



IUBS BioNews

Editorial

(Issue#9, October 2026)

A Giant Tree Has Fallen



On July 28, 1978, **Kofi Akamani** was born into a Ghanaian family in the town of Akropong in Southeast Ghana. He was the eldest of six children, and at a very early age showed his intellectual prowess and a love for teaching. After completing a teacher's diploma, he taught in Bongo, a small town in the Upper East region of Ghana, near the border with Burkina Faso.

He was so good at teaching that he was given the best teacher award in the Bongo-Gowrie District. Kofi must have known that he was destined for a greater calling. He graduated from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology with a degree in Planning and then went on to Oslo where he obtained an MPhil in Culture, Environment and Sustainability and a PhD from the University of Idaho in Natural Resource Science.

Kofi's academic trajectory was in the ascendancy. In 2011, he joined Southern Illinois University (SIU) and rose to be Professor of Forest Recreation and Conservation Social Sciences. He also served as Director of Graduate Studies in the School of Forestry and Horticulture, and Director of the Agricultural Sciences Ph.D. program at SIU.

Kofi's international academic reach was evident when he was invited to be a Lead author in the IPBES Nexus Assessment and the UNEP Global Environment Outlook 7 Assessment. The IPBES Nexus Report is on the Interlinkages among Biodiversity, Water, Food and Health, and Kofi contributed to Chapter 5: "Options for delivering sustainable approaches to biodiversity conservation, restoration and sustainable use". By engaging with such major global assessments, Kofi developed a truly international academic family.

It is no wonder then, that Kofi was elected Secretary General of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) on June 13, 2026, at the General Assembly of IUBS held in Bangalore, India. In his nomination statement, Kofi says that he considered that “a key priority issue is the need to enhance the visibility of early career scientists and researchers from the Global South, as well as disadvantaged groups in the Global North in the activities of IUBS”. This goal that Kofi set for himself indicates that he was not only sensitized to the need for nurturing young scientists from the Global South from where he originated, but he also recognized that even in the Global North there were disadvantaged communities that needed to be focused upon.

This was Kofi’s inclusiveness, and with his gentle manner, he would have made inroads into this goal with quiet determination.

However, on September 19, 2026, Kofi passed away. A Giant Tree has fallen, but has left two saplings behind. We wish for them to grow up strong and tall in the light of his memory.

Seven native and endangered trees have been planted in Chile by the Sociedad de Biología de Chile to honour Kofi and to symbolize seven generations of his being. I wonder what Kofi’s favourite tree was. Could it have been the Big Tree of Oda (*Tieghemella heckelii*), supposedly the tallest tree in Ghana, reaching into the sky at close to 70 m?

IUBS has dedicated the Science Forum that will be organized at Biodiversity COP17 in Yerevan, Armenia, in October 2026, to the memory of Kofi Akamani. It is befitting that the central theme of this two-day forum is the nexus between sectors and transformative actions required for biodiversity to persist and for generations of trees and organisms to pass on into the future.

IUBS has also set up a [link](#), for anyone who would like to add memories of Kofi including photographs.





Updates

The 2026 IUBS General Assembly was held in Bangalore after 50 years

In September 1976, 50 years ago, the IUBS General Assembly was held in Bangalore. At that time Nils Oker-Blom was President, Knut Fægri was Past President, and Edward Ayensu was Secretary General. Oker-Blom was a distinguished virologist in Helsinki, famous for work on avian retroviruses with a strain named after him (OK10). He was also known for tick-borne encephalitis virus, and early on surmised that the Kumlinge disease found on Kumlinge in the Åland archipelago of Finland was a tick-borne disease. Knut Fægri was a Norwegian botanist at the University of Oslo, whose book on pollination ecology written with the Dutch botanist Leendert van der Pijl, was one of the first textbooks I ever bought as a graduate student, and of which I read every word. Fægri was many things, including a paleobotanist, and a palynologist, with fascinating studies on lichens and glaciers, and was justifiably named a Millenium Botanist at the Botanical Congress in St Louis in 1999. In the words of Jørgensen (2002): "He was able

