

THE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (COEB), UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA

Happy New Year to all of you! We are excited for 2022 – despite the ongoing pandemic, we have been able to realize some significant achievements. I am especially proud of the Center's efforts to build taxon capacity among researchers in Rwanda and the region. In the last issue of the newsletter, we highlighted the biodiversity field school we co-hosted with colleagues from Senckenberg Institute in Germany. This resulted in expanding the National Herbarium of Rwanda collection, and trained young researchers in aquatic macroinvertebrates, small mammals, and other taxon groups. In the past few months, we held two more training events: a specialized training for those interested in algae and diatom studies including PhD and MSc students, and a training in ant sampling techniques and taxonomy. Some say taxonomy is dying out, but in the Center, it is alive and growing. With support from various foundations and funding organizations, we will continue to build capacity to sample, identify, monitor and conserve the amazing biodiversity present in the Albertine Rift and Great Lakes Region where we are located. We cannot effectively conserve what we do not know. *Beth Kaplin*, Director of CoEB



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Ant Taxonomy Course: A steppingstone towards understanding ant community composition in Nyungwe National Park



Photo: A group photo of participants in the Ant Sampling and Taxonomy course organized by CoEB with funding from RBINS, held at IPRC-Kitabi.

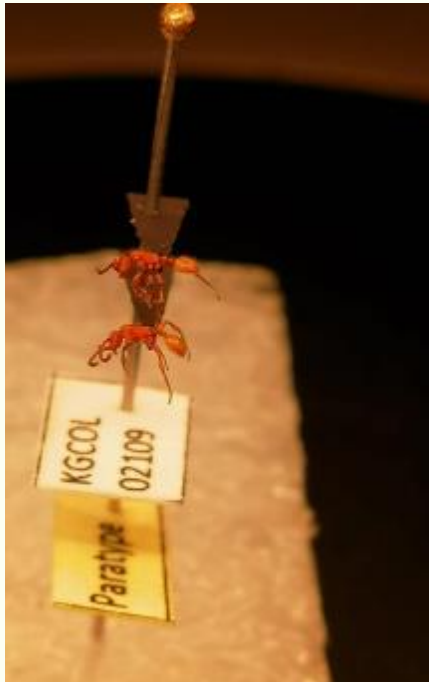
On 18-26 October 2021, a course on ant taxonomy and sampling methods was conducted in Nyungwe National Park, Rwanda. This course was organized by the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management (CoEB) at the University of Rwanda (UR) in collaboration with the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Science (RBINS) and funded through a taxonomic capacity building fund that was awarded to Dr Wouter Dekoninck (Curator of Entomological Collections at RBINS) and Dr Venuste Nsengimana (Lecturer at University of Rwanda and Deputy Director of the CoEB). The Nyungwe National Park management authority African Parks provided logistical support and assistance.

The aim of the course was to introduce Rwandan researchers and students to entomofauna identification and sampling methods, to enhance taxonomic capacity in Eastern Africa. The objectives of the training program were to (1) disentangle the taxonomic status of collected ant species and genera; (2) develop a reference-type collection using modern sampling and curation

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techniques; (3) understand the importance of good practices of adding type-material to a collection; and (4) understand techniques to describe, store, and manage entomology collections.

Expert trainers and participants came from various countries: trainers from Belgium, Spain, and Ivory Coast, and participants from Rwanda, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo, including nodes of the CoEB. Theory was combined with field activities in Nyungwe National Park and lab work. Thus far, 200 sample vials have been identified to at least genus level. In total, 38 genera and over 200 species have been identified, of which 15 genera and 61 species are new to Rwanda and four are confirmed to be new to science! Data will be published in the Rwanda Biodiversity Information System (RBIS) to enable easy access, as well as in peer review journal articles.



*Photo: The first paratype of the Rwanda Ant Collection, *Aenictus koloi* (left); trainers showcase how to dry winkler samples in the lab (right).*



Photo: Trainees learning how to treat samples in lab

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Photo: Trainees collecting samples using the winkler method (left); and hand sampling method (top right).

