specified meetings of the Council of Ministers and the other organs and institutions of the Community.

EAFF considers this development as very positive in light of the organization’s advocacy mandate at the regional level. Farmers in East Africa are now assured of official representation at the EAC.

The outputs of the 20th council of minister’s meeting was the result of a concerted effort of the EAFF secretariat and members that started in 2005. Continued on page 2.
EAC: EAFF’S JOURNEY TO OBSERVER STATUS

EAFF first applied for observer status on 24th February 2005, after receiving initial communication from the Council of Ministers. This application was rejected on grounds that EAFF members must be registered in their respective countries. After fulfilling this requirement, EAFF submitted a second application on 30th May 2007. This application was also rejected. In April 2008, EAFF sent a delegation of farmer leaders, led by the former Vice President, Mr. Chebet Maikut, to Arusha to meet the EAC Secretary General, Ambassador Juma Mwapachu.

The meeting with Amd. Mwapachu resolved that EAFF formalizes its relationship with the EAC through a Memorandum of Understanding. The MoU was signed in August 2008. Shortly later, on 16th September 2008, EAFF submitted a third application. This application was tabled by the Council of Ministers who deferred the decision pending further discussions with their respective Ministries of Agriculture. The Council wanted the Agricultural Ministers to ratify the position of their respective national farmer organizations.

The EAFF President and CEO sent letters to the leaders of her member organizations in the five countries updating them on the developments with respect to the organization’s application for observer status. The EAFF management requested the country leaders to lobby their respective ministries. EAFF then proceeded to organize the second regional farmers’ congress in Arusha, near the seat of the EAC Secretariat. The event was attended by the Minister of East African Community Affairs from the Tanzanian government, and the Director of Productive Sectors at the EAC Secretariat, Dr. N. Weggoro. The EAFF President eloquently presented EAFF’s case to the Minister, after which the Minister directed Dr. Weggoro to follow up on the matter, to ensure that observer status was granted.

In the meantime, the EAC Secretariat regularly invited EAFF to various EAC policy functions including the Preparatory meeting for the Heads of State summit on Food Security and Climate Change.

UGANDA: UPDATES FROM UGANDA COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE (UCA)

Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA) is the umbrella organization of cooperative societies in Uganda. With an individual membership of 500,000 members, UCA is fast developing into a formidable voice for the cooperative movement in Uganda. In the first quarter of 2010, UCA was involved in several advocacy activities such as:

**UCA advocates for credit for farmers.** The financial sectors in the region have, for a long time, viewed agriculture and farming as risky business. And as such credit available for small scale farmers has been either hard to access, expensive or in most cases, both.

UCA is currently negotiating the Microfinance Support Centre (MSC), an agency under Uganda’s Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, to extend credit to cooperatives for various activities such as storage. UCA’s goal is for farmers to access this credit at rates between 9 percent per year which is about half the current market rate.

**Revising Uganda’s Cooperative Act.** UCA is actively engaged with the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry in amending the Cooperative Act. These revisions have been on-going for several years, though progress has been slow. UCA is advocating for less government involvement in the management of cooperative societies, and the need for more direct incentives for cooperative societies. The revised law has been sent to the Cabinet for approval, and a committee is to be formed to fast-track the process. UCA has nominated Mr. Leonard Msemakweli, the Executive Secretary to sit on the committee.
Cooperative societies are the only form of farmer organizations that are governed by a specific law. In East Africa, the cooperative movement dates back to the early years of the 20th century — 1913 in Uganda, and 1908 in Kenya. Legislation in these countries has evolved considerably over the past 100 years, with the changing economic and political landscape.

