

# The BioNET-EAFRINET Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup> 2011-16: Summary

## BioNET-EAFRINET

BioNET-EAFRINET is a government-endorsed network of institutions and individuals who support taxonomy and its applications. EAFRINET is the EAST African LOOP (Locally Owned and Operated Partnership) of BioNET, a taxonomy partnership of 105 member countries ("the most comprehensive network" for taxonomy - Convention on Biological Diversity). EAFRINET provides a platform for cooperation to maximise the potential of taxonomy to contribute to sustainable development.

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Purpose

Taxonomy is the science and practice of discovery, description, classification and naming of organisms, preserving collections of them and providing keys and tools for their identification and data on their distributions. It delivers basic and indispensable knowledge for many fields of human interest and contributes in many ways to the sustainability of our planet. The main purpose of EAFRINET is to promote, develop and organise taxonomic capacity, particularly in less developed countries, so the taxonomic community can better support biodiversity conservation and sustainable and equitable use, agriculture and thus food security, industries, other sciences and policy implementation.

### *EAFRINET's Vision –*

*The capacity to discover and name organisms is accessible to serve the needs of people everywhere.*

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Focal Themes

During 2012-16, EAFRINET will principally contribute to:

**The conservation, sustainable and equitable use of biodiversity.** Biodiversity – the variety of life on earth - is intricately connected to the welfare of the planet and humanity. Taxonomy provides the knowledge base on organisms. Faced with considerable biodiversity change, including climate change impacts and substantial biodiversity loss, we need more than ever to know what biodiversity we have, what we are losing, and what is changing, in order to secure local livelihoods and meet present and future global challenges, including environmental health, food security, economic well-being. EAFRINET will contribute to the achievement of the CBD 2011-20 strategy, anticipated Rio+20 Goals and other emerging agendas.

**Agriculture and food security.** Food security is recognised at the highest political levels as one of the greatest challenges facing the world community. Implementation of the International Plant Protection Convention and phytosanitary regulations depends on the ability of countries to reliably identify plant pests. For producers, species identifications provide access to scientific and traditional knowledge on a species and are therefore very important for pre- and post harvest pest management, as well as for the management of beneficial organisms such as pollinators, natural enemies of pests and the myriad of species that sustain soil processes. Taxonomic data also allows us to predict potential shifts in the distribution of pests under climate change.

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Niche

Through its multi-disciplinary participation (unlike taxonomic societies that focus on specific taxa and initiatives that focus on particular aspects of taxonomy) and by embracing both taxonomy practitioners and users, EAFRINET helps to bridge the gap between end-user taxonomic needs and the ability of the taxonomic sector to meet those needs.

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<sup>1</sup> The EAFRINET Strategic Plan 2011-16 has been developed using principles from 'Outcome Mapping', a method for participatory planning, monitoring and evaluating that is particularly suited to international organisations or networks with diverse institutional mandates.

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Mission

BioNET-EAFRINET – that is EAFRINET individual and institutional members including BioNET officers (Regional and National Coordinators and supporting staff) and the Regional and National Coordinating Institutes – works directly with technical and policy partners and donors (BioNET affiliates) to maximise the potential of taxonomy to contribute to biodiversity conservation, food security, poverty alleviation, animal, plant and human health, and many other fields of human interest.

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Strategic Goals

1. **Support capacity building in and for taxonomy:** BioNET-EAFRINET in collaboration with leading national, regional and international technology partners will foster capacity building *for* taxonomy and its applications (e.g. facilitate training taxonomy and use of taxonomic information to develop of identification tools etc, strengthening collections, integrating new technology into taxonomic work) and *in* the skills needed to promote and sustain taxonomy (e.g. facilitating training in grant proposal writing, project management and strategic planning).
2. **Prioritise and accelerate the delivery of taxonomic products and services to meet end-user needs:** BioNET-EAFRINET facilitates the assessment of end-user taxonomic needs and the generation and dissemination of demand-driven taxonomic services, tools and products.
3. **Mobilise resources for taxonomy and the network:** BioNET-EAFRINET facilitates the mobilisation of new technical, human, financial and other resources for the network through fundraising activities including donor liaison and, collaborative project development.
4. **Promote taxonomy through outreach activities, public relations and communication:** BioNET-EAFRINET helps to create awareness of the relevance of taxonomy to end-users (such as the general public, scientists, business, donors, policy makers and even taxonomists themselves) through public relations (e.g. conferences, events, exhibitions) and the production of unique communications products.
5. **Influence, advise and support policy and regulatory bodies and facilitate policy implementation relating to taxonomy:** BioNET-EAFRINET promotes the long-term sustainability of the taxonomic sector by providing relevant and timely input into national, regional and global policy development (e.g. under, CBD, IPPC, CITES and other bodies) to strengthen national and regional processes and global multilateral agreements.
6. **Support network building at national and regional levels:** BioNET-EAFRINET strengthens network building through effective communication, mentoring and information sharing, workshops and meetings, partner matching and participatory planning and monitoring and evaluation to promote learning, creativity and innovation.

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Values

- Common Vision
- Willingness to champion taxonomy
- Culture of sharing (e.g. information and experiences in capacity building for taxonomy)
- Partnerships (coordinate relevant activities with other partners)
- Network awareness (understanding the whole is the sum of the interactions of the parts)
- End-user awareness
- Scientific integrity
- Openness to innovative approaches to taxonomy

## BioNET-EAFRINET's Modus Operandi

EAFRINET provides a platform through which its coordinating institutions and individual members can enhance the effectiveness of those aspects of their work that relate to taxonomy and its applications