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The 2016 Global *Musa* Strategy

MusaNet is very pleased to announce the publication of the 2016 Global Strategy for the Conservation and Use of *Musa* Genetic Resources. The strategy, updated from the first version in 2006, covers many topics of *Musa* genetic resources: diversity, taxonomy, characterization, in situ conservation, *Musa* collections around the world, the ITC collection, information management, the safe movement of germplasm, evaluation and genetic improvement. The chapters contain an assessment of the current situation (Where we are), future objectives (Where we want to go) and proposed actions (How will we get there). The proposed actions will form the foundation for MusaNet activities over the next 5-10 years, which will be the subject of the upcoming MusaNet meeting (see below).

A summary booklet has also been produced and will be printed in time for the ProMusa symposium and MusaNet meeting (see below).



Read more and download the Strategy and the summary booklet [here](#).

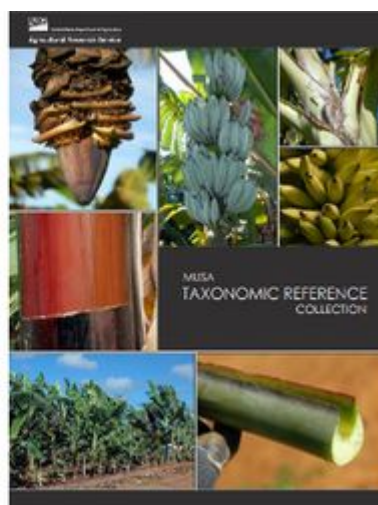
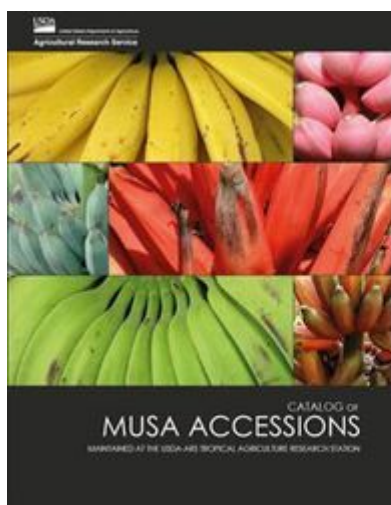
USDA catalogues on MusaNet

The USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Tropical Agriculture Research Station (TARS) in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, has recently published two open-access catalogues showcasing their *Musa* collection.

The first catalogue documents the entire USDA-ARS TARS *Musa* collection for research and educational purposes. It contains detailed information in the form of digital voucher images of particular phenotypic traits, agronomic traits as well as molecular information.

The second catalogue shows the work USDA-ARS TARS has undertaken as part of Bioversity International's Taxonomic Reference Collection (TRC) exercise. This exercise, which involves 12 global partners, aims to test the robustness of the standard banana descriptors across several environments using 34 accessions that represent the diversity of *Musa*. In this catalogue, the TRC accessions are documented by passport and descriptor information, agronomic performance, molecular fingerprints and voucher images.

You can download the USDA catalogues [here](#).



Young *Musa* researcher profile: Lia Hapsari

MusaNet will regularly profile a young researcher in *Musa* genetic resources. The first profile features Lia Hapsari, from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences in East Java.

With an undergraduate background in Plant Breeding and a MSc in Conservation Biology, Lia joined the Purwodadi Botanic Garden of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences in 2009 and is currently a member of research staff on Domestication, Introduction and Economic Botany Group, Curator of Musaceae collection and also Networking and Dissemination Supervisor.



One of her recent important projects is the revitalization of the collection and diversity study of bananas in the Purwodadi Botanic Garden, which involves saving the banana field collection from disease, increasing the number of accessions through collecting missions in East Java (including Madura Island) and expanding information about its banana diversity.

She plans to pursue a PhD in about 3 to 5 years and will continue her career at the Purwodadi Botanic Garden, working on *Musa* and other regionally important taxa including yam, ginger and mango.

Read more about Lia's work and her favourite banana cultivar [here](#).

Upcoming Events

MusaNet meeting in Montpellier

MusaNet will hold a general meeting 14 and 15 October 2016 at Bioversity International in Montpellier, just after the [ProMusa Symposium](#) (10-14 October). This will be the first all members meeting since MusaNet was established in 2011. The meeting will focus on implementing the newly published Global Strategy for the Conservation and Use of *Musa* Genetic Resources. We will discuss the numerous proposed actions detailed in the Strategy, as well as other ideas and priorities concerning the five thematic groups for the next 5-10 years. Around 25 members have confirmed that they will attend, including representatives from the four regional networks (MusaLAC, Innovate Plantain, BARNESA and BAPNET) and ProMusa. A report summarizing the discussions will be published on MusaNet following the meeting.

We are looking forward to a productive and dynamic meeting!

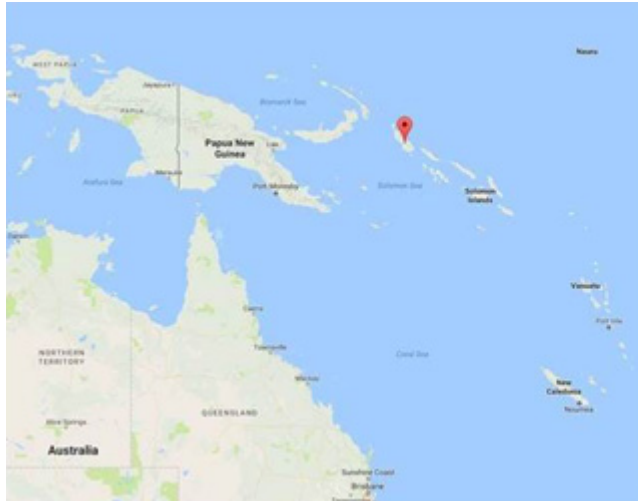
Exploring Bougainville Island

After the very fruitful [collecting mission in Indonesia](#) in 2012-2013, this October, a group of MusaNet members will conduct a 12 day collecting mission on the Pacific island of Bougainville. Janet Paofa and Gou Rauka (NARI), Joshua Koles (DPI Buka), Julie Sardos (Bioversity), Gabe Sachter-Smith and Steven Janssens (Botanical Garden of Meise) will participate in the mission. Due to the recent Bougainville conflict, the island was not visited during the IBPGR Papua New Guinea collecting missions conducted in 1988-89.

This mission will therefore focus on the original *Musa* diversity that can be found there with particular expectations on edible diploids and Fe'i bananas. In addition to suckers that will be transferred to NARI's facilities prior to introduction to the ITC, seeds will also be collected to perform population genetic studies to better understand the biology of the wild species concerned, and also for tests on seed germination.

Best of luck to the collecting mission team!

Left: Location of Bougainville Island. Right: Fe'i bananas, like this one collected from Indonesia, will be targeted during the mission (photo credit: Jeff Daniels, DAF).



MusaNet regional workshop on EAHBs in Uganda

MusaNet will hold its second regional workshop on *Musa* characterization and documentation at NARO, Uganda from the 12-16 December. At least 13 national *Musa* collection curators from East and Southern African countries will participate in the workshop, which will be similar to the first [regional workshop held at CARBAP in 2015](#). The main objectives are to have a common understanding and agree on the minimum descriptors used to characterize East African Highland bananas (EAHBs) and to train the curators on field characterization using MusaTab, the mobile device application that will be released at the end of the year.

The workshop will also cover aspects of information management, field management and foster knowledge exchange among the regional collections. It should be an exciting week at NARO so stayed tuned for the full report after the workshop.

