

VAVILOV-FRANKEL FELLOWSHIP AWARDED TO ACIAR SCIENTIST

Tamar Jinjikhadze, a scientist from Georgia involved in an ACIAR project collecting germplasm in the Central Asian region, has been awarded a prestigious Vavilov-Frankel Fellowship. The fellowships were established in 1989 by the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), to commemorate the contributions made to plant science by Nikolai Ivanovich Vavilov, of Russia, and Australia's Sir Otto Frankel, a pioneering chief of CSIRO Plant Industry.

Ms Jinjikhadze's fellowship is supported by the Australian Grains Research and Development Corporation and Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc.

The fellowship will allow Ms Jinjikhadze to study *Triticum timopheevii*, a species of wheat found in Georgia. An important aspect of the fellowship is the opportunity to expand research skills and capability through study in Australia at Sydney University.

Ms Jinjikhadze will study the molecular basis of resistance to rust diseases in *T. timopheevii*.

Low wheat yields in Georgia are partly due to the prevalence of rust diseases. Ms Jinjikhadze will spend her fellowship assessing *T. timopheevii* samples for resistance to the known races of rust disease.

This research is a microcosm of that being undertaken by the ACIAR project to collect germplasm in the Central Asian Republics and the Caucasus.

Many varieties of widely grown cereal crops originated in these areas, and ACIAR has been working with ICARDA to collect, conserve and preserve as much of this storehouse of wild cereals as possible.

Resistance to diseases such as rust, as well as traits that allow crops to adapt to a wide variety of environments and stresses may be lost if this germplasm is not preserved.

Through the ACIAR-ICARDA project, research capacity in germplasm conservation has been developed and will be continued through a follow-up project.

PEARLS OF PROMISE

The results of an ACIAR-supported research project to develop the black pearl industry in the Solomon Islands were showcased at a charity auction of Solomon Island pearls in Sydney on 30 June.

The auction raised about \$25,000 for the Gizo hospital in Western Province, the area of the Solomon Islands where the pearls were grown.

Pearl production has been developed in a pilot pearl farm, linked to an ACIAR project through the WorldFish Center.

Sixty of the 90 lots on offer at the auction sold. The remainder are now being offered through jewellers in Sydney as a further way to expose the project's importance to the Solomon Islands.

ACIAR, with the WorldFish Center and the Government of the Solomon Islands, has been collaborating in a project to refine the industry's development through improved techniques to grow and culture black lip pearls.

The black pearl oyster (*Pinctada margaritifera*)



flourishes in atoll lagoons and is an important export earner for French Polynesia and the Cook Islands.

An ACIAR-WorldFish project involving Tonga and Kiribati is also linked to a pilot pearl farm activity with the WorldFish Center in the Solomon Islands.

NEW PROJECTS

ADP/2002/012 – Technical change in Thai and Indonesian agriculture: measurement, socio-economic impact and policy implications

ASEM/2003/012 – Improving the marketing system for maize and soybeans in Cambodia

ASEM/2003/011 – Herbicide use strategies and weed management options in Filipino and Australian cropping

AS2/2002/079 – Utilisation of local ingredients in commercial feeds for pigs

CIM/2004/004 – Plant genetic resource conservation, documentation and utilisation in central Asia and the Caucasus

CIM/2004/003 – Plant health management for faba bean, chickpea and lentils

CIM/2000/039 – Impact of migration and/or off-farm employment on roles of women and appropriate technologies in Asian and Australian mixed farming systems

FIS/2003/037 – Artisanal shark and ray fisheries in Eastern Indonesia and their relationships with Australian resources

FIS/2002/068 – Improving feeds and feeding for small scale aquaculture in Vietnam and Cambodia

FIS/2002/001 – Developing aquaculture in degraded inland areas in India and Australia

FST/2003/002 – Development and evaluation of sterile triploids and polyploid breeding methodologies for commercial species of acacia in Vietnam, South Africa and Australia

FST/2002/097 – Identification of optimum genetic resources for establishment of local species of sandalwood for plantations and agroforests in Vanuatu and Cape York Peninsula (Australia)

FST/2002/010 – Domestication and commercialisation of multi-purpose indigenous trees and shrubs for food and other products in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Queensland (Australia): a feasibility study with special reference to *Canarium Nut*

LWR/2003/006 – Enhancing agricultural production in the Philippines by sustainable use of shallow groundwater

- **LWR/2002/085** – Utilising basic soil data for the sustainable management of upland soils in Vietnam and Australia
- LWR/2000/013** – Sustainable agriculture in saline environments through serial biological concentration
- PHT/1999/081** – Reducing spoilage and contamination risks of fresh vegetables in China and Australia
- SMCN/2004/002** – Wheat and maize productivity improvement in Afghanistan
- SMCN/2002/073** – Efficient nutrient use in rice production in Vietnam achieved using inoculant biofertilisers

PROJECT VARIATIONS

ACIAR projects may be varied to extend the time to completion, to increase the budget available or both. Project variations and extensions are undertaken following a review process of the project, that involves both internal and external review phases.

