

University of Pretoria Wins Anafe Bid

Posted on 06 August 2010



The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria has been selected as the Southern Africa region's Focal Institution for ANAFE (African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education). The University competed with other regional Universities in a process which started in November 2009.

The mission of ANAFE is to "improve Agricultural and Natural Resources Education for Impact on Development". A good example is the focus on Agroforestry, which has resulted not only in the teaching of Agroforestry as part of agriculture or natural resource management programmes in many colleges and universities, but also as a separate discipline. In order to fully achieve sustainable development in African countries, agricultural and natural resource education on tertiary level is of critical importance.

An ANAFE selection committee visited the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences from 18 to 20 February 2010. The committee was won over by a number of factors during their visit. The following were among them: the impressive, state of the art research facilities, the strong human resource availability, long history in training from undergraduate to PhD levels, the strong publication record, sound financial management policy, strong focus on entrepreneurial training and development, and the close integration existing between the university and industry. The aim is to establish four focal Institutions in Eastern and Central Africa (ECA), Southern Africa (SA), the Sahelian countries (Sahel) and the Africa Humid Tropics (AHT), to enhance human resource development through post-graduate education. Being selected as one of these institutions is a great honour and will benefit the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences' post-graduate training significantly.

ANAFE is a decentralized organization. Membership surged to 128 colleges and universities in 34 African countries. It conducts its work through four regional chapters called RAFTs (Regional Agricultural Fora for Training). There is one RAFT each in Eastern and Central Africa (ECA), Southern Africa (SA), the Sahelian countries (Sahel) and the Africa Humid Tropics (AHT). National chapters are known as NAFTs (National Agricultural Fora for Training).

The University of Pretoria will be the Southern African centre for all agricultural and natural resource training and research transformation activities through ANAFE. The University will run the regional programme as well as link up with the continental programme. This should be seen as an excellent opportunity to improve the visibility and influence on the capacity building front of the University of Pretoria while contributing to the development of the continent and achievement of food security.

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