, agriculture, and conservation. For example, genetic biocontrol strategy is also applicable in removal of invasive species such as rodents on islands, which are responsible for extinctions and biodiversity loss.

The African Genetic Biocontrol Consortium joined the world in commemorating this day since biodiversity underpins human well-being in the present and in the future, and its rapid decline threatens nature and people alike. Biodiversity remains the answer to several sustainable development challenges. From nature-based solutions to climate, health issues, food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity is the foundation upon which we can build back better.

AFRICAN GENE DRIVE:

PAMCA ESTABLISHES AFRICAN GENE DRIVE FOR VECTOR CONTROL NETWORK

The goal of the network is to promote awareness raising, sharing of good practice, promotion of African led research and community engagement

To join the membership database, use this link:

https://agdvc.pamca.org/en/membership/join

The Pan-African Mosquito Control Association (PAMCA), a member of the African Genetic Biocontrol Consortium has established the African Gene Drive for Vector Control (AGDVC) network. The African Gene Drive for Vector Control network is a community of individuals and organizations interested in the applications of gene drive technologies for public health. The goal of the network is to promote awareness raising, sharing of good practice, promotion of African led research and community engagement in order to ensure that both expert and non-expert stakeholders have access to information about the basic science, latest research, developments and implications of gene drive deployment as a potential tool for vector control in Africa. It is the belief of the network that by facilitating evidence based information sharing and dialogue on the potential uses and pitfalls of gene drive for public health, African stakeholders, as the main beneficiaries of this new technology, will be better equipped to make informed decisions about its value and suitability for African settings.

The African Gene Drive for Vector Control was initiated by the Pan-African Mosquito Control Association (PAMCA) to address the lack of inclusion of African researchers in the debate surrounding gene drive technologies. Globally, Africa carries the highest burden of malaria, and the ramifications of mosquito gene drives could prove game-changing in the fight against malaria and other vector-borne diseases. More perspectives from Africans based in malaria affected countries need to be included in the discourse on mosquito gene drives -with each other, and with external actors involved in research, policy making and programming. The creation of an African Gene Drive for Vector Control network serves to build a critical mass of collective intelligence and support African agency for ownership of gene drive research, policy development and practice in this emerging field.

The Network's members are African researchers, regulators, governmental and non-governmental organizations, civil society and organizations working on or interested in learning more about gene drive for vector control.

AFRICA ONE HEALTH NETWORK:

THE INAUGURAL AFRICA ONE HEALTH NETWORK (AFOHNET) WORKSHOP

Workshop dates: Monday, October 3, 2022 - Friday, October 7, 2022.

The Inaugural Africa One Health Network (AfOHNet) Workshop 2022 will provide AfOHNet members a Pan-African networking opportunity for multi-disciplinary engagement with a mission of strengthening disease detection, diagnoses, and reporting in African nations collaborating across the continent. The Workshop will include a mixture of keynote panel presentations, dedicated thematic sessions, and lively discussions and debates on the challenges that impact building an integrated, non-duplicative One Health scientific network by sharing best practices and lessons learned from established One Health initiatives. The 5-day conference will also include a hackathon, breakout workshops, and working group panels to enrich regional collaborations, networking, and encourage and promote a new generation of young One Health leadership across Africa.

Attendees will be selected via a competitive abstract submission process, with priority given to AfOHNet members. Participation will entail either oral or poster presentations on topics related to the implementation of One Health concepts across Africa. Travel and registration expenses will be covered for those selected to participate.