to cut through the most complex Gordian knot in one blow, and did not hesitate to do so—he rather enjoyed it. For this he was both admired and feared, particularly in his capacity as General Secretary (sic) and later President of IUBS.” Edward Ayensu was a Ghanaian botanist, founding member of the African Academy of Sciences, and a science statesman, having held many important positions including serving as the founding Director of the Office of Biological Conservation of the Smithsonian Institution. An expert on African yams, he also wrote a book on the Medicinal Plants of Africa. He co-edited with Betty Meggers and W Donald Duckworth another book that was on my graduate student reading list and I later acquired: *Tropical forest ecosystems in Africa and South America: a comparative review*. This book was a goldmine for a young graduate student, trying to make sense of Indian ecosystems that she had not yet begun to fully explore.

So, 1976 was a special year, and 50 years later, it makes me immensely proud and yet terrified because there has been a causeway laid down by giants, whose footprints are as important as those found at Laetoli, and even more difficult to fill.

In 2026, IUBS has a Ghanaian Secretary General, Kofi Akamani, and I think of how proud Edward Ayensu would have been of his able successor five decades later. Kofi is an important contributor to the IPBES Nexus Report and is a Professor in the Department of Forestry, Southern Illinois University, USA.

A new Executive Council was elected at this General Assembly on 13 June 2026, and the Council Members will be introducing themselves to the IUBS community through this newsletter.

The General Assembly was held at the Indian Institute of Science, India’s foremost science institution, in Bangalore (9–13 June 2026). Scientific sessions spanned over three days. A highlight was the Keynote Address by Pavan Sukhdev titled *Nature Impacts and Risks of the Private Sector*. Pavan is currently CEO of GIST Impact (<https://www.gistimpact.com/>), a company based in Switzerland that advises governments and the private sector on the impacts of their policies and environmental footprints on their own future business. Pavan is a green economist, and had also held the position of President of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Other plenary talks were by Soumya Swaminathan, Director of the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, and former Chief Scientist at WHO during the COVID pandemic. Soumya talked about the importance of OneHealth approaches for a sustainable future. Vandana Prasad, former Director of the Birbal Sahni Institute for Paleosciences, Lucknow, India, spoke on how paleobiology can inform contemporary biology about ecosystem trajectories through time, especially in the Anthropocene. Teatulohi Matainaho, a pharmacologist and specialist on marine natural products, is currently the President of the newly formed Pacific Academy of Sciences, based in Papua, New Guinea. In his plenary lecture, Lohi spoke passionately about the ecological wellbeing of Pacific Island Nations.

Besides the keynote and plenary talks, there was several parallel scientific symposia that included important concerns such as **OneHealth** and **Mangrove and Marine Conservation** (the coral reef aspect of the latter Symposium, especially the need for collaborative monitoring between nations, was written up in *Nature India* (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d44151-026-00123-8>)). The OneHealth Symposium focused on zoonoses and vector-borne diseases and presented solutions from Indian cities such as Bangalore where mosquito and dengue monitoring are being conducted systematically. Also included were Symposia on **Neglected Tropical Diseases in India and Africa** that especially focused on snake bite since morbidity and mortality from snake bite is considered high priority for WHO particularly in Africa and India. A Symposium on **Chemical Ecology in the Anthropocene** showcased the diversity of systems and approaches that can be employed to study chemical ecology, and also highlighted Integrated Pest Management (IPM) using natural semiochemicals to reduce pesticide loads on ecosystems. A valuable Symposium on **Pastoralism** highlighted the work on global pastoralism systems that IUBS has funded over several years and also provided examples of pastoralism and grassland–savannah systems in India. Another Symposium focused on **Monitoring Past and Present Biodiversity** and showcased new methods such as e-DNA and drone technology for monitoring. Another whole-day Symposium was devoted to **Precision Agriculture for Crop Production and Crop Protection**. This Symposium brought together important agriculturists from Taiwan, Sri Lanka, the USA and India, and also put together the expertise from biologists and engineers to present technologies such as AI-based solutions for forthcoming aridity, disease and other exigencies. A White Paper on Precision

Agriculture is proposed as an outcome of this Symposium and the symposium organisers are working on this.

