



Aims

This month, and we will be looking 'through an East African lens' and picking up on some of the global trends and research themes we have identified since October. This is the first time that we have focused a discussion on a specific region and the three witnesses will help us to explore questions related to food security and the future of agriculture, livelihoods and biodiversity conservation in the region.

Partners this month

We're jointly hosting this meeting with the Global Food Security Initiative and the Cambridge-Africa Programme so thank you for their help.

Welcome: **James Wood** and **Pauline Essah** from the Cambridge-Africa Programme

Will Simonson from the Global Food Security Initiative

Apologies

David Dunne – the Director of the Cambridge Africa Programme – is not feeling well

Agenda

All the witnesses will give a 10 minute introduction and their perspective on the two core questions followed a general discussion:

- 5:00pm Welcome by the Chair and an introduction to the topic
Each witness gives a short introduction and thoughts about the questions (10 mins)
Response from **Phil Franks**
International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
- 6:00pm Questions and beginning the open discussion
Coffee break
Possible responses: **Gavin Siriwardena - British Trust for Ornithology**
Stephen Asuma - Conservation Leadership Masters course
- 7:15pm Continue the discussion in three groups and then come together for final thoughts
Reception and dinner, which will include a working session

Witnesses

This month, the three witnesses are:

Liz Watson

Senior Lecturer and Pybus Fellow of Newnham College,
Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

Tinashe Chiurugwi

Research Associate in the Business Strategy team at the National
Institute for Agricultural Botany (NIAB)

Alison Mollon

Senior Programme Manager, West & Central Africa, Acting Regional
Manager, Africa at Fauna and Flora International (FFI)

Questions

The witnesses have all been asked two core questions:

- 1) What do you perceive as being the main gaps in our knowledge?
- 2) What would you include in the 'next generation' of research questions?



Witness profiles

Tinashe Chiurugwi

Research Associate

National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB), Cambridge

Tinashe Chiurugwi's specialities are crop improvement and technology transfer, having worked on a range of horticultural and arable crops in Zimbabwe and the UK at Pioneer Hi-Bred, Seed Co Ltd, University of Reading, Rothamsted Research and CGIAR (the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) Consortium.

As a research associate within the NIAB International Initiative, Chiurugwi develops proposals and fundraising strategies and delivers projects to apply NIAB skills and expertise to agricultural issues in developing countries, including year-long scoping study to determine the feasibility of applying the NIAB Innovation Farm concept (a knowledge exchange/technology transfer hub) in Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya. He is now spearheading fundraising efforts to launch NIAB Innovation Farm in Ghana and Uganda.

In Tanzania, he has also been collaborating with Naliendele Agricultural Research Institute, to identify the facilities, practices and mechanisms that would improve the translation of agricultural research into farming practice in Nachingwea District, Southern Tanzania. In addition, he has been assisting in the management and leadership of a research project that has built a UK-Kenya partnership to support the uptake of new crop varieties by Kenyan smallholder farmers. As part of this, he coordinates participation by NIAB staff to help researchers at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation to develop knowledge exchange models suitable for smallholder farmers, and in the production and distribution of communication materials.



Alison Mollon

Senior Programme Manager, West & Central Africa, Acting Regional Manager, Africa
Fauna and Flora International (FFI)

Alison joined FFI in April 2014 after returning from the Democratic Republic of Congo where she was the Programme Manager for the Frankfurt Zoological Society. From early 2011 Alison was based in the headquarters of the Virunga National Park and was responsible for multi-donor project implementation including the GEF National Parks Network Rehabilitation Project. Focussing on protected area management, Alison also oversaw projects that supported the Maiko and Upemba National Parks and lead on programme assessment, development of the national strategy and the resulting project design. Alison also became experienced in developing and leading operations in conflict zones. She specialises in species population estimates and has contributed to analysis of sampling methodology of great apes in Central Africa and has advised the government of St Lucia on best practice management and monitoring of the St Lucia Parrot.

Alison is currently leading the FFI Africa Regional Team to address threats to species and habitat conservation focussing on different protected area management systems, sustainable use of forest and forest related resources and engagement with business. Alison previously worked as a Project Manager for the GSMA, managing mobile money projects.



Liz Watson

Senior Lecturer and Pybus Fellow of Newnham College,
Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

Liz Watson's research focuses on the relations between livelihoods, institutions, environment and development in the drylands of the Horn of Africa. In Ethiopia, work in Konso examined the production and sustainability of its intensive agricultural terraced landscape, and focused on the nature and significance of indigenous social institutions for governing land and labour.

More recently, research with the pastoralist Boran and Gabra of northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia has explored the dynamic and adaptive nature of mobile livelihoods. In the context of multiple stresses, social, cultural and political developments - as well as 'Development' projects - have often undermined indigenous institutions and have exacerbated exposure to risk and vulnerability. New research, funded by the Royal Geographical Society with IBG Thesiger-Oman International Fellowship, examines one of the local responses to the current challenges, namely the increased preference for camels. Camels are seen by pastoralists as better adapted to a changing climate, as well as potentially more profitable given the changing nature of regional trade and increased urban demands for milk and meat.



