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1. News from the President



Since becoming your President in June 2011 the [ICA Board](#) **has been setting out a strategic action plan for the upcoming years**. This action plan has to make sure that ICA can support your university in addressing the challenges in engaging with the needs of society through education, research and supporting innovation, and, secondly, in responding to the increasing global competition between universities and the need to develop the global engagement of our students, staff and administrators.

ICA so far has been most successful in supporting agricultural and life science universities in engaging in the development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) within the framework of the Bologna process which is renewed for a second phase until 2020. ICA and the ICA Standing Committees have developed important projects, tools and recommendations helping our universities to use European Erasmus and Tempus funds, and building quality control systems for higher education in the life sciences. The ICA Board now aims to continue this but also to **further develop its engagement at the European and global levels in representing life science universities to the European Commission, industry and society at large**.

In particular, at the EU level ICA needs to be more present and better known. I am convinced that ICA can create a platform together with our Standing Committees and partners, such as CEDIA, to represent the interests of life science universities to external partners. Recently ICA became an Affiliate member of the [European Universities Association \(EUA\)](#) where ICA will promote and develop the strength and specificity of life science higher education in Europe. We will in the next months discuss how we can take advantage of this.

The ICA Rectors & Deans Forum was held for the first time in Ghent last autumn. It was a most successful event under the title [Life Sciences Universities and Faculties: Meeting the Challenges and Expectations](#). Therefore it has been decided to make it an annual ICA event, where decision makers of our member universities can meet and discuss with our stakeholders in industry, government and NGOs the strategic choices for

agricultural and life science universities. The [next Forum](#) will address ***Educating for the Knowledge Society in the Life Sciences: stakeholder reflections*** and will be held on 30 and 31 October 2012 at Ghent University. The Forums are framed to support your university in developing its profile in education, research and innovation. For our stakeholders it provides an opportunity not only to exchange information, but also opens up the possibilities for future engagement. We hope that those rectors and deans who were present last year will return and that those who missed it will put it in their agenda and be present this time.

At the global level we hope to develop channels of communication and concrete initiatives with the help of the newly re-launched Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations in the Agricultural Life Sciences ([GCHERA](#)). ICA will also continue to develop the European - North American dialogue through the successful series of annual conferences jointly organised with our sister organisation the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) in the US. This dialogue is being extended in 2012 with the inclusion of the Canadian Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (CFAVM) who are organising the [conference ***Growing the Bioeconomy: the social, environmental and economic/policy implications.***](#)

A second challenge for ICA is **to address the implications of the broadening of the life science disciplines on the delivery of education and in research and innovation.** In particular, the focus on the production of bio-renewable resources and the impact on food production has received new attention now that everybody is convinced that fossil resources are depleting and that the economy of the future will be a bio-based one. I am convinced agricultural and life sciences will play a key role in this transformation of our economies. This poses main challenges not only in developing new technologies but also in the transformation of rural areas and agricultural commodity markets with increased volatility of prices and pressure on the environment and so on. ICA can support members respond to these challenges by organizing conferences and communications on this transformation of higher education. A first step in this direction is the already mentioned [APLU-CFAVM-ICA conference ***Growing the Bioeconomy: the social, environmental and economic/policy implications.***](#)

The ICA Board will also **re-launch the ECHAE Standing Committee as the ICA Network for Higher Education in the Life Sciences** (ICA-Edu). ICA-Edu will focus on supporting your university staff in developing your curricula and the delivery of teaching and learning in the internet age. The conference in Bolzano, during the ICA Week of Conferences, will continue the series of conferences focusing on developing teaching and learning in the life sciences – with the title [Educating the Net generation in the Life Sciences](#). So we ask you to promote this conference among your staff.

Last, but not least, in order to accomplish this mission and plans ICA needs to be financially sound and have enough financial means for new projects. Presently, ICA lacks sufficient funds because ICA depends entirely on membership subscriptions. The Board is grateful for the agreement of the 2011 General Assembly to the increase in membership subscriptions which had not changed for at least ten years and as a consequence had declined significantly in purchasing power. However, this increase will not be sufficient for realising the above ambitious projects. **ICA needs a new business model and to**

reorganize its internal organization so that it is possible to further professionalize its support to members and potential partners. We not only need to keep our present membership of over 60 universities but more importantly to attract new members.

Also at the cost side we have made important savings thanks to the very generous offer of the **Czech University of Life Sciences Prague to host the ICA Secretariat** at a greatly reduced cost. This ensures that at least our budget of 2012 is again in equilibrium after some years of substantial losses. The ICA Secretariat moved from Institut Polytechnique LaSalle Beauvais on 1st January 2012. The ICA Board is grateful to Marie Dubruque, in her role the ICA Secretary at LaSalle Beauvais, for her work for ICA.

I believe that the realisation of the above plans will give a new impetus to ICA and hence greater benefit to you as members. I look forward to engaging with you at the upcoming events which are listed below.

