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## **Dr. Elias Ayuk of Cameroon Appointed Director of UNU-INRA**

The United Nations University (UNU) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Elias Takor Ayuk as Director of the UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA), effective 15 October 2010.

UNU-INRA, based in Accra, Ghana, supports the building of African capacity by strengthening national institutions to promote sustainable use of the continent's natural resources for development. The aim is to help African scientists, technologists and institutions acquire capabilities to generate, adapt and apply knowledge and technology to promote the more efficient utilization of natural resources for self-reliant development. The Director has overall responsibility for the research and management of the Institute.

“In order to accelerate economic growth, reduce poverty and provide essential services to the African populace, the continent must mobilize its diverse wealth and people in a sustained manner to build a strong knowledge base,” said Dr. Ayuk. “The UNU-INRA mandate includes two pillars – capacity building and natural resources management – that are central to this effort. The UNU-INRA goal is to ensure that agents of change (scientists, policy makers and researchers) will be empowered to use their capacity, will and knowledge to catalyse change and inform policies for the sustainable management of the continent's rich natural resources.”

From 2004–2010, Dr. Ayuk was Senior Program Specialist with the Globalisation, Growth and Poverty programme at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Regional Office for West and Central Africa, in Dakar, Senegal. He had joined IDRC in 2002 as Senior Program Specialist with the Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA), and served as Acting Executive Director of SISERA from 2002 to 2006.

His previous positions included Regional Senior Policy Economist and Project Leader with the Southern African Development Community/World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) Agroforestry Research Project (1998–2002, Zimbabwe); Regional Policy Economist (1994–1998, Mali) and Regional Economist and Country Representative (1992–1994, Burkina Faso) with the ICRAF Semi-Arid Lowlands of West Africa Regional Program; and Rockefeller Foundation Visiting Scientist at the International Fertilizer Development Centre – Africa Office (1990–1991, Togo). He also has undertaken consultancies for the World Bank's Soil Fertility Initiative and for UNESCO's World Wide Fund for Nature.

Dr. Ayuk holds M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Agricultural Economics from Texas A&M University (USA). His areas of expertise lie in the social, economic and policy dimensions of natural resource management, marketing and modeling. He has written or co-written numerous refereed journal articles, papers and book chapters, and co-edited the 2007 book *The Policy Paradox in Africa: Strengthening the Links between Economic Research and Policymaking* (Africa World Press and IDRC).

“I welcome Dr. Ayuk to the UNU family,” said UNU Rector Konrad Osterwalder. “UNU has pledged to step up its activities in Africa, and the appointment of Dr. Ayuk as director of UNU-INRA is a crucial step in this direction.”

To request an interview with UNU-INRA Director Elias Ayuk, please contact the UNU Office of Communications (e-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)).

Information on UNU-INRA is available online at <http://www.inra.unu.edu/>. For more about the global UNU system, see <http://www.unu.edu/>.

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