This research capacity building event is an example of the Center's efforts to build taxon expertise in Rwanda and the region. Ants are excellent indicators of ecosystem functioning and provide important ecosystem services. However, there have been few studies conducted in Rwanda on this group and little is known about their distribution and diversity.

The incredible high diversity of ants found in just this small slice of Nyungwe National Park during this relatively short sampling event, including new species, suggests that more sampling in other parts of the country will uncover even more ant diversity. By collaborating with local and international partners, and working with our nodes, we raise funds to conduct these kinds of trainings in order to increase the capacity to discover, sample, monitor and manage the amazing biodiversity of this region. The Albertine Rift region is a biodiversity hotspot, and ants are just one of the many understudied but environmentally important groups waiting to be explored.



Photo: The growing ant collection in CoEB

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Biodiversity, Natural Resource Management, and Water Food Nexus: A collaborative ARUA project



Photo: *Gomphonema* sp, a diatom sampled in Rwanda

As a node of the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) Institute of Water Resources Management (IWRM), the CoEB won a research grant totaling 137,819,867 Rwf to investigate biodiversity, natural resource management, and water-food nexus. The CoEB is conducting research on integrating biodiversity indicators into water quality monitoring in Rwanda. This effort is part of a bigger project titled, "Unlocking Resilient Benefits from African Water Resources", which spans eight universities across Africa working on specific subprojects. In addition to the University of Rwanda, the universities involved in this project include Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, University of Cheikh Anta Diop in Senegal, Dar es Salaam University in Tanzania, University of Lagos in Nigeria, Makerere University in Uganda, and University of Cape Town and University of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa. Under this project, the CoEB co-hosted a Bound Starter Workshop and a Power Workshop. The project at UR is also supporting one masters and one PhD student in the Biology Dept who are studying within the Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management tract.

Training future experts in phycology!



Photo: Field sampling for algae in Akanyaru river, Rwanda

From 29 November - 3 December, the CoEB organized a one-week Phycology course to build research capacity, including a general introduction to algae and field sampling techniques. It was organized through a partnership between expert Dr Christine Cocquyt from Meise Botanical Garden, Belgium and Alphonse Nzarora a PhD student and lecturer at UR, and funded by the ARUA project.

Dr. Cocquyt trained UR graduate students, field assistants, and early career researchers in algae field sampling methods and laboratory identification techniques. Field sampling was conducted in Kirehe, Bugesera, and Kicukiro Districts.

This training event is another example of the CoEB efforts to build taxon expertise in Rwanda and the region. Diatoms are especially important indicators of freshwater ecosystem health and functioning.

"I'm very proud of my students. They performed well on the field and then we get here in the lab, they are still doing an amazing job and I hope that Rwanda will have experts in diatoms in future." Dr Christine Cocquyt

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Planet Birdsong and CoEB collaboration takes flight!



Photo: Hilary MacBean showcasing how to record bird sound using a parabola and a smart phone.

Planet Birdsong (www.planetbirdsong.org) is a UK based charitable initiative devoted to engaging the greatest possible number of citizens in nature. The initiative is multi-disciplinary, involving scientists, conservationists, musicians, educators, citizens and information technology professionals.