- AS1/2000/009** – Development of diagnostic and control methodologies for animal trypanosomiasis (Surra) in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, the Philippines and Australia
- AS1/1998/054** – Poverty alleviation and food security through improving the sweet potato-pig production systems in Indonesia and Vietnam
- CIM/1996/140** – Biological threats to *Saccharum* germplasm and sugar production in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Australia
- CP/2000/090** – *Liriomyza huidobrensis* leaf miner: developing effective pest management strategies for Indonesia and Australia
- FIS/2001/034** – Inland pond aquaculture in Papua New Guinea – assessment of the industry and evaluation of smallholder research and development needs
- FST/1998/118** – Planning methods for sustainable management of timber stocks in Papua New Guinea's forests
- FST/1998/115** – Domestication of Papua New Guinea's indigenous forest species
- FST/1998/113** – Development of a sustainable, community-based essential oil industry in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea using the region's woody-plant species.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

PROCEEDINGS

Water in Agriculture

The availability of water and water quality are major concerns for everyone. Agriculture is the largest consumer of water. As the world's population increases, how do we increase food production with limited water and land resources? These proceedings cover the papers presented at the CARDI International Conference 'Research on Water in Agricultural Production in Asia for the 21st Century', held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in November 2003.

Vang Seng, Eric Craswell, Shu Fukai and Ken Fischer (eds) 2004. ACIAR Proceedings 116, 240pp. Price \$25 (plus postage and handling).

MONOGRAPHS

Anthracnose resistant *Stylosanthes* for agricultural systems

A summary of new knowledge about *Stylosanthes* research and development. Both published and unpublished information on anthracnose disease and the development of new germplasm with anthracnose resistance and high yield potential for existing and new production systems is included. **S. Chakraborty** (ed.) 2004. ACIAR Monograph 111, 266pp. Price: \$45 (plus postage and handling).

Advances in grouper aquaculture

Aquaculture of high-value finfish species, such as groupers, is an industry of increasing importance throughout the Asia-Pacific. This book looks at larval rearing to improve growth and survival of groupers during the hatchery phase; diet development to produce feeds with low environmental impact; and support for the NACA Grouper Aquaculture Research and Development Network. **M. Rimmer, S. McBryde and K. Williams** (eds) 2004. ACIAR Monograph 110, 138pp. Price \$22 (plus postage and handling).

Community-based resource planning: studies from Zimbabwe and northern Australia

This monograph describes research activities and outcomes from the ACIAR funded project 'Enhanced Resource-Use Planning for Tropical Woodland Agroecosystems' based in Zimbabwe and northern Australia. Its findings provide an improved framework for resource use planning in tropical woodlands.

R.N. Thwaites, J.L. Carter and P.L. Norman (eds) 2004. ACIAR Monograph 109, 126pp. Price \$28 (plus postage and handling).

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Feeds and Feeding for Inland Aquaculture in Mekong Region Countries

Aquaculture of freshwater species in the Mekong regions of Cambodia, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Thailand is an important source of protein and income for

small-scale land owners. But the cost of feed is constraining development of aquaculture. This report describes the current situation with feeds and feeding for inland aquaculture in these countries and identifies the research and training needed to benefit small-scale aquaculture producers. **Peter Edwards and Geoff Allan** (eds) 2004. ACIAR Technical Report 56, 136pp. Price \$17 (plus postage and handling).

Trials of Cold-tolerant Eucalypt Species in Cooler Regions of South Central China

Eucalypts are of considerable economic, social and environmental importance in southern China. ACIAR has supported collaborating forestry research between China and Australia since 1985. This report draws together the results of many trials undertaken over the past 20 years into eucalypts suited to mean annual temperatures of 15 to 20C, with absolute minima down to -8C. **R.J. Arnold, B. Clarke and J. Luo** (eds) 2004. ACIAR Technical Report 57, 106pp. Price \$17 (plus postage and handling).