The GA also included a special two-day Teacher Training Workshop to expose 100 school and college teachers to innovative methods of informing students about the impacts of climate change. This Workshop was led by the IUBS team that has over several decades developed online teaching material on climate change impacts. This project is a core activity of IUBS and is now being anchored at FLAME University in Pune, India (<https://tropicsu.org/about-us/>; <https://csecc.flame.edu.in/>).

The GA also saw a spirited session on the Science Forum, in preparation for the two-day IUBS-led **Science Forum** at COP17 in Armenia in October 2026. IUBS representatives outlined the history of the Science Forum and its goals, which are essentially to interface with policy makers and to show how domain knowledge is vital and must be employed in policy.

Also, prior to the GA, IUBS partnered with INQUA, IOP and ISZS to conduct a 5-day Early Career Researcher (ECR) workshop on: ***How paleontological proxies can inform us about climate change impacts on biodiversity***. Participants from 12 countries were selected. This is the first time such an ECR workshop has been conducted by IUBS and we intend to make this a regular feature. More details on this Workshop are available in this Newsletter.

The GA in Bangalore was packed with scientific activity with talks, panel discussions, and poster sessions. The goal of IUBS is to engage more with the global South, and at the GA this was evidenced by participation from several countries from this region.

The next General Assembly will be held in Chile in 2029. This cannot get more South than this, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Jørgensen, P.M. 2002. Knut Fægri (1909–2001), the inextinguishable. *Taxon* 51:391–392

Renee M. Borges, President, IUBS

Science Policy Forum for Biodiversity

The **Seventh Science–Policy Forum for Biodiversity (SPFB)** will take place on 24 & 25 October alongside CBD COP17, marking the SPFB **20th anniversary**. IUBS plays a key role in the Science Forum, which was established in 2006 through an **agreement between IUBS and the CBD Secretariat** and is organized in collaboration with partner organizations and host countries.



Science for Biodiversity

Building on the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the SPFB will focus **on turning knowledge into action** and strengthening the links between science, policy and society. It will explore practical approaches to biodiversity implementation, including nexus approaches across biodiversity, climate, land, food, water and health, as well as mechanisms for effective science–policy interaction and transformative change.

The programme brings together scientists, policymakers, practitioners, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, youth and other stakeholders through plenary and thematic sessions, roundtables and interactive discussions.

The programme includes the following sessions:

- **Keynotes:**

COP17 theme and KMGBF collective-progress review; host-country priorities; Forum objectives and expected outputs.

The nexus & Transformational changes assessments as a framework to measure progress towards KMGBF 2030

- **Nexus in practice: Mainstreaming and landscape governance** Targets 1, 10,14
- **Building pipelines to monitor ecosystem service provision** Target 21
- **Mainstreaming and ocean governance**
- **Monitoring and indicators.** Target 21
- **How do we move from ambitious global biodiversity targets to real-world, ground-level action?**
- **Ecosystem restoration in action: key elements for success and challenges for implementation.** Target 2, 22
- **Biodiversity and Health — Operationalizing One Health from Monitoring to Integrated Implementation**
- **Business, finance, and nature-positive economies:** *Operationalizing the 2026 IPBES Business and Biodiversity Assessment and Fulfilling GBF.* Target 15
- **Workshop on financing landscape-governance**
- **Optimising the role of the Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centres - Capacity-building and technical cooperation**
- **Delivering 30x30 through Transformative Biodiversity Governance.** Targets 1, 3 **Nature-Positive Recovery: Building Resilience from disasters and conflict.** Targets: 2, 12, 14, 22
- **Challenges in translating data to policy**
- **Understanding the dimensions of wildlife trade.** Targets: 5, 9, 10
- **Knowledge management and exchange**
- **Using data to guide action**
- **DSI and benefit sharing: experiences and lessons learned from research partnerships**

more information on the sessions [here](#)