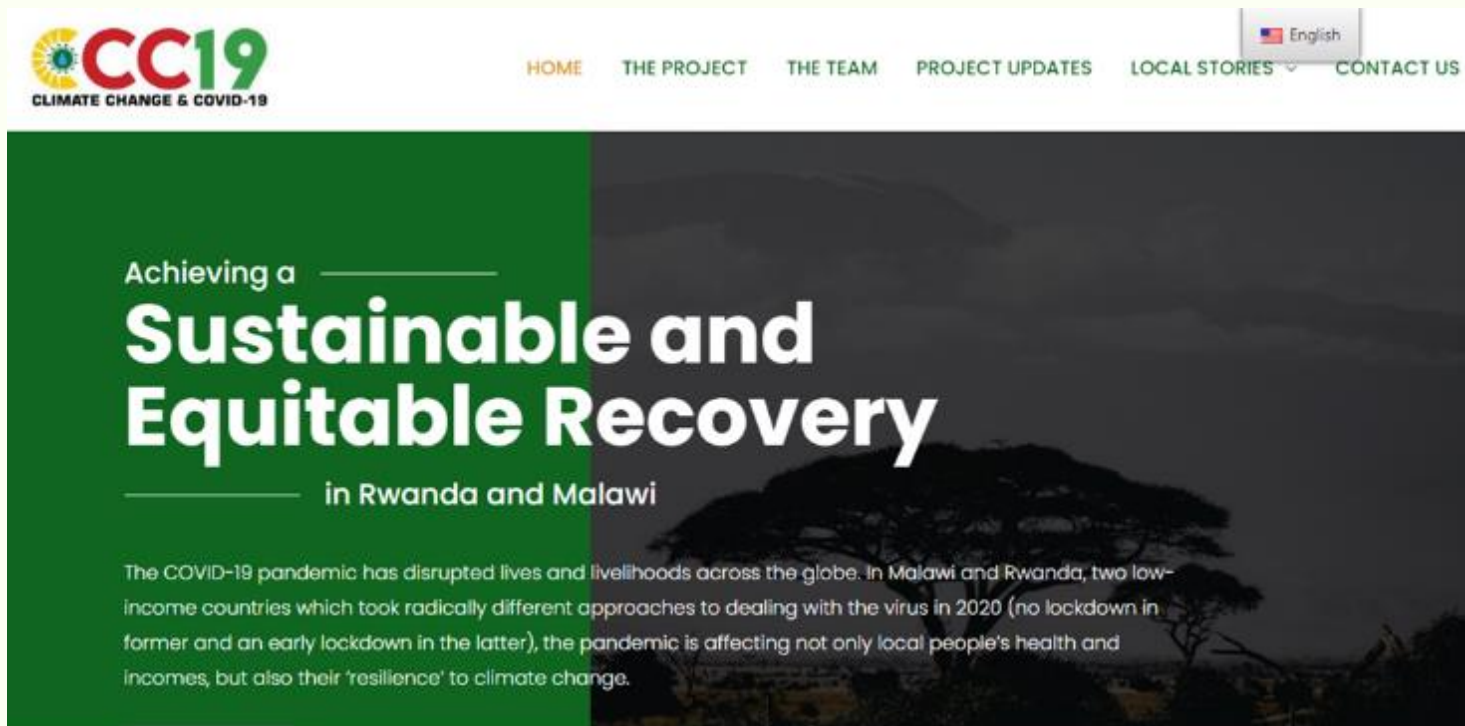
Planet Birdsong utilizes bird songs, which are an international language that transcends geographical and species boundaries, to help humans connect to nature. We set the ball rolling with birdsong to open our ears and minds to the sounds that colour our lives, inform a sustainable future, and bring science and technology together to mediate and enrich citizen engagement.

October saw the start of a practical training in bird acoustic recordings in Rwanda using a phone and adapted parabolic reflector. This was the first practical expression of the new collaboration between CoEB and Planet Birdsong that combines music and nature-based education with rigorous science through the aid of citizen scientists, researchers, and academics.

Following the project's introduction through the CoEB Seminar Series, we launched four technical online trainings where 90 people expressed an interest and registered for the Planet-Birdsong Google Group. This allows for transparency and ease of access, where all recordings, presentation slides, and links are available, aiding revision and home review. At least twenty people are now studying the techniques of this initiative, with Ms. Hilary MacBean actively mentoring three young citizen scientists at IPRC Kitabi and Kivu Hills Academies.