Evaluation of International Provenance Trials of *Casuarina equisetifolia*

The results published in this report reveal a considerable amount of genetic variation between provenances of *Casuarina equisetifolia* and provide important information for people interested in agroforestry and fuelwood production in the tropics and subtropics. **K. Pinyopusarerk, A. Kalinganire, E.R. Williams and K.M. Aken** (eds) 2004. ACIAR Technical Report 58, 106pp. Price \$17 (plus postage and handling).

WORKING PAPERS

Forages for red soils area of China J.M. Scott, D.A. MacLeod, Minggang Xu and A.J. Casanova (eds) 2004. ACIAR Working Paper 55, 200pp. All papers available at www.aciar.gov.au

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NEW APPOINTMENTS

NEW CHAIR OF THE ACIAR BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Dr Meryl Williams has been appointed chair of the ACIAR Board of Management, and President of the Policy Advisory Council. The



Photo: ACIAR

appointment was announced by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, on 11 August 2004.

Dr Williams takes over from Professor Beth Woods OAM. Professor Woods has taken a new position as executive director R&D Strategy in the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.

Dr Williams' professional interests are in research for development, research management and the role of fish and other living aquatic resources in people's lives.

Dr Williams is inaugural executive officer of the Future Harvest Alliance Office, formed in 2004 by the 15 international agricultural research centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Prior to this, she was director-general of WorldFish Center from 1994-2004.

Dr Williams was previously director of the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and was a member of the AIMS Council from 1989 until June 1997. She was executive director of the former Bureau of Rural Resources in the Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra, and worked in fisheries research at the South Pacific Commission and in the Queensland Government. She was a member of the first board of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and, from 1989 to 1993, was a member of the Council of the Australian Maritime College.

Dr Williams is also the chair of the FAO Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research, and a member of the scientific steering committee of the Census of Marine Life, the High Seas Marine Protected Areas Working Group and of the scientific committee of DIVERSITAS. She has published extensively in the scientific

and development literature on tropical fisheries and aquaculture and has a PhD in Zoology and a Masters Degree in Literary Studies (mathematical statistics).

Dr Russell Haines is ACIAR's new Forestry Research Program Manager. The Forestry Program focuses on the establishment, management and sustainable utilisation of forests.

Dr Haines joins ACIAR from the (Australian) Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, where he was an acting general manager.

Until late 2002, he was chief executive of the Queensland Forestry Research Institute (QFRI). He has a background as a forestry researcher and research manager in breeding, silviculture, water and nutrition, forest protection and product processing.

He also has considerable experience in strategic planning, financial management and business processes.

Ms Amber Davidson is ACIAR's new country manager in Indonesia. Ms Davidson is an AusAID officer who is on leave-without-pay, working for the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in Suva, Fiji, as planning adviser in the Land Resources Division.

At AusAID Ms Davidson has worked in a variety of program areas, including program evaluation, budget and planning and on AusAID programs/projects in PNG and the Solomon Islands. Ms Davidson also managed the secretariat functions of the 2002 Aid Review.

Prior to joining AusAID in 1997, she was research director with the University of Sydney, where she led a social and economic research team of 12 researchers. Her area of expertise is in urban and regional planning. Ms Davidson has a Masters (Hons) in Urban and Regional Planning and a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Environmental Science and Ecology.

Ms Davidson will join ACIAR in October 2004.



Photo: ACIAR

Christian Roth is ACIAR's research program manager for Soil Management and Crop Nutrition. The program focuses on land and cropping systems and soil management at the field scale. Dr Roth has a PhD in Soil Physics from the University of Goettingen, Germany, where he also obtained a degree as Diplom-Agraringenieur (agricultural sciences).

He worked in southern Brazil as part of the German Agency of Technical Assistance (GTZ) project on erosion control in mixed cropping systems, using no-tillage techniques. Dr Roth was a lecturer and researcher in soil physics at the Department of Soil Science, Institute of Ecology, at the Technical University of Berlin, specialising in measuring soil hydraulic properties and rainfall simulation studies.

He joined the CSIRO's Multidisciplinary Coastal Zone Program based in Townsville in 1996 in the position of principal research scientist, and was later appointed research group leader of Tropical Land and Water Management for Sustainable Land Use at CSIRO Land and Water. From 1998, he was also acting officer-in-charge of CSIRO's Davies Laboratory.