Guido Van Huylenbroeck

ICA President and Dean of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering of Ghent University

2. News from the Secretary General



ICA is supporting two conferences in 2012 in addition to the ICA Rectors and Deans Forum. The details of each event are outlined below. In particular I draw attention to the Conference [*Educating the Net generation in the Life Sciences*](#) - see the conference focus and keynote speakers – submit an abstract for a contributed paper by 30 April.

The **ICA Secretariat** is now based at the Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague (CULS) and it is a pleasure to welcome Jaromír Němec, who is Head of the International Relations Office in CULS, as the ICA Administrator. My sincere thanks to Marie Dubruque for her past work for ICA.

I should also like to highlight a new service to members. ICA will be pleased to **list on the ICA Website new job opportunities** in ICA member institutions. For the moment these positions will be posted on the Website but in the future we aim to push this information to our members. If you wish to have a position advertised please send an email with the details to icasecretariat@ica-europe.org

ICA Week of Conferences 2012, 18 to 22 June 2012, Bozen-Bolzano Italy



The ICA Week of Conferences will include the ICA Network for Higher Education in the Life Sciences (ICA-Edu) Conference, the IROICA Annual Conference (further details below), the Board meetings of ICA and the ICA Standing Committees AGRIMBA and AGRINATURA, and the General Assemblies of ICA, AGRINATURA and IROICA.

The **ICA General Assembly 2012** will be held on Wednesday 20 June at 16.30, at the Free University Bozen-Bolzano, Bolzano, Italy. The ICA General Assembly Agenda and a call for

nominations for election to the ICA Board will be sent to members on 4 May. The General Assembly will be followed by the Reception for the ICA Week of Conferences.

There will also be a meeting of the **ICA Council** preceding the ICA General Assembly. The ICA council brings together representatives of the ICA Standing Committees and the ICA Board to discuss opportunities for collaborative activities.

Conference: Educating the Net Generation in the Life Sciences, 21 and 22 June 2012, Bozen-Bolzano Italy

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is playing an ever greater role in the lives of university students, academic staff and administrators. Our students from their earliest years interact with electronic games and by the time they apply for university are internet and IT aware, and social networking is an integral part of their lives.

This ICA-Edu Conference will examine how life science universities are adapting to these expectations and how they are developing innovative approaches in the use of ICT to deliver their degree programmes and courses.

Academic staff, course and degree programme coordinators, vice-rectors and vice deans for education, learning and technology support staff are invited to participate.

See [call for contributed papers](#) by 30 April and the Keynote speakers.



Conference: Growing the Bioeconomy – Social, Environmental and Economic Implications, 2 to 5 October 2012, Banff, Alberta, Canada

With an ever expanding Bioeconomy, **decision-makers need up-to-date knowledge** to develop strategies to manage this growth. Environmental scientists, policy experts and scientific leaders are invited to work together in a meeting of minds to understand the **implications** of the growing Bioeconomy from social, environmental and economic/policy perspectives.

ICA and our North American partner associations, APLU and CFAVM, invite you to attend and **contribute to a shared understanding** of the challenges and opportunities relating to [Growing the Bioeconomy](#) from social, environmental and economic/policy perspectives.

See call for **Contributed Papers** for sessions addressing the social, environmental and economic/policy perspectives and for **Graduate Student Contribution** **by 15 May 2012** – visit the [conference website](#).

The University of Alberta, Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences hosts the conference and is the local organiser.



ICA Rectors and Deans Forum 2012: Educating for the Knowledge Society in the Life Sciences: stakeholder reflections, 30 and 31 October 2012, Gent, Belgium

The aim of this annual event is to provide the opportunity for university decision makers from ICA's member universities to meet and discuss with our stakeholders in industry, government

and NGOs the strategic choices for agricultural and life science universities. The Forum 2012 will address ***Educating for the Knowledge Society in the Life Sciences: stakeholder reflections*** and will be held on 30 and 31 October 2012 at Ghent University. This Forum follows the successful [Forum in 2011](#).

Following the four pillar structure proposed by the [World Bank](#) for the development of the Knowledge Economy, on the first day of the Forum 2012 we will discuss with our stakeholders the development:

of ***information infrastructures*** required to facilitate the effective communication, dissemination and processing of information.

of ***economic incentive and institutional regimes*** that enables the free flow of knowledge, supports investment in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and encourages entrepreneurship which is central to the knowledge economy.

of ***innovation networks*** of research centres, universities, think tanks, private enterprises and community groups necessary to tap into the growing stock of global knowledge, assimilate and adapt it to local needs, and create new knowledge.

On the second day we will discuss the development of ***university education to ensure that our graduates have the skills*** needed to create, share and use knowledge.

More details to follow – please put the date in your diary now and [register your interest](#) in receiving further communications for this event.