Watch all Planet Birdsong recorded trainings [here](#)

Get in touch with Hilary MacBean,
Planet Birdsong Trustee, Rwanda project co-ordinator
hilary.macbean50@hotmail.co.uk



A new project, funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and managed in a multi-national partnership in Rwanda, Malawi, and Scotland, has been initiated to explore the relationship between Covid19 and climate change on rural communities in Rwanda and Malawi. The project is called CCC19 (<https://ccc19.africa/>). At UR, academic staff from College of Science and Technology, College of Agriculture, Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine, and College of Medicine and Health Science are involved in this interdisciplinary project, as well as CoEB Research Fellow Dr. Laine Munir, a gender and natural resource management specialist.

As part of the CCC19 project, a virtual half-day writing workshop was held on 8 December 2021, led by Dr Lisa Schipper (Co-Editor-in-Chief of Climate & Development journal) and Dr Edmond Totin (Associate Editor at the same journal). Lisa and Edmond delivered sessions on the publication process, structuring of manuscripts, choosing the right journal, referencing & plagiarism, and dealing with reviewer feedback, just to name a few.

A webinar event "COP26 & climate justice as a framework for climate policy" also took place on 7 October 2021. This event was hosted by Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland in collaboration with the CoEB/UR and Mzuzu University in Malawi.

Moreover, a panel discussion led by Dr Michael Mikulewicz, Research Fellow, Glasgow Caledonian University and Salina Sanou, Head of Programmes, Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), was held just prior to the COP26. Two short presentations introducing recent climate change and Covid19 research at the CoEB/UR and Mzuzu University were given to set the tone prior to the panel discussion. The panel discussion focused on what the CCC19 project means for COP26, Africa and Climate Justice. The discussion was led by Professor Beth Kaplin, Director of CoEB, and Dr. Griphin Chirambo, Head of Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Mzuzu University.

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Rwanda Biodiversity Information System (RBIS) for sustainable development and climate change adaptation in Rwanda



Photo: Biodiversity occurrence records on RBIS



Photo: RBIS training workshop with tour companies.

The Rwanda Biodiversity Information System (RBIS) is a system established to mobilize biodiversity data to aid decision making and policy development in support of ecosystem and biodiversity conservation in Rwanda. The RBIS supports Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reporting, Multilateral Environmental Agreement reporting, and restoration and adaptation monitoring. We provide trainings to multidisciplinary stakeholders in the use of the RBIS system to ensure its use and applications.

The team behind the establishment of this innovative platform met in Musanze to train ~50 individuals who represent national tour companies and whose daily activities involve tourism across Rwanda. The core of the training was to provide tour company staff with the knowledge and skills to use the RBIS system and enhance its use in the field, as well as provide deeper learning opportunities to international researchers and tourists engaged with these companies.

The RBIS has over 35,000 occurrence records of freshwater biodiversity including birds, amphibians, odonates (dragonflies), fish, and macroinvertebrates. These taxa groups are biological indicators for quality of freshwater ecosystems.

The team is continuously searching for and mobilizing data, and is developing new modules on water quality, plants, algae, and mammals. The system will also incorporate meteorological data to understand the relationship with species distributions and occurrences, and for early detection of environmental change.

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Kayonza irrigation and integrated watershed management project (KIIWP), Phase 2

Following the signing of an MoU between UR and Rwanda Agriculture Board, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), CoEB welcomed a new project, the KIIWP project, which includes the following activities: (i) monitor water quality and quantity at supported water sites for livestock and domestic use; (ii) monitor environmental impacts of pipe line projects; (iii) provide technical backstopping for reviewing the quality and implementation of sub-catchment management plans.

The project team includes CoEB Research Associates/UR academic staff, CoEB Research Fellows, professional interns, and postgraduate students.

The project launched with a 10-day field mission 5-14 December, where team members collected baseline data on environmental indicators linked to 10 valley tanks/dams constructed during the last fiscal year. The team collected data in two-targeted water sub-catchment areas (Rugazi and Rwakibare).

