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AfricaBlight: Present and future

ANNE W NJOROGE

International Potato Center (CIP), Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya
Email: annienjoroge@gmail.com

The establishment of AfricaBlight, an African network coordinating late blight research in the African countries has been proposed. Diverse researchers in the different African countries have been carrying out various activities aimed at either understanding the phenotypic characteristics of *Phytophthora infestans* or, the outcome of the interaction between *P. infestans* and one of its hosts in Aftica (potato, tomato, garden huckleberry). However, very few genetic studies investigating the circulating *P. infestans* strains exists and even the current ones are sometimes fragmented into regions within specific countries in dissimilar years. Consequently, no proper information on the status of the P*. infestans* genotypes in Africa exists. In 2017, a 12-plex microsatellite genotyping approach was validated for the region, at a research hub in Nairobi Kenya, allowing for global comparisons of data from the rest of the world. I propose that harmonization of late blight research through the AfricaBlight network will give researchers a platform to use standard protocols. Proper coordination of the network's activities will however require funding, both nationally and internationally, and hence, the first aim of the proposal is to seek out funding opportunities.