**Communiqué of the 53rd Annual Conference of the Entomological Society of Nigeria (ESN)**

The 53rd Annual Conference of the Entomological Society of Nigeria (ESN) was successfully held from Wednesday, October 2, to Saturday, October 5, 2024, at the University of Abuja, Nigeria. The conference, themed “Insects: Implications for Public Health, Agriculture, and Environmental Sustainability,” brought together stakeholders from academia, government, industry, and research to explore the critical roles insects play in ecosystems, agriculture, and public health, and to discuss sustainable solutions for leveraging these contributions while addressing challenges posed by insects in disease transmission and food production.

**Day One: Wednesday, October 2, 2024**

The first day of the conference began with the arrival and registration of participants at the Faculty of Agriculture Lecture Theatre. Delegates from various sectors across the country and beyond arrived at the venue, setting a vibrant tone for the conference. This was followed by the council meeting of the National Executive Council (NEC), Board of Trustees (BoT), and the Local Organizing Committee (LOC), where strategic decisions regarding the future of the Society were discussed.

**Day Two: Thursday, October 3, 2024**

The official opening ceremony commenced with a courtesy visit by the ESN leadership, including NEC, BoT, and LOC members, to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja, Prof. Aisha Maikudi. This gesture underscored the university’s commitment to hosting and supporting the entomological community.

The conference program then transitioned into the ceremonial sessions. Prof. Y. D. Malann, Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee, delivered a warm welcome address, expressing gratitude to attendees and outlining the objectives of the conference. This was followed by a keynote address delivered by Prof. Abdullahi Mustapha, Director General/CEO of the National Biotechnology Research Development Agency (NBRDA), who underscored the significant impact of insects on public health, agriculture, and environmental sustainability. Prof. Mustapha called for innovative solutions in biotechnology to manage the challenges posed by insects, emphasizing the need for biodiversity preservation, particularly in light of climate change and habitat destruction.

The day also saw the presentation of goodwill messages from various stakeholders and sponsors, alongside a brief music interlude to provide a celebratory tone to the proceedings. Important milestones in the Society’s history were achieved during the session, including the awarding of Honorary Fellows to notable entomologists, the investiture of the Chairman of the Board of HFESN, and the unveiling of the ESN National Secretariat prototype. These events marked significant moments of recognition and progress for the Society.

Dr. Ishiak Othman Khalid, Director General of the National Agency for the Control of Small Arms, delivered a paper that delved into cutting-edge research in the field of entomology, emphasizing the role of insects in both innovation and sustainability.

The afternoon plenary session, chaired by Prof. Georgina S. Mwansat, featured three key papers addressing urgent topics in the field of entomology:

* **Conserving Declining Insect Biodiversity for Ecosystem Sustainability** by Dr. Ibrahim Musa Goni, Conservator-General, National Park Service.
* **Reducing Public Health Disease Burden through Effective Vector Control** by Dr. Sunday Isiyaku, Executive Director of Reaching the Last Mile (RLM).
* **Insect-Plant Relationships: Tackling Global Food Challenges and Environmental Sustainability** by Prof. Baba Gana J. Kabir, Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Research Institute.

These papers sparked robust discussions on conservation strategies, vector management, and food security, highlighting the crucial role insects play across various ecosystems.

The day concluded with a cocktail reception, offering participants the opportunity to network and engage in informal discussions about the future of entomology in Nigeria and beyond.

**Day Three: Friday, October 4, 2024**

The third day of the conference featured a series of technical sessions, providing a platform for scientists, researchers, and professionals to present their findings on contemporary issues in entomology. The sessions covered diverse topics such as pest management, insect biodiversity, and the intersection of insect populations with climate change. Poster viewings complemented the presentations, offering visual insights into ongoing research.

In the afternoon, the Annual Business General Meeting (ABGM) was held, during which key decisions were made regarding the governance and future direction of the Society. Discussions centred on enhancing member engagement, updating membership databases, and ensuring sustainable financing for the Society’s projects. The meeting concluded with a strong call for greater collaboration among members, researchers, and external stakeholders.

The day ended with a conference dinner, where participants had the chance to relax and reflect on the outcomes of the day’s discussions, while also celebrating the achievements of the Society.

**Day Four: Saturday, October 5, 2024**

The final day marked the departure of participants, signalling the conclusion of the 53rd Annual Conference. Delegates departed with renewed enthusiasm and a commitment to advancing the field of entomology for the benefit of society and the environment.

**Key Outcomes and Resolutions**

The conference concluded with a set of key resolutions aimed at addressing both current challenges and future opportunities within the field of entomology:

* **Insect Biodiversity Conservation**: There was a consensus on the urgent need to develop both short- and long-term strategies to conserve declining insect populations. These populations are critical for maintaining ecological balance, supporting agricultural productivity, and sustaining public health. The resolutions emphasized the importance of habitat restoration, sustainable agricultural practices, and climate-smart conservation efforts.
* **Vector Control and Public Health**: With the ongoing burden of vector-borne diseases such as malaria, lymphatic filariasis, and onchocerciasis, the conference called for a stronger commitment to Integrated Vector Management (IVM). This approach combines biological, chemical, and environmental management strategies to effectively control vector populations and reduce disease transmission. The participants stressed the importance of public awareness campaigns and the adoption of innovative techniques in vector management.
* **Technological Innovations in Entomology**: A significant focus was placed on the role of biotechnology in addressing insect-related challenges. Innovations such as gene manipulation, genetic pest control, and advanced surveillance technologies were highlighted as key tools for enhancing agricultural productivity and managing harmful insect populations. The conference also encouraged research into the use of insects as a sustainable protein source, contributing to global food security.
* **Collaboration and Capacity Building**: The need for increased collaboration between research institutions, government bodies, and the private sector was emphasized throughout the event. Participants called for the establishment of research partnerships and the continuous training and development of members. The Society resolved to enhance capacity-building initiatives to ensure that Nigerian entomologists remain at the forefront of global research.
* **ESN National Secretariat**: The launch of the ESN National Secretariat prototype represents a significant milestone for the Society. This new facility is expected to enhance the operational capacity of the Society, provide a hub for entomological research, and elevate the profile of entomology as a discipline in Nigeria.

**Conclusion**

The 53rd Annual Conference of the Entomological Society of Nigeria reaffirmed the essential role of entomology in addressing global challenges related to public health, food security, and environmental sustainability. Through engaging discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaboration, participants left the conference equipped with new insights and a renewed commitment to furthering research and implementing innovative solutions that harness the potential of insects for the betterment of society.

**Signed,** Prof. Y. D. Malann
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