The targeted environmental data include chemical and physical water quality, biodiversity inventories inside dams as well as in the surrounding environment. This project contributes to freshwater ecosystem conservation, and also is building research capacity and taxon expertise among Rwandan youth.



Ecosystem-based adaptation for climate resiliency (EbA)

The EbA project in CoEB is part of REMA's ongoing effort focused on 'Building resilience of communities living in degraded forests, savannas and wetlands of Rwanda through an ecosystem-based adaptation approach'. This project has provided research grants coordinated by CoEB with REMA partnership to eight masters students from CAVM and CST programs.

The grant provides 1,860,000 Frw/student for research on impacts of EbA on people's livelihoods and on ecosystems. The CoEB co-organized a series of trainings for the funded students and their supervisors on ecosystem-based adaptation approaches and statistical analysis, together with REMA partners.

In addition, 12-15 October 2021 in Musanze, student grant awardees received a training on manuscript preparation, which also provided students with the opportunity to interact with their manuscript reviewers.

From 24 – 26 November 2021, REMA, in collaboration with the CoEB, held a workshop for students that allowed them to present their research and obtain feedback from board members of the oversight committee.

This project is an example of building research capacity and providing science to inform policy and management.



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Promoting Indigenous Trees for Timber Industry In Rwanda (PITTIR)



Photo: Pine plantation in Muhanga district

The CoEB received a National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) academia-industry grant to contribute to national priorities for reforestation, food security, and biodiversity conservation by identifying a suite of indigenous tree species that meet industry requirements for commercial production and contribute to human wellbeing. The grant awarded 69,780,000 from NCST plus 30,000,000 from industry partner Sawmill East African LTD (SEAL), for three years starting in July 2021 and extending until 2024.

"It is an academia-industry partnership grant from NCST, and we want to make it a triple-helix project by creating a partnership between the CoEB, S.E.A.L., and Rwanda Forestry Authority" Prof. Beth Kaplin, Project PI

In October, the PITTIR research team, led by the SEAL partners, visited forest concessions located in different districts. They visited concessions located in the Rulindo, Muhanga and Karongi districts. They also visited SEAL's tree nurseries located in Muhanga district. Through these activities, the research team was able to formulate a more grounded and robust vision of where to set future nurseries and plantations for indigenous tree species.



Photo: Timber processing in Rulindo District

On 17 December, the CoEB hosted an inception stakeholder workshop with representatives from government institutions, private companies and associations, and NGOs, all of whom interact with forests in some capacity. The event took place at the CST Nyarugenge campus and hosted 20 participants. Valuable feedback and insights were collected to enhance project activities and allow for more effective and participatory implementation.



Prof. Beth Kaplin presenting the PITTIR project to stakeholders during the stakeholder's workshop at the CST/UR Nyarugenge campus in Kigali.

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EDUCATION & AWARENESS RAISING



20

Graduate students
supported



9

Trainings
conducted



9

Seminars hosted



1

Academic
interns



3

Professional
interns



3

Community
Outreach activities

CoEB Seminar Series highlights

Continuing to engage students, researchers, and professionals from around the world, the CoEB seminar series hosted a diversity of topics from October – December this year. Eight seminars were provided in these three months with 20-50 people attending each time. October seminar presenters included Dr. Myriam Mujawamariya, a CoEB Research Associate and Lecturer at UR, who presented on “Physiological responses of tropical trees to warmer and drier climates”; Alain Ndoli, Senior programme officer at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Kigali, Rwanda, presented “Disentangling the positive and negative effects of trees on maize performance in smallholdings of Northern Rwanda”; Hilary McBean, Founder Member and Trustee of Planet Birdsong Foundation, presented on “An Exploration of Why Birds and Bird Sounds are Relevant to Conservation Biology, Community Participation and Economic Development”; and Joseph Tuyishimire, User Engagement Manager at Digital Earth Africa presented on “Mainstreaming Earth Observation (EO) in Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resources Management Projects in Africa”.