COP17
YEREVAN ARMENIA

**TAKING ACTION
FOR NATURE**

Call for contribution to the IUBS declaration on AI



As we all know, AI has entered many aspects of our lives. How should biologists react to AI and how might it affect biology and biodiversity? These are important questions for the biology community to address.

A group of mathematicians recently came up with the [Leiden Declaration on the implication of AI](#) for their discipline. There are now calls for other disciplines to follow suit and outline the benefits and costs of AI for various aspects of their disciplines (see [here](#)).

In the areas of protein folding, AI has made great strides with AlphaFold3 being able to predict the protein folds of millions of proteins; still AlphaFold3 is not able to predict the process of how these folds are achieved. AI has been able to contribute to drug discovery by examining millions of protein–ligand interactions. There are many other ways in which AI could help biology.

However, the environmental costs of AI are rarely considered; an Act and a Bill placed before the US Senate and House in March 2026 calls for a moratorium on data centres for AI until the costs of AI have been clearly elucidated.

It is time for IUBS to put out a position paper on Biology and AI that would take into account the pros and the cons of AI for biology, biodiversity and humankind.

Taking lead from the Leiden Declaration for Mathematics, this could become the **IUBS Declaration on AI and Biology**.

I do hope that you will ~~consider this idea and let me know whether~~ you will be willing to contribute to this process.

In your response, please address the following questions:

1. In what areas of biology do you feel AI can make significant contributions? Please give examples and references, if possible.
2. In your opinion and experience, and given your geographical location, what is the likely environmental cost of AI data centres? Please give specific examples, if possible.

Please write to me at renee@iisc.ac.in with a cc to [Nathalie Fomproix](#) before **15 November 2026**.

Early Career Researchers Workshop

IUBS–INQUA Workshop Brings Early Career Researchers Together to Explore Past and Future Biodiversity

IUBS) and the International Association of Quaternary Researchers (INQUA), with the participation of the International Organisation of Paleobotany (IOP) and the International Society of Zoological Sciences (ISZS), jointly brought together Early Career Researchers (ECRs) for the workshop “How paleontological proxies can inform us about climate change impacts on biodiversity,” held from 4–8 June 2026 at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, India.

The workshop brought together ECRs and experts from 12 countries and created a unique interdisciplinary space connecting ecology, evolutionary biology, paleontology and paleoecology. Scientific presentations explored how fossils, geochemical and isotopic data, molecular approaches, ancient DNA and other paleontological proxies can reconstruct biodiversity changes, species dispersal, adaptation and extinction through time, while also providing insights relevant to present-day conservation and climate change.



The working group planning a collaboration on the palaeoclimatic history of the Bay of Bengal discuss their project with Dr. Carlos Jaramillo, of Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute at Panama.

photo: Renee Borges

A central focus of the workshop was building new international and interdisciplinary collaborations. ECRs presented research spanning fossil mammals, ancient parasites, grassland dynamics, tropical biodiversity and disease ecology, using approaches ranging from traditional paleontology and ecology to molecular ecology and biomarkers.

The collaborative sessions resulted in five emerging international working groups focusing on parasites and past ecosystems, Pleistocene mammal distributions, grasslands as alternative stable states, the origins of tropical rainforest biodiversity, and the paleoclimate history of the Bay of Bengal. Participants explored opportunities for joint research, training activities, review papers and future grant proposals, with IUBS and INQUA seed funding identified as potential avenues for supporting these emerging collaborations.