The primary Workshop Topics to be addressed include:

- Science Confidence– Making the Connection between One Health Science and Global Health Security
- COVID-19 Resiliency and Recovery Success Stories
- Innovative One Health Approaches to Biosurveillance
- Best Practices of One Health Risk Communication
- Activation of a One Health Network: Moving from Theory to Practice
- New Technologies for Low-Resource Settings

The abstract portal is now open for submissions via this link:

https://afohnet.org/events/the-inaugural-africa-one-health-network-afohnet-workshop

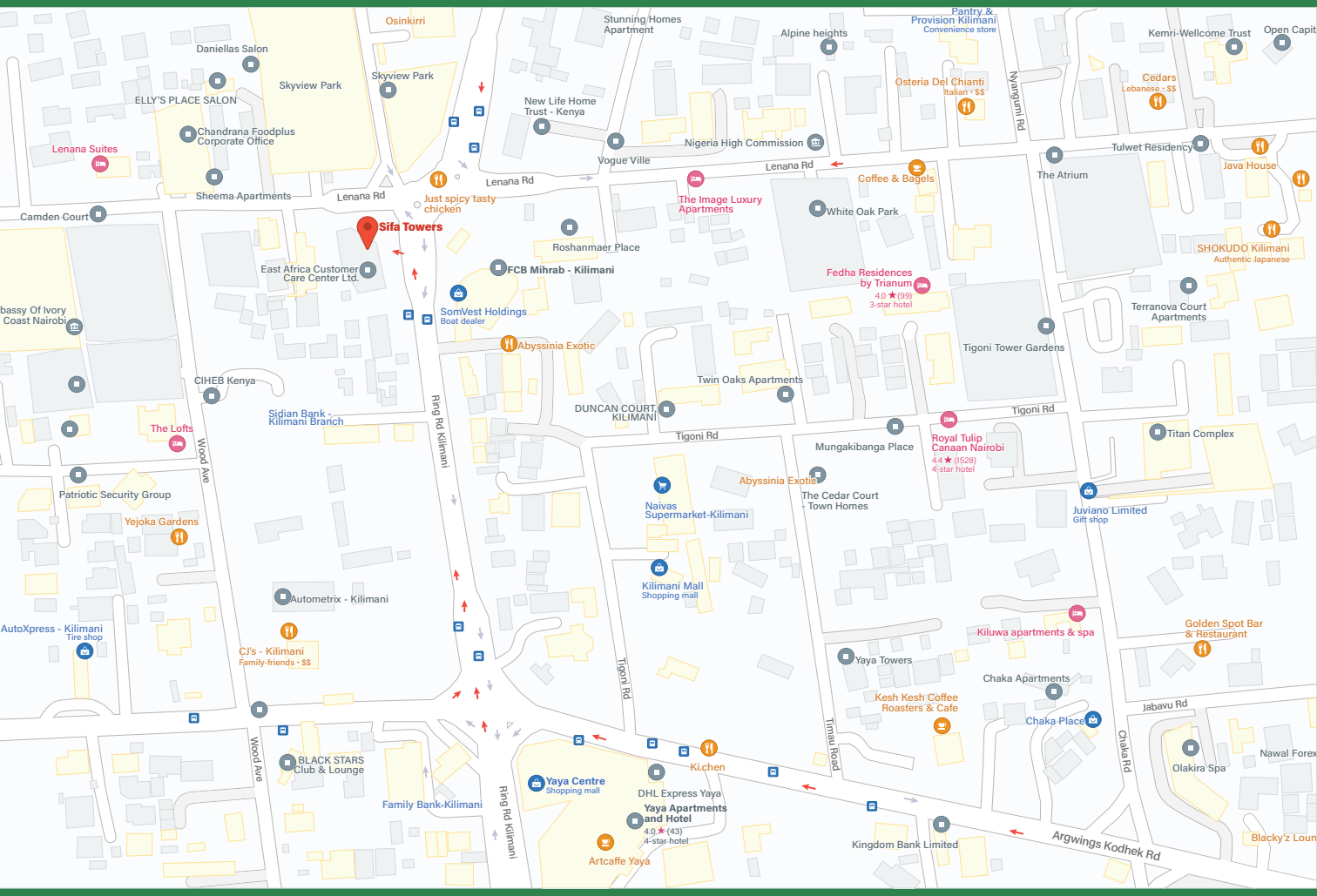
Deadline for submissions is July 2, 2022!

The Inaugural Africa One Health Network (AfOHNet) Workshop

Managing Zoonotic Infectious Diseases in Africa: The Key Role of the One Health Approach

African Genetic Biocontrol Consortium

Where to find us



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