November and December seminars were provided by Johan Uddling Fredin and his team of researchers from the University of Rwanda and the University of Gothenburg/Sweden. The team presented on the “Rwanda TREE project”, research exploring how native trees adapt to a warming climate. Dr. Kayla Cranston, Faculty member & Director of Conservation Psychology Strategy & Integration at Antioch University, New England (USA), presented “The Five Factors of Sustained Engagement: Measuring Durable Behavior Change for Biodiversity Conservation”. Elie Ntirenganya, a PhD student, presented “Species richness and seasonal abundance of thrips (Thysanoptera) on different tea cultivars in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province, China”. Evariste Rutebuka, a PhD student at Melbourne University, Australia, presented on “Investing implications of post 2020 global biodiversity framework indicators for multiscale monitoring and reporting”. And last, but certainly not least, Thacien Hagenimana, a Research Fellow and Data Manager at CoEB, offered a training on GitHub, a platform used in project management. Video recordings of the CoEB Seminar Series can be accessed at our Youtube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdr8ykoxB00DI7ywxpvBuWA>

Advocate, promote, educate, and raise awareness about biodiversity, natural resource management, science-policy linkages, knowledge management, and sharing mechanisms.

BIOPROSPECTING

National Herbarium of Rwanda (NHR)

The NHR strives to support plant biodiversity science and conservation and provide resources that can empower individuals and institutions to make science-driven decisions for environmental sustainability. The NHR provides valuable data regarding the botanical biodiversity of Rwanda and the Albertine Rift region for present and future generations.



17,000

Specimens digitized



53,000

Specimen records
repatriated



22500

Specimens mounted



222

Seed records added



In November 2021, the National Herbarium of Rwanda hosted 88 students from the School of Medicine and Pharmacy and the Department of Pharmacy at UR as part of the training for a Pharmaceutical Botany and Traditional Medicine module. The coordinating staff of the NHR, who are professional interns graduated from Botany and Conservation option of Biology Dept, CST/UR coordinated the visit which provided knowledge about plant identification to the Pharmacy students.

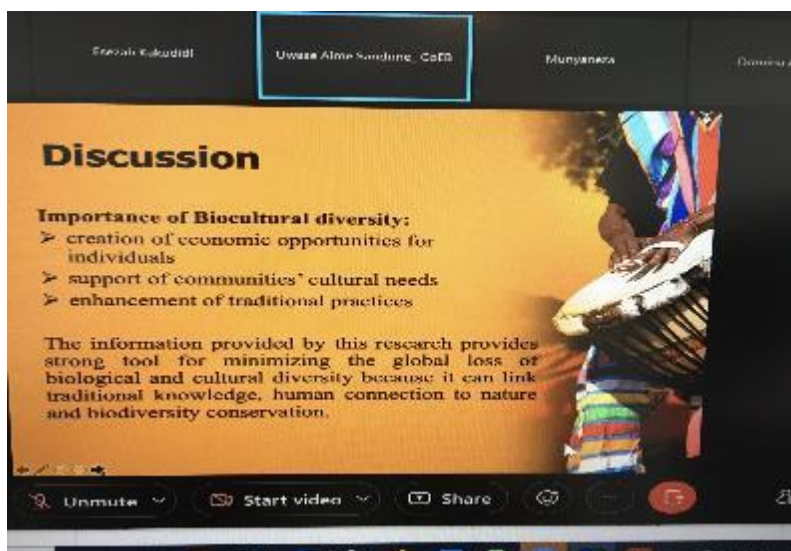
Contribute to the valorization of biodiversity from genes to ecosystems for sustainable development in the region through bioprospecting initiatives.