[Simon Heath](#)

ICA Secretary General

3. News from ICA Standing Committees

AGRIMBA



The AGRIMBA annual meeting will be held on Thursday, 21 June 2012, in Bolzano during the ICA Week of Conferences. As usual the General Board will hear the reports from the local MBA directors, accredit existing programmes and appoint Committees for the accreditation of newly started MBA programmes. New MBA programmes are about to start in Stavropol and Kaliningrad. Representatives of these programmes will be present during the meeting. Further, the AGRIMBA study week 2012 will be evaluated and the study week 2013 will be announced. Finally, our bi-annual congress in 2013, to be organised in Podgorica (Montenegro), will be an item on the agenda. We are looking forward to a successful meeting in Bolzano.

Wim Heijman

On behalf of the Executive Board,

ARINATURA



AGRINATURA highlights [two recent reports](#) in relation to the development of higher agricultural education in Africa.

Communiqué of the Ministerial Conference on Higher Education in Agriculture in Africa (CHEA), Kampala 15th – 19th November 2010, Kampala

Workshop on Tertiary Agricultural Education in Africa Final Report
- Synthesis on Workshop Objectives, Processes and Results/ Next
Steps, October 3 – 5, 2011Ås, Norway,



CASEE CONFERENCE 2012:
**Sustainable Agriculture and Food Production in the Danube
Region, 3 to 5 May 2012, USAMV Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

During the past 25 years agriculture, as well the food production and productivity, have changed dramatically in Central and Eastern Europe countries related to the Danube region. The CASEE Conference 2012 provides a forum to disseminate knowledge and new insights on the sustainability of agriculture and food production in the Danube region. We will discuss the complex of the agrifood chain and the needs of future generations living in this region. These topics involve a systems approach, which implies interdisciplinary efforts in research and education, acting and applying the knowledge to local and regional problems.

Margarita Calderon Peter
CASEE Secretary General



15TH IROICA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
**IRO Communication and Management in the NET
Generation", 21 to 22 June 2012, Free University of Bozen-
Bolzano, Bolzano, Italy**

Social Media and Web platforms have become important elements in IRO management and communication with students. To learn more about current developments, join us in this year's IROICA conference. Register by 1 May (Deadline for hotel reservation is April 14)

Margarita Calderon Peter
IROICA President

SILVA Network annual conference 2012



SILVA Network plans its annual conference in connection with the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Higher School of Agricultural Engineering of the University of Lleida, 22 to 25 November 2012. The first announcement is under preparation.

Contact [Siegfried Lewark](#), SILVA President, for more information

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

**QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMMES:
ADOPTING GOOD PRACTICE**



The European Accreditation Agency for the Life Sciences will hold this [International Workshop](#) on 26 and 27 September 2012 at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb

This workshop will provide a forum to share good practice for the quality assurance and enhancement of Master degree programmes. The workshop will address the quality assurance of Master degree programmes aimed at national students, and the additional requirements to meet the expectations of international students. It will also address the specific needs for the quality assurance of joint Master degree programmes delivered by two or more universities.

The Workshop programme will encompass the entire quality assurance and accreditation process; taking account of the need to have in place effective internal quality assurance processes and the process to be followed in preparation for an external review. Particular emphasis will be placed on the critical issues to be addressed in order to ensure a successful outcome for an external review of a degree programme.

At the end of the workshop, it is expected that participants will:

- be familiar with the terminology and principles of quality assurance,
- recognise the need for annual monitoring and review as a central theme,
- understand quality enhancement as an ongoing process,
- define the pre-conditions for academic accreditations
- be able to compile the evidence-base required for peer review, and
- be able to utilise a quality assurance framework in preparing for the evaluation of a Master programme by an external peer review team

The workshop is intended for Vice Rectors for Education, Deans, Quality Assurance coordinators, Master degree programme coordinators.

Full details and registration see [EAALS website](#) or contact [Simon Heath](#)

5. News from ICA members

Czech University of Life Sciences, in collaboration with the North Carolina State University, is organising the [Summer School](#) in Genetic Data Analysis in Prague, June 11 - 15 2012

The I.S.L.E Erasmus networks project "Innovation in the teaching of Sustainable development in Life Sciences in Europe"

This [project](#) led by AgroSup Dijon in France involves 39 institutions from 30 different European countries interested in introducing the concept of Sustainable Development in their curricula and in the management of their institutions by sharing and exchanging know how and good practices. The project started in 2010 and will finish in 2013. [Download the flyer.](#)



6. Other News Items



FEEDING THE WORLD : Agronomists & Agrologists Front and Centre in Facing the Challenges of Local and Worldwide Food Production

[Vth World Congress of Agronomists and Agrologists](#), 17 – 21 September 2012, Quebec, Canada.

Supported by the World Association of Agronomists (AMIA), this event, which is held every four years, brings together professionals from around the world and offers them a forum for exchanging on issues in the profession and discussing the challenges they face. The Congress is a unique opportunity to highlight the role of agrologists and their contribution to the well-being of the population.

7. Contribute to the next Newsletter

The ICA Newsletter is published four times a year. All Standing Committees and ICA member institutions are invited to contribute news of interest to ICA members. Please send your contributions for the July 2012 edition no later than June 15 to [Jaromír Němec](#).