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"Feeding the planet in the 21st century under climate variability and change: commodity chains, biodiversity, sustainability"

## Panel Discussion in the Ferrara Theatre

Thursday, October 29, 2009 — 1:00-3:00 pm



**Moderator: Gary H. Toenniessen**, *Rockefeller Foundation, New York*

Gary Toenniessen is a Managing Director at The Rockefeller Foundation and until recently served as Interim President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa during its start-up phase. As Managing Director, Toenniessen provides leadership and strategy direction for the Foundation's initiatives in agricultural development. In Africa the emphasis is on resilient crops, soil fertility, strengthening markets and capacity building. He has co-authored/edited *Rice Biotechnology and Securing the Harvest: Biotechnology, Breeding and Seed Systems for African Crops*. He continues to develop ideas and theories on how the world's growing population can and should be fed and how agricultural development can be an engine for economic growth.



**Speaker: Marianne Bänziger**, *International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), Nairobi*

Marianne Bänziger is CIMMYT's Deputy Director General for Research and Partnerships. The International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, known by its Spanish acronym, CIMMYT ([www.cimmyt.org](http://www.cimmyt.org)), is an international, not-for-profit research and training organization. With partners in over 100 countries, the center applies science to increase food security, improve the productivity and profitability of maize and wheat farming systems, and sustain natural resources in the developing world. Marianne Bänziger received her PhD from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology ETH in Zurich, Switzerland in 1992 before she joined CIMMYT as a Maize Physiologist in Mexico. In 1996, she moved to Zimbabwe where she initiated CIMMYT's drought breeding efforts in southern Africa and subsequently took over the leadership of the African Livelihoods Program (2004) and the Global Maize Program (2005) while being based in Kenya. She assumed her new role as the CIMMYT's Deputy Director General for Research and Partnerships in October 2009, based in Mexico. Marianne Bänziger has an in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with increasing food production in the developing world under conditions of increasing scarcity of natural resources and impacts of climate change.



**Speaker: Peter H. Raven**, *Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis*

Peter Raven is a botanist and environmentalist, notable as the longtime director of the Missouri Botanical Garden, which he has directed since 1971. Raven is possibly best known for his important work *Coevolution of Insects and Plants* published in the journal *Evolution* in 1964, which he coauthored with Paul R. Ehrlich. Since then he has authored numerous scientific and popular papers, many on the evening primrose family, *Onagraceae*. Raven is also an author of the widely used textbook *Biology of Plants*, now in its seventh edition, coauthored with Ray F. Evert and Susan E. Eichhorn (both of University of Wisconsin). In 2000 the American Society of Plant Taxonomists established the Peter Raven Award in his honor, to be conferred to authors with outstanding contributions to plant taxonomy and “for exceptional efforts at outreach to non-scientists”.



**Speaker: Peter Langridge**, *Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (ACPGF), University of Adelaide, Adelaide*

Peter Langridge is currently the Chief Executive Officer and Director of the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics. This centre was established by the Australian Government in 2003 to develop and deliver new genetic technologies for crop improvement. Research at the centre is targeted to enhancing the tolerance of crops to environmental stresses, particularly drought and salinity tolerance. The Centre works largely with wheat and barley but also uses rice, maize and other species as models for studying stress responses. Peter’s research has focused on developing and deploying new breeding strategies based around a detailed molecular and genetic understanding of the target species and traits. This work sits at the interface between molecular biology and practical crop improvement.



**Speaker: Pierre Lagoda**, *United Nations Joint Food & Agriculture Organization/International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna*

Since 2004, Pierre Lagoda has served as section head of the Plant Breeding and Genetics Section of the UN’s Joint FAO/IAEA programme, which assists Member Countries of to use nuclear techniques and related biotechnologies for developing improved strategies for sustainable food security. The Food and Agriculture Organization was founded in October 1945 and mandated mandate to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, to improve agricultural productivity, and to better the condition of rural populations. Current research activities include mutation Induction and related biotechnologies, structural and functional genomics (banana, rice), comparative genomics; tropical crops breeding; and musa genetics and breeding.