Natural Product Research Network for East and Central Africa

19th International Symposium: Natural products towards solving global challenges and sustainable development in Africa



Photo: Opening of the NAPRECA symposium in Rwanda with Hon. Minister of Education, Vice Chancellor of UR, and the organizing committee



A recent graduate in Botany and Conservation at UR and co-coordinator at the National Herbarium of Rwanda, Aime Sandrine Uwase presented in the Natural Product Research Network for East and Central Africa (NAPRECA) symposium about her research on biocultural products at the Ethnographic Museum of Rwanda in Huye.

Scientists and researchers convened in Kigali for the 19th International Symposium of the Natural Product Research Network for East and Central Africa (NAPRECA) in November 2021. The event highlighted the importance of natural products in addressing global challenges and their use as sources of compounds for drug discovery. It was officiated by Honorable Minister of Education Dr Valentine Uwamariya.

Speaking at the opening, Prof Alexandre Lyambabaje, University of Rwanda Vice Chancellor, lauded the importance of the symposium to raise awareness on the role of natural resources. He also called for collective efforts to increase awareness and also improve investment on conservation of raw materials such as indigenous plants. The 2021 NAPRECA symposium was co-organized by the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management, and the Regional Center of Excellence for Vaccines, Immunization, and Health Supply Chain Management (RCE-VIHSCM), both at University of Rwanda. The events was a blended symposium with participants from countries in East Africa and Europe.

"We have a department of bioprospecting in the CoEB but it has not yet become fully active and we need collaborations like this symposium event to do research on biodiversity and natural resources which can lead to natural products for sustainable development". Prof. Beth Kaplin

Contribute to the valorization of biodiversity from genes to ecosystems for sustainable development in the region through bioprospecting initiatives.



Amidst Covid-19 restrictions, 30th International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB 2021) goes virtual

The 30th International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB) organized by the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB), took place virtually from 13-17 December. Pre-congress sessions (i.e. training courses, workshops, roundtables) were held between 6-10 December.

The University of Rwanda's Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management (UR-CoEB) was offered a free booth to virtually display its activities. "We put together our booth with videos, PDFs about our current projects, etc, and I received really nice messages from people who attended ICCB conference and visited the booth; they want to know more about CoEB", Director of CoEB, Prof. Beth Kaplin.

The CoEB also hosted pre-conference roundtable events co-organized with partners, Research Associates and Fellows.

The CoEB co-organized an event that explored how to leverage ecosystem services science including payments to improve conservation outcomes in Africa, and was embedded within the pre-congress program of the [International Congress for Conservation Biology 2021 \(ICCB 2021\)](#); it was held on 8 December. Three panelists (Peter Katanisa, Marshall Banamwana and Dr Benis Egoh) started the discussion on the relevance of ecosystem services concepts for conservation, novel tools and policy instruments that can be leveraged to improve conservation outcomes on the continent. Prof Beth Kaplin of CoEB/UR partnered with Dr. Benis Egoh from the University of California-Irvine, USA, Dr. Tuyeni H. Mwampamba, Associate Research Professor, National Autonomous University of Mexico, and colleagues from the [Ecosystem Services Partnership Africa \(ESP-Africa\)](#) and ICCB2021 organizing committee to organize the event. Two Research Fellows of CoEB, Dr. Laine Munir and Cristina Gallegos, also organized a training event on Gender Mainstreaming in environmental research during the pre-congress period.

These two events were aimed at decision-makers, conservation practitioners, researchers and students, and researchers.

The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, a node of the CoEB, attended and organized two symposia at the recent December ICCB. Staff participation included 10 oral presentations and 4 posters.

The Board of Directors of the SCB Africa Section offered participation grants to all African graduate students, researchers, academic faculty, and conservation managers in NGOs to attend the 30th International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB). This grant was open to all African SCB members and non-members, and was offered on a first come first served basis.

ICCB is the premier global meeting for conservation scientists and professionals, including researchers, students, agency personnel, environmental educators, practitioners, and other conservation stakeholders. Attendees gather for lively discussions and scientific presentations on the nexus between biodiversity conservation and genetics, ecology, biogeography, anthropology, history, psychology, economics, conservation marketing, religion, and more. The Society for Conservation Biology is the main international professional society for conservation scientists and practitioners, and hosts the ICCB every other year.