The working group planning a collaboration on paleo-parasitology included ECRs from multiple continents: Asia, South America, Africa and Europe.
photo: Renee Borges



Participants particularly valued the workshop's international, interdisciplinary and collaborative character, which provided opportunities to exchange ideas across disciplines, develop new research questions and strengthen international networks. Overall, the workshop demonstrated the potential of integrating paleontological and paleoecological evidence with modern ecological and conservation research to better understand biodiversity dynamics and the impacts of environmental change through time.

The full workshop report, including details of the scientific sessions, collaborative initiatives and participant reflections, is available [here](#).

IUBS Programmes

At the General Assembly, **IUBS Members** adopted a series of scientific programmes for the upcoming triennium. These programmes reflect IUBS's commitment to **bottom-up, international and interdisciplinary scientific initiatives**, proposed and shaped by its Members.

IUBS supports these programmes annually throughout the triennium through seed funding. New initiatives are at an early stage of programme development and are expected to build further partnerships and external resources.

Some IUBS programmes, including BHBD and TROP ICSU, are recognized as strategic scientific activities of IUBS and operate as independent initiatives.

In this newsletters, we will briefly present each of the programmes adopted at the General Assembly.

Triennial Programmes

The DSI Scientific Network

DNA and RNA sequence data stored in public databases are essential for biological research, but their use is being shaped by multiple evolving international benefit-sharing regimes. Ongoing negotiations in UN fora, including the CBD, BBNJ, ITPGRFA and WHO, seek to improve equitable sharing of benefits stemming from the use of sequence data.



This will likely lead to new requirements and procedures for data users and data managers. The lack of harmonization across legal systems, combined with limited awareness among scientists, could impact research collaborations and could create non-compliance risks. This project will analyse differing sequence data benefit-sharing frameworks and develop case studies illustrating the practical challenges facing researchers. Outputs will include webinars, policy briefs, and a side event at the Convention on Biological Diversity to support informed, fair scientific practice.

Toward an Integrated Climate–Biodiversity–Health (CBH) Framework



Climate change is rapidly reshaping the spatial distribution of biodiversity, with growing but fragmented evidence of consequences for human health. This programme develops an integrated Climate–Biodiversity–Health (CBH) framework that places climate-driven biodiversity redistribution at the center of health risk analysis. By aligning concepts across ecology, biogeography, and health-related sciences, the programme aims to clarify how ecological redistribution processes translate into differential health outcomes across regions and populations.

Through international workshops, working groups, and synthesis outputs, the programme will provide a shared conceptual foundation to support future interdisciplinary research and collaboration at the interface of biodiversity change and human health.

Grand challenge: Education on Chemical Ecology in the Anthropocene

The importance of understanding the impact of the Anthropocene on Chemical Ecology cannot be overstated. Atmospheric pollution is affecting the chemical communication between plants and pollinators with impacts on agricultural and horticultural production. Ozone is changing chemical signals that plants use to communicate with other plants. This project attempts to get students involved in understanding not only chemical ecology but anthropogenic effects on inter- and intra-kingdom chemical communication by practical exercises and by posing questions that need to be answered



Pastoralism as a global herbivory socio-ecosystem



Mammalian herbivores are known to have dominated terrestrial ecosystems for the last 15 million years, while pastoralism is known to be the most widespread land use. Recent developments in better mapping the extent and action of pastoralist groups, as well as identifying equivalent ecosystem function actions, have revealed the importance of covering key knowledge gaps. This programme aims to better characterize the huge gap around pastoralism in forests and wetlands, as well as to better identify the niche replacement happened from the Pleistocene extinction of megafauna to the use of livestock, and the sustainability challenges posed by its abandonment.

Zoonotic Disease Coordination Network

Under the influence of global change, seasonal and transboundary animal migrations are further elevating the risks of zoonotic disease. It is therefore essential to strengthen international cooperation and establish a global research network, monitoring system, and joint prevention and control mechanism for zoonotic diseases. One Health emphasizes the interconnectedness of human health, animal health, and environmental health.



