

FORIG NEWS

Volume 7, Issue 1

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CSIR-FORIG LADIES TOUR IN PICTURES



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CSIR-Forestry Research Institute of Ghana

Volume 7, Issue 1

CSIR-FORIG WELFARE ORGANIZES HEALTH TALK

On 25th April 2013, the Welfare Committee of CSIR-Forestry Research Institute of Ghana organized a health talk at the Institute's premises in Kumasi. Mrs. Gloria Djangbletey, member of the Committee in her opening remarks said the purpose of the programme was to promote a healthy lifestyle and create awareness of the common major illnesses that affect the wellbeing of people. Topics deliberated on included "Lifestyle and Health", "Eating Wisely" and "Stress! A Time Bomb." The three PowerPoint presentations were made by Dr. Charles Hammond, Miss Sandra Boakye Yiadom and Miss Evelyn Owusu Ansah.

Highlights of the Programme - Lifestyle and Health

In his presentation, Dr. Hammond, a pediatrician at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi defined healthy lifestyle as living life in a way that helps a person to remain physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. Since wellness involves both choice and action, Dr. Hammond emphasized that the choices we make each day and the actions we take on those choices could lead to a healthier lifestyle or otherwise.



CSIR-FORIG Conference Room

Photo: Bukari Daramani

He said making negative choices in life like lack of physical activity, taking in too much alcohol, smoking and sexual promiscuity could lead to obesity, cancers, hypertension, stroke, diabetes, arthritis and sexually transmitted diseases, among others. Dr. Hammond's word of caution to all in attendance was to make positive choices and a life-long commitment in the areas of physical fitness, stress, work relationships, medication and nutrition to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Eating Wisely

Miss Sandra Boakye Yiadom, a nutritionist explained the above phrase as eating a variety of foods in proportions and at the right frequency. Miss Yiadom said food is important since it supplies energy which enables us perform the many tasks of everyday living, provides materials needed to build, repair and maintain body tissues, supplies substances that help regulate the body's processes; and helps to protect the body against diseases.

Miss Sandra recommended the eating of a variety of foods such as the following:

- ⇒ *Foods that make us grow* - these include meat, eggs, beans (especially soyabean), agushi and groundnuts.
- ⇒ *Foods that make us glow* - these include fruits and vegetables like oranges, tomatoes, watermelons, kontomire, bananas and other fruits.

She concluded with an advice for all to choose a healthy diet, reduce the intake of fats, oils and sugar and rather drink at least two to three litres of water daily.

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Stress! A Time Bomb

What if you, the reader of this caption were told CSIR-FORIG is sitting on a time bomb? What would be your reaction? Dr. Frances Emily Owusu-Ansah, a lecturer at the School of Medical Sciences, KNUST perfectly described this time bomb during her presentation as the overworked, stressed-out lifestyle of many Ghanaians (CSIR-FORIG inclusive); the work patterns and leisure deficits of today's societal demands that leave many with no backup for recovery. This time bomb, when ready to explode could destroy a single person or a whole family or seriously injure the entire society.

Dr. Owusu-Ansah mentioned that stress is a fact of and a part of everyone's life which could be experienced in the city, on the farm, at work and even in the home. She was however quick to add that not all stress is bad and that we all need some stress in our lives to enable us function. Her description of stress could be summarised in these words: "too little stress creates boredom and lack of motivation; too much stress is also harmful to one's health and that an optimum level of stress is necessary."

With regard to those who were prone to stress, Miss Owusu-Ansah stated that no one was exempted from stress even though some were more susceptible to it than others; and grouped the symptoms of stress into three broad categories namely:

⇒ Physical (headache, pounding of the heart, chest pain, backaches, dizziness, etc)

- ⇒ Behavioural (alcohol and drug addiction, nail biting, becoming irritable and intolerant of minor disturbances, poor work performance and absenteeism, etc)
- ⇒ Psychological (feelings of rejection, anxiety and failure, inability to have a good laugh or high pitch nervous laughter, worrying too much about insignificant things, nervous tics and inability to cry, etc)

Job Stress: What is it?

Miss Owusu-Ansah said the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health defines job stress as "the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Much emphasis was laid on job stress during her presentation mainly because her audience was the working class. Staff in attendance were encouraged to watch out for the causes of job stress which among others included incompetence, lack of job satisfaction, poor working conditions and the feeling of not being in control over one's work.

Managing Stress

Dr. Owusu-Ansah concluded her presentation by briefly discussing twenty ways of managing stress; some of which included the need to become aware of our stressors, emotional and physical reactions, learn to take slow deep breaths to bring one's heart rate and respiration back to normal, balance our lives, take vacations regularly; and not take life too seriously by sometimes laughing as and when the need arose.

GHANA JOURNAL OF FORESTRY AND THE OJ SYSTEM: WAY FORWARD

The Open Journal System (OJS) is an open source solution to managing and publishing scholarly journals online. The OJS software is a research and development initiative of the Public Knowledge Project at the University of British Columbia. Open Journal System is a highly flexible editor-operated journal management and publishing system that can be downloaded for free and installed

on a local web server.