With the advent of regional integration, EAFF has deemed it necessary that the region should have a standard cooperative policy from which legislation should be developed. Against this backdrop, EAFF organized a workshop to analyze and compare the Cooperative Acts from Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. The workshop brought together representatives from apex cooperative organizations from the region such as the Cooperative Alliance of Kenya, Uganda Cooperative Alliance, and the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives, Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union (all EAFF members), International Cooperative Alliance, Uganda National Farmers’ Federation, Ministry of Cooperatives in Kenya, and the Galgafarm First Hungarian Cooperative. After discussing the key gaps in the Uganda and Kenya Acts, the participants’ recommended that the regional model act should have clear objectives and guiding principles, and should emphasize the following: the promotion of ownership by members in terms of governance and management; the promotion of professionalism in the cooperative movement in terms of governance, accounting and management; the distinguishing roles of cooperatives — facilitation versus business; prevention of dual registration of cooperatives under the Cooperatives Act and the Companies Act; and clear guidelines for the implementation of the legislation, with the inclusion of representatives of the cooperative movement in the implementation framework. EAFF’s primary target audience for the regional policy and act is the East African Community. As a first step, EAFF will advocate for the topic of Cooperatives Policy to be placed on the EAC agenda for the period July to December 2010.

EAFF DISCUSSES COOPERATIVE POLICY, Nairobi

![Participants at EAFF Cooperatives Policy Workshop (left to right): standing, Stephen Muchiri (CEO, EAFF); Joseph Nkandu (Consultant, and CEO, NUCAFE); Grace Ngambi (Treasurer, KENFAP); Philip Kiriro (President, EAFF); Francis Kamande (Board member, CAK); Tadesse Meskela (MD, Oromia); Geza Varga (MD, Galgafarm First Hungarian Cooperative); Mainza Mugoya (Policy Officer, EAFF); Leonard Msemaweli (Exec Sec, UCA); squatting, Gloria Mazoko (Policy Officer, TFC); Harriet Ssali (Vice President, EAFF); Gacoki Kipruto (Workshop Rappateur)]
The Economic Community of the Great Lakes region (CEPGL) is a regional governmental organization whose membership consists of three countries—Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. CEPGL was formed in 1979, and revived in April 2007. The theme of Agriculture and Food Security is a central component of one of the organization’s objective: to significantly reduce poverty.

From April 14th to 15th 2010, CAPAD (EAFF members from Burundi) organized a stakeholder’s forum to discuss the work of CEPGL and its relevance to farmers in the region.

The forum brought together farmers from the three countries, EAFF staff, and representatives from development partner organizations. CEPGL was represented by Madame Odette Kayitesi, the Director of Agriculture and Food Security. During the two-day meeting, farmers repeatedly advocated for more involvement in the design and implementation of government programs.

This position was received by the Mme Kayitesi, who urged the farmers to present their positions under one voice. She also proposed that the farmers, through their regional umbrella organization, EAFF, should sign a memorandum of understanding with CEPGL. This would cement the relationship between the two organizations and strengthen the farmers’ position at the policy table. In addition to the EAFF Policy Officer, Mainza Mugoya, EAFF was represented by two board members—Mme Annick Sezibera from CAPAD (Burundi), and Mme Cesarie Kantarama from INGABO (Rwanda).

The two board members agreed to propose that EAFF develops and signs a MoU with CEPGL during the board meeting slated for May 2010. There are several advantages of seeking a formal relationship with CEPGL. One, CEPGL aims to follow closely in the footsteps of the EAC in terms of regional integration, seeking common standards and procedures and trade regimes among others. Since EAFF already has observer status at EAC, a MoU with CEPGL would strategically place EAFF at the heart of policy-making throughout the region. This would also ensure the coherence of farmers’ interests in the two organizations.

Two, farmers in the CEPGL region have unique challenges given their recent turbulent history. With a closer and more deliberate engagement in the region, EAFF would be able to develop tailor-made programs for the region.

FOPAC, the umbrella organization of farmers located in the North Kivu region in DRC organized a meeting of stakeholders in the agriculture sector in Goma, in Eastern DRC. The meeting brought together parliamentarians and farmer representatives to review the existing agricultural policies and advocate for more favourable policies for farmers.