It is widely recognized as an essential approach to addressing the major global challenge of frequent infectious zoonotic disease outbreaks and pandemics. This programme plan to setup an international network for studying zoonotic diseases under the framework of One Health, so as to reveal the transmission pattern and dynamics among wildlife, domestic animals, and human beings of key zoonotic diseases, and to provide advices or knowledge to governments and the public for disease prevention and control.

New Initiatives

Bark Macrostructure Diversity Across Six Biomes: Integrating Anatomical Foundations with Ecological and Evolutionary Patterns

Bark, a conspicuous interface between plants and their environment, remains understudied in the diversity of its external structure. The ecological and evolutionary roles of bark texture, peeling, and related macromorphological traits lack broad comparative assessment, and links between external morphology and microstructure remain unclear.



This project will analyse global patterns in the diversity of bark macromorphological traits across six biomes on different continents, integrating anatomical, ecological, and evolutionary data. It aims to resolve the anatomical basis of bark variation and its relationships with growth form and environment. By advancing a global collaborative framework, the project will strengthen bark research and improve predictions of vegetation responses to environmental change.

Forest Landscape, Biodiversity and Social Resilience

This project is currently being revised following the recommendation of the General Assembly and will be resubmitted as a new initiative.

BHBD

Open Biodiversity and Health Big Data



In response to the appeal "Open Data in a Big Data World", the BHBD Initiative was first approved by IUBS in 2017. The aim of the programme is to develop the BHBD Alliance as a world-wide open platform for the integration, translation and sharing of biodiversity and health big data, as well as to build the principles and mechanisms for global data sharing in accordance with laws and ethics of member countries. We advocate your positive support and participation in this programme to develop necessary solutions to open data sharing to the greatest extent.

TROP ICSU

Transdisciplinary Research-Oriented Pedagogy for Improving Climate Studies and Understanding

TROP ICSU was initiated in 2017 by IUBS in collaboration with other partners and is now co-led by IUBS and FLAME University.

The project promotes climate change awareness and understanding through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education. It has developed an open-access platform with more than 900 curated, free-to-use educational resources, helping teachers integrate climate change into high-school and undergraduate teaching across 10 disciplines.

The resources include lesson plans, digital tools and locally relevant examples, designed to encourage interdisciplinary thinking, collaboration, systems thinking and solution-oriented learning. Developed by experts and subject to a multi-stage review, they are mapped to different curricula, climate topics, grade levels, languages and local contexts, making them relevant to teachers and learners worldwide.



Governance

New Executive Committee elected in Bangalore



From left to right: Kofi Akamani, Karl-Josef Dietz, Moemen Hanafy, Monica Mwale, Renee Borges, Alice Hughes, Michael Seeger and Guy Smagghe.

Following the **General Assembly in Bangalore**, we are pleased to introduce the newly elected Executive Committee: **Kofi Akamani, Renee Borges, Karl-Josef Dietz, Moemen Hanafy, Alice Hughes, Le Kang, Atsushi Kawakita, Monica Mwale, Allison Perrigo, Michael Seeger and Guy Smagghe.**

As highlighted earlier in this newsletter, we are deeply saddened by the loss of our Secretary General, **Kofi Akamani**. In accordance with the IUBS Statutes, a new Secretary General will soon be appointed from among the members of the Executive Committee.

In the coming editions of our newsletter, we will take the opportunity to present each EC member individually, highlighting their background, experience, and role within the Committee. We start in this issue with Renee Borges and Le Kang and Kofi Akamani.