Advantages of the OJ System

The OJS is beginning to be the preferred choice of a number of journals around the world mainly because:

- ⇒ The system has been designed to reduce the time and energy devoted to the clerical and managerial tasks

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associated with editing a journal

- ⇒ It improves the record-keeping and efficiency of editorial processes
- ⇒ It seeks to improve the scholarly and public quality of journal publishing through a number of innovations, including making journal policies more transparent

OJS Features

Unlike conventional publishing, moving to electronic publishing has reduced many of the traditional problems involved with manual editorial processes and OJS has features that are very helpful. One of these features is that the system automatically generates a list of reviewers and filters out those who have already declined in the first review. Other features include the following:

- ⇒ OJS is installed and controlled locally
- ⇒ Submission of manuscripts and management of journal contents are done online
- ⇒ Editors configure requirements, sections, review process, etc
- ⇒ Reading tools for content are based on field and editors' choice
- ⇒ Readers have the opportunity and ability for commenting
- ⇒ There is provision for online help support

Challenges of the *Ghana Journal of Forestry* (GJF)

It cannot be disputed that the GJF has served as an effective communication channel for scientists at CSIR-FORIG and others in the field of forestry. However, the Journal has been confronted with problems of sustainability and delays on the part of reviewers. It is also worth noting that since its inception, the GJF has always been printed; and distributed through the normal mailing system. In addition to increases in printing cost, there is also increasing cost in postage; a situation which needs urgent attention.

Food for Thought

In this era, since electronic publishing has now become an important avenue for knowledge transfer and scholarly communication; it is important to consider publishing the GJF online. Even though information and communication technologies could not solely be relied on to support access to electronic publishing in Ghana, it maybe a good strategy to consider publishing the Journal on-line for internet subscribers and / or users and few hard copies for non-internet subscribers and /or users.

In the light of the above, can we conclude that the aspiration of every scholar and / or scientist is to publish research findings for international recognition; and that the Open Journal System Software is a good option to adopt?

By: Naomi Appiah

PAST DIVISIONAL HEADS OF THE INSTITUTE AWARDED

The Institute's durbar for the 1st half of the year was held on Friday 10th May, 2013 at the Conference Room. The following past divisional heads were awarded for their dedicated service to CSIR-FORIG during the year 2012 as follows:

- ⇒ Dr. Stephen Adu Bredu - Forests, Wildlife Management and Governance
- ⇒ Dr. (Mrs.) Beatrice Darko Obiri - Forest Products and Marketing
- ⇒ Dr. Kennedy Owusu-Afriyie - Biodiversity and Land-Use
- ⇒ Mr. Joseph Kwame Appiah - Wood Industry Development and Trade

- ⇒ Mrs. Gloria D. Djabletey - Ecosystem Service and Climate Change
- ⇒ Mrs. Georgia Marfo Coffie - CSIR-FORIG Administration

CSIR-FORIG LADIES TOURED THE CENTRAL REGION

Approximately six weeks (7th June, 2013) after the timely presentation by Dr. Frances Emily Owusu-Ansah on “Stress! A Time Bomb”, CSIR-FORIG ladies decided to reduce their stress levels by touring the Central Region of Ghana. Executives of the ladies’ club organised a day’s trip to Kakum National Park and the Elmina Castle for its members; one recipe for managing stress by engaging in social activities.

Kakum National Park

The Kakum National Park is located in the coastal environs of the Central Region of Ghana and covers an area of 375 square kilometres. History of the Park proves that it was established in 1931 as a reserve but was gazetted as a National Park in 1992. The park is unique in the sense that it was established at the initiative of the local people and not by the State Department of Wildlife which is responsible for wildlife preservation in Ghana. Another distinct feature is that the Kakum National Park has a canopy walkway which is 350 metres (1,150 ft) long and connects seven tree tops which provides access to the forest.



Kakum Canopy Walk
Photo: Tourist guide

The park is enriched with different species of wildlife such as forty species of mammals (forest elephants, buffalo, leopard, etc), over two hundred species of birds, large number of reptiles and amphibians, and more than four hundred species of butterflies, among others.

Elmina Castle

A tourist guide at the Elmina Castle gave the history of the castle as the largest and oldest existing castle connected to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. When an inquiry was made as to the secret behind the existing good condition of the castle, it was revealed that the castle was built on sedimentary rocks in 1482 by the Portuguese; and believed to be over a hundred meters deep.

Unpleasant Memories of the Castle

The castle is divided into three courtyards: the main, inner and service courtyards. In the main courtyard, all the rooms on the ground floor except two cells were dungeons for male captives during the slave trade period. One of the two cells served as a dwelling place for leaders of those who fought for freedom. The condition was so horrible to the extent that no provision was made for food or water and the bodies of those who died were thrown into the sea to serve as a deterrent to others who had the desire to fight for freedom.

Sadly, women were not excluded from the ill treatment meted out to captives of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. All the rooms on the ground floor of the inner courtyard were the females’ dungeons. Such women captives were victims of rape by the Governors; some of who became their mistresses and even bore children to them. It is also worth mentioning that captives in the dungeons were from a number of African countries such as Ghana, Togo, Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast and a host of other places.

The irony of the history of the Elmina Castle was the location of a Dutch reformed Church on top of the females dungeons with the inscription “**Psalm 132 - Zion is the Lord’s resting place**”.



IUFRO & ITTO CORNER

IUFRO Meetings

For a full list of IUFRO events, please visit <http://www.iufro.org/events>

11 - 13 September, 2013

2013 International Symposium on Tropical Forest Ecosystem Sciences

Bintulu, Sarawak, Malaysia

Contact: Seca Gandaseca

E-mail: seca@btu.upm.edu.my

Website: <http://www.iufro.org/events>

ITTO MEETINGS

25 - 30 November, 2013

Forty Ninth Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Associated Sessions of the Committees

Libreville, Gabon

Contact: Mr. Emmanuel Ze Meka

E-mail: itto@itto.or.jp

Website: <http://www.itto.int/workshop>

Editorial Team

Mrs Naomi Appiah

Mrs Stella Britwum Acquah

Mr. Bukari Daramani

Forestry Research Institute of Ghana
P.O. Box 63
KNUST
KUMASI,
Ghana

Phone: 233 3220 60123
233 3220 60122
Fax: 233 3220 60121
Email: director@csir-forig.org.gh

To send in articles, please use forig_news@csir-forig.org.gh