
Introducing

BUROTROP

One of the issues that aroused much interest and discussion at the XXVI Cocotech Meeting of the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community in Bangkok in 1987 was the proposal to establish a bureau to assist in coconut research with financial assistance from the EEC.

The proposal originated from several European research agencies which recognizing the need to give a new impetus to research on tropical perennial oil crops, in particular oil palm and coconut, had agreed to take the initiative of creating an international structure.

The Cocotech Panel which noted the statement of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) that coconut was the oil crop most in need of international research support and that international research on the crop was currently underfunded and that it had the potential for high pay off welcome the initiative.

It did not take much time for it to be a reality. Bureau for the Development of Research on Tropical Perennial Oil Crops better known as BUROTROP came into effect as of March 1, 1990 with its headquarters in Paris.

The immediate objectives of the BUROTROP are:

“Encourage the exchange of information and experience among research institutions and organizations concerned with tropical perennial oil crops.

Contribute to the identification of production, processing and marketing

constraints and to establish R & D requirements which contribute to overcoming them.

Initiate and promote research on tropical perennial oil crops and offer the opportunity of coordinating such activities within the global network.

Assist donor organizations willing to participate by providing a means and mechanism of coordinating their assistance within the global network.

Identify training needs and advise on suitable training placement in appropriate institutions. To strengthen training capabilities where gaps exist.”



BUROTROP consists of an executive committee of 15 members of whom seven are from producer countries and regional organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific. APCC and the South Pacific Commission are represented on the Executive Board.

Coconut information is one area in which BUROTROP is very much interested in. The activities it undertakes in the information field are:

1. Set up information and data gathering service;
2. Help existing information and data gathering services and promote the distribution of their products;
3. Sponsor or finance conferences,

workshops, seminars and other meetings.

It has already established a database linked to the FAO CARIS program. The seminars it organized in Tanzania and Jamaica have contributed to increase the awareness of the importance of the crop in Africa, Latin America and Caribbean countries. These seminars also established the base-line situation of production development and research in coconut in these countries which enabled identifying the research needs and priorities. “Eurococo Seminar BUROTROP was organized in September last year was to make known the achievements and to take a look at prospects for European contribution to such research. It will bring European research and those from producing countries together which should lead to promoting cooperation among them and institutions they represents.

APCC work very closely with the BUROTROP. Its past three Cocotech Meetings in Fiji (1991), Colombo (1992) and Bali (1993) were financially assisted by BUROTROP. APCC and BUROTROP are working jointly on a Directory of Coconut Research Activities.

BUROTROP's activities also has helped APCC to forge a link with the coconut producing countries of other regions to their mutual benefit. Following the international Seminar on Coconut Research and Development for Latin America and the Caribbean organized by BUROTROP and IICA in October 1992 in Jamaica, an informal arrangement is being pursued to have links with some of these countries by which they could benefit from the information network. First such link is to be Jamaica with its Coconut Industry Board as the focal point. It is hoped that the network will eventually be linked to other coconut producing countries within and outside the region. This is expected to further strengthen the exchange of information among the coconut producing countries. ■