EC Members, a closer look

Renee Borges, President



Renee Borges is a graduate and post-graduate from the University of Bombay where she studied zoology, microbiology, and animal physiology. She is a PhD from the University of Miami, Coral Gables, and studied the foraging ecology of the Indian giant squirrel in relation to phytochemistry of Western Ghat forests in India for her doctoral degree. She was adjunct faculty at the Wildlife Institute of India at Dehradun, and also Deputy Director of Research at the Bombay Natural History Society.

Renee Borges is currently a Professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. Her lab studies the mechanisms and the consequences of mutualism and parasitism in iconic symbiotic model systems such as fig and fig interactions, ant and ant-plant interactions and in fungus-farming termites. She also collaborates with physicists to understand soil-based architecture by animals such as termites, potter wasps and mud dauber wasps. She has investigated chemical and visual mimicry in spiders and the visual ecology of nocturnal bees.

Renee Borges is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Biosciences* and is on the Editorial Board of several journals including the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. She is a JC Bose National Fellow. She was the Secretary of the Indian Academy of Sciences, based in Bangalore.

Le Kang, Vice-President for International Relations

Le Kang is a CAS distinguished professor in Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). For more than three decades, his research has focused on ecological genomics, especially in the regulatory mechanisms underlying the phenotypic plasticity and adaptation of insects. He has also made significant contributions to the development of research and technologies for fungal biopesticides in China.

Professor Kang is a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and has been elected as a foreign member of six national and international academies and organizations, including the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), and EMBO. He currently serves as Vice President of the International Union of Biological Sciences and Vice Chairman of the China Committee for the International Science Council.

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to scientific research and technological innovation, Professor Kang has received numerous national and international honors, including the Second Prize of the National Natural Science Award, the Ho Leung Ho Lee Prize, the Tan Jiazhen Life Science Achievement Award, and the Silverstein-Simeone Award.





Moemen Hanafy, Vice-President for Finances

Prof. Moemen S. Hanafy is Professor of Plant Biotechnology at the National Research Centre (NRC), Egypt. He earned his Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics from Hannover University, Germany, in 2002 as a DAAD Fellow. He subsequently conducted postdoctoral research at the National Agricultural Research Center for the Hokkaido Region, Sapporo, Japan, as a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Fellow (2003–2005).

Prof. Moemen S. Hanafy is Professor of Plant Biotechnology at the National Research Centre (NRC), Egypt. He earned his Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics from Hannover University, Germany,

in 2002 as a DAAD Fellow. He subsequently conducted postdoctoral research at the National Agricultural Research Center for the Hokkaido Region, Sapporo, Japan, as a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Fellow (2003–2005). He later joined Leibniz University Hannover, Germany, as an Alexander von Humboldt (AvH) Experienced Research Fellow (2008–2010). He also served as Associate Professor of Plant Biotechnology at the Faculty of Science and Humanities, Salman bin Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from January 2012 to June 2013.

With more than 35 years of experience in plant biotechnology, Prof. Hanafy has made significant contributions to plant genetic engineering and crop improvement for abiotic stress tolerance. Over the past two decades, he has published approximately 40 peer-reviewed research articles, authored five book chapters, and delivered around 35 invited lectures at national and international scientific conferences. He serves on the editorial boards of several international scientific journals and is an active member of numerous professional scientific societies.

Prof. Hanafy has received several prestigious awards, including the Prize of the President of the National Research Centre for Best Applied Research (2008) and the National Research Centre Prize for Scientific Encouragement in Agricultural Sciences (2013). In recognition of his strong scientific collaborations with Europe, he was appointed Ambassador Scientist of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Egypt (2016–2021).

He served as Chairman of the Egyptian National Committee of Biological Sciences from 2018 to 2022 and was re-elected for the 2025-2028 term. He was also elected to the Executive Committee of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) for the 2019–2023 term, subsequently elected Treasurer of IUBS (2023–2026), and was recently elected Vice President for Finance of the Union.

online version available here

The following people have contributed to the newsletter: Renee Borges, Nathalie Fomproix, Moemen Hanafy and Le Kang

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