Our growing CoEB community includes staff, UR associates, research fellows and affiliates, and professional and academic interns. Taking a multidisciplinary approach, the Center intentionally brings together different disciplines, academic fields, and youth to solve conservation and sustainability issues within Rwanda and the region.



Photo: Undergraduates at University of Rwanda in the Conservation Biology option check milkweed host plants of the African Queen butterfly for eggs laid by captured wild adult females, mentored by Professor Ian Gordon, a recently appointed Honorary Professor at University of Rwanda and Research Fellow of the CoEB.

Undergraduate students from Conservation Biology options at UR start their senior thesis research with the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund

Pollinators are in the spotlight of this year's Bachelor students from the University of Rwanda conservation biology options. Undergraduates are using the new Ellen DeGeneres Campus to understand the species and ecosystems outside the Volcanoes National Park and help reveal some of the remaining secrets of the African Queen butterfly in Rwanda, mentored by Honorary Professor Ian Gordon who dedicates his life to 'the Queen'. Biodiversity inventor of biodiversity along agricultural field margins, studies of plant-pollinator interactions, and ecological research on butterflies, provides baselines for conservation efforts such as the establishment of pollinator corridors and habitat restoration."



Along with ongoing construction and landscaping activities, the first native plants at the new DFGFI Campus gardens are already attracting insect and bird pollinators. Which ones? That is what these undergraduate students are trying to figure out.

Congratulations to a CoEB Research Fellow for becoming a Board Member of the Africa Section of the Society for Conservation Biology!



Jean Aimé Ruticumugambi
PhD Candidate
Ghent University, Belgium

Jean Aimé Ruticumugambi was recently elected to serve as the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB)-Africa Section's Board Member at Large #3. His term ends on 31 December 2024.

He is a Lecturer at Rwanda Polytechnic, Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC), Kitabi which is a node of the CoEB, and he is on study leave to complete his PhD in Bioscience Engineering: Natural Resources, Forest & Nature Lab, Ghent University in Belgium.

Jean Aimé is a Landscape ecologist fascinated by the patterns and determinants of species richness and composition in space and time in both natural and human modified landscapes and largely in tropical agricultural landscapes. His PhD research focuses on landscape scale impact of agroforestry on functional biodiversity in Rwanda.

Jean Aimé is a member of various professional organizations, as well as Secretary of SCB Rwanda Chapter, and he is an Honorary research fellow in the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management at University of Rwanda (UR-CoEB).

A member at large, in the context of a society like SCB, means that he will be supporting SCB Africa Section's visibility and publication efforts and serve as student representative for the African continent.



Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management

The Government of Rwanda is committed to Centers of Excellence that will ensure research is available to meet national data needs for evidence-based decision making. University of Rwanda hosts several Centers which drive academic research, training and innovation in support of policy and management. The CoEB was formally established at University of Rwanda in 2016 and works across Colleges, Schools and departments. It engages with environmental scientists, biologists, social scientists, policy scientists, gender experts, ecological economists, anthropologists, chemists, pharmacists, molecular biologists, foresters, agronomists, climate scientists, and many others. The Center functions as a consortium of institutions, known as nodes, and works with youth and elders, with government and private sector, communities, practitioners, NGOs and international partners to meet its mission.

We are developing opportunities for youth and early career researchers to gain experience, we provide data for decision-makers, we are creating an academic & research culture, and making it enjoyable. We are creating a dynamic and welcoming atmosphere for academics and practitioners, we want science and research to be exciting and rewarding, and we are driven to contribute to sustainable development goals and achievement of climate resiliency and biodiversity conservation for Rwanda and the region.

Contact us!

www.coebiodiversity.ur.ac.rw

CoEB Rwanda



@coerwanda



coeb1@ur.ac.rw



+250786470049