

IPM CRSP Trip Report

Country Visited: Ethiopia

Dates of Travel: December 18 to 23, 2009

Travelers Name and Affiliation: Wondi Mersie, PI of Parthenium Project, Virginia State University.

Purpose of Trip: To organize and attend a regional parthenium workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop is based on the project entitled, “Abating the Weed Parthenium (*Parthenium hysterophorus* L.) Damage in Eastern Africa Using Integrated Cultural and Biological Control Measures.” The goal of the workshop was to develop a detailed work plan to implement the parthenium project. Specific objectives of the workshop were:

- discuss and develop a common protocol for the implementation of each objective
- discuss the role of women in parthenium management
- familiarize project partners with IPM CRSP and USAID regulations, expectations
- conduct training on biological agent rearing, release and monitoring of impact

Sites visited: -Biological Control facility at Ambo Plant Protection Research Center
-The workshop was held at Abebech Hotel on December 21 and 22, 2009.
-Parthenium infested farms and pasture areas on the road to Sodore about 130 Km east of Addis Ababa
-The USAID mission in Addis Ababa

Description of Activities/Observation:

The parthenium regional workshop was officially opened by Ambo Research Center Director Dr. Kemal Ali representing Dr. Solomon Assefa Director General of Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) at 9 AM on December 21, 2009.

Attendance was forty and there were five female participants. Workshop participants were from Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and USA. About 85% of the participants were from Ethiopia.

During the two days, a total of seventeen papers were presented including country papers as well as papers highlighting the progress of the parthenium project. The workshop also addressed various aspects of the biological control of weeds. A unique presentation was made by Mrs. Yeshi Chiche entitled, “Gender Dimension in Parthenium Weed Management.” This presentation stimulated a lot of questions and discussions regarding the role of women in agriculture and in particular in weed control activities in Ethiopia. There was also an extensive discussion on the characteristics of an ideal rearing site for *Zygogramma*. The two new members of the parthenium project team, Dr. Emily Wabuye

from Kenya and Ms. Krissie Clark from Tanzania also made presentations on the potential distribution of parthenium in their respective countries. A map showing the distribution of parthenium in Ethiopia and an identification key for parthenium were distributed to workshop participants.

An interview with the local press was also conducted at Ambo. The interview questions focused on the progress of the parthenium project.

List of participants of the regional parthenium workshop on December 21-22, 2009

Name	Institution/Profession	E-mail	Phone
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December 23, 2009

Dr. Mersie met with Dr. Belay Demissie, Senior Agricultural Advisor and Head, Rural Productivity Division at USAID Mission in Ethiopia. Dr. Belay was unable to attend the parthenium workshop due to prior commitments. He was briefed by Dr. Mersie about the parthenium project and the workshop.

December 24, 2009

Dr. Mersie met with Dr. Eshetu Ahmed, EIAR Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator at his office. The meeting focused on the support needed from EIAR management for efficient implementation of the biological control work, and budget utilization of the project. Dr. Eshetu affirmed his support for successful implementation of the project. Dr. Kassahun Zewdie, EIAR Parthenium Project Coordinator was present at the meeting.

December 25, 2009

Dr. Mersie met with Dr. Berhe Gebre Egizeabeher, Plant and Animal Directorate at Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MOARD), Mr. Berhanu Gebre Medhin, Weed Scientist at MOARD and Dr. Kassahun Zewdie, EIAR Parthenium Project Coordinator. Dr. Berhe was acting on behalf of State Minister Dr. Aberra Deressa who was out of town. The discussion focused on the role of MORAD in the rearing and release of *Zygogramma* after IEE permit is obtained from USAID. MORAD is eager to facilitate the site selection process for the rearing of the bioagent.