The meeting identified four main policy items which will be the main issues for FOPAC’s lobby and advocacy work in 2010. These issues were access to land, access to inputs, production support and processing and marketing support. With respect to land, FOPAC is advocating for the clear demarcation of land to be used for agriculture, forestry, mining, reserves, or other land use. This would provide certainty for farming activities. In addition, farmers are advocating for clarity in the implementation of the land law and customary laws, which conflict each other in the area of land management.

According to the land laws, the state is mandated to manage the land, while according to the customary laws, the chiefs are the main custodians of the land.

The meeting highlighted four main policy items which will be the main issues for FOPAC’s lobby and advocacy work in 2010.
EAFF Advocacy Calendar (April–June 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Land Grab</strong>: EAFF has commissioned a study on Land Grab. The study will look at the motivations of the players behind the problem, and highlight specific cases where farmers are negatively impacted.</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
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<td><strong>Policy Training</strong>: EAFF will conduct a training for CEOs, policy officers and leaders on the topics of policy formulation, analysis, and advocacy.</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Agricultural Inputs</strong>: EAFF will commission a study to determine the most appropriate policy environment to ensure that farmers can access agricultural inputs in a timely and cost-effective way.</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAC Heads of State Summit</strong>: EAFF President, Mr. Kiriro will attend the EAC Heads of State summit in Arusha, where the Climate Change policy and Food Security policy will be ratified.</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Arusha</td>
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<td><strong>ASARECA Policy forum</strong>: EAFF Board member (Rwanda), Mr. Martin Nzamugorora will attend (on behalf of the EAFF President) the ASARECA policy forum on food price stability in the COMESA region.</td>
<td>May 4th</td>
<td>Kigali</td>
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- Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC)
- Vredeseilanden (VECO)
- European Union (EU)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA)

Uganda:  
Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA)  
Contact: Mr. Leonard Msemakweli, Exec. Secretary  
Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE)  
Contact: Mr. Jotham Turnusilime, Exec. Secretary  
National Union of Coffee Agribusiness and Farmers Enterprises (NUCAFE)  
Contact: Mr. Joseph Nkandu, Exec. Secretary  

Democratic Republic of Congo:  
Fédération des Organisations Producteurs du Congo au Nord-Kivu (FOPAC)  
Contact: Mr. Etiene Mbagurirahi, Exec Sec  
Ligue Des Organisations Des Femmes Paysmannes Du Congo (LOFEPACO)  
Contact: Ms. Therese Katungu  
Cooperative Centrale Du Nord-Kivu (COOCENKI)  
Contact: Mr. Daniel Munambo, CEO  
Syndicat De Defense Des Interests Paysans (SYDIP)  
Contact: Mr. Mbulula Kambale, Secretary General  

Burundi:  
Confédération des Associations des Producteurs Agricoles pour le Developpement (CAPAD)  
Contact: Dr. Annick Sezibera, Executive Secretary  

Rwanda:  
Syndicat Des agri-eleveurs du Rwanda (IMBARAGA)  
Contact: Mr. Juvenal Musine, CEO  
Syndicat Rwandais des Agriculteurs et Eleveurs (INGABO)  
Contact: Mr. Francois Mbabazi, Coordinator  

Kenya:  
Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP)  
Contact: Dr. John Mutunga, CEO  
Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK)  
Contact: Mr. Francis Munane, CEO  

Tanzania:  
MVIVATA  
Contact: Mr. Steen Ruvuga, CEO  
Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives (TFC)  
Contact: Willigis Mbugoro, Exec Sec  
Agricultural Council of Tanzania (ACT)  
Contact: Ms. Janet Bigeko, CEO  

Eritrea:  
National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW)  
Contact: Mr. Tseggai Mogos, Sec. Gen.  

Ethiopia:  
Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union (OCFCU)  
Contact: Mr. Tadesse Meskela, GM  

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