

THE AGROECOLOGY POST

Amplifying Stories of African Journalists
and Communicators

JANUARY - MARCH 2024 | ISSUE 005



**SECURE LAND
RIGHTS CONTRIBUTE TO
PROMOTING AGROECOLOGY**

Remarks from Editor in Chief:

Dear **Readers**,

Greetings and welcome to the most recent Agroecology Post edition. This is the first edition we have released in 2024. It is my pleasure as Editor-in-Chief to share with you a selection of incisive and inspirational pieces, as well as thought-provoking articles, that highlight the path toward sustainable and regenerative agriculture. These stories were written by our journalists at the Agroecology School for Journalists and Communicators.

This issue highlights the critical role that protected land rights play in furthering Agroecology—a paradigm shifting approach to food production that stresses the intricate interdependencies between agriculture, ecology, and human well-being. It recognizes that the world is an intricately interconnected system in which every decision made in the context of agriculture affects biodiversity, soil quality, water availability, and human well-being on an ecosystem-wide scale.

I would want to express my appreciation to all of the hardworking journalists and contributors who put their knowledge and hearts into this edition. Their combined knowledge and unceasing work are proof of the worldwide shift towards agroecology and motivate us all to act.

Do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any comments or recommendations. Our goal is to elevate the Agroecology Post to the top publication supporting the efforts of journalists and communicators covering agroecology.

Warm regards,



Nancy Mugimba

Editor-in-Chief, Agroecology Post

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www.agroecology-school.org/post.

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KAMPALA | UGANDA

Government Pressed to Back Organic Agricultural Innovations



Policymakers in Uganda have been fervently urged to robustly support the ingenious organic agricultural innovations masterminded by smallholder farmers, serving as a catalyst for advancing agroecology throughout the nation.

This appeal was made by Hakim Baliraine, a small holder farmer and regional chairperson on Board of Directors for Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF Uganda), during the Agroecology Conference at Hotel Africana, Kampala, on February 25th, 2024.

Read more:

<https://www.watchdoguganda.com/business/20240129/164785/government-pressed-to-back-organic-agricultural-innovations.html>

By Mourice Muhoozi
Watchdog Uganda

ENTEBBE | UGANDA

AFSA/SIDA Initiates A Campaign "My Food is African" To Inspire the Consumption of Local Foods



The Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) in collaboration with SIDA back on a campaign of transforming the African food system to sustainability (TAFS) project, themed "My Food is African." This was revealed during the campaign launch at Country Lake Resort Garuga in Entebbe, Uganda.

This transformative initiative builds on the success of the Mobilizing for an African Food Policy (MAFP) – My Food is Africa initiative which aims to inspire African citizens to demand and consume healthy and culturally appropriate food supported by favourable policies by 2026.

Read more:

<https://www.gatewaynewsug.com/afsa-sida-initiates-a-campaign-my-food-is-african-to-inspire-the-consumption-of-local-foods/>

By Johnmary Luwaga
Gateway News

MBARARA | UGANDA

Conservation Practices on Dairy Farms



Prioritising a sustainable future should be their primary concern for every dairy farmer, motivating them to implement measures aimed at minimizing their carbon footprint.

By investing in sustainable dairy farming practices, farmers can uphold their family legacies and pave the way for a new generation. This entails focusing on maintaining healthy soil, ensuring clean water and harnessing renewable energy sources.

Read more:

https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/magazines/farming/conservation-practices-on-dairy-farms-4490158#google_vignette

By Esther Bridget Nakalya
Daily Monitor

NEBBI | UGANDA

Lawyers, Partners Offer Free Legal Services to Settle Land Conflicts in Nebbi



Legal advocates and development partners are offering free legal aid services to help victims of land conflicts and discrimination in West Nile. Leaders are blaming land conflict for causing farming in Erussi sub-county, Nebbi district, which was a food basket West Nile.

However, Kelvine Adubango of Joel Cox Advocates, revealed that every year, the legal firm handles more than 1000 cases of land conflict in Nebbi, with the majority of the cases involving families. *"Some of these cases have been referred for mediation, others have gone to court, while others have gone to appeal,"* Adubango said.

Adubango stated that through partnership with the district local government and other organizations, lawyers in the sub-region have offered pro-bono services to more than 100 people.

Read more:

<https://gnaa.co.ug/2024/03/lawyers-partners-offer-free-legal-services-to-settle-land-conflicts-in-nebbi/>

By Marko Taibot
Greater North News Agency

BARINGO | KENYA

In Kenya, Seed Banks help with Food Security



When Peninah Ngahu was a child, her mother used to select the healthiest and largest maize, millet and sorghum seeds from the harvest and position them above the fireplace. There they would dry out and gain protection from fungal and insect attacks, ready for use in the planting season.

"The smoke and wood ash always sufficed," she says. "The harvests were good, and we had a variety of food in plenty."

Read more:

<https://chinadialogue.net/en/food/in-kenya-seed-banks-help-with-food-security/>

By Jackson Okata
China Dialogue

NEBBI | UGANDA

Land Fragmentation and Land Conflicts Causing Food Insecurity in Nebbi



The rampant land fragmentation and land conflicts in Erussi Sub-county, Nebbi district are affecting productivity and causing food insecurity.

According to the district authorities, Erussi Sub-county which has been a food basket for the West Nile region is now grappling with food insecurity due to the increased land fragmentation and land conflicts.

Speaking during the launch of the Land Rights camp over the weekend organised by the Eastern African Small Scale Farmers Forum [ESAFF] at Erussi Sub-county, Collins Orom Jalacida, the sub-country Chairperson disclosed that land fragmentation has led to land conflicts.

Read more:

<https://thecooperator.news/land-fragmentation-and-land-conflicts-causing-food-insecurity-in-nebbi/>

By Marko Taibot
The Cooperator News

KITGUM | UGANDA

Farmers in Kitgum Reviving Soil Fertility using Agricultural Waste



In cotton stalks, David Odong Adonga, has found treasure. For a decade, Adonga, a cotton farmer in Onyaa Central Village Kitgum Matidi Sub-county Kitgum District, unknowingly made a heap of the remains of the crops and set them on fire.

But in 2017, he was taught that what he saw as trash was real cash in the form of biochar. Biochar is a charcoal-like, carbon-rich material made of organic materials such as wood, sewage sludge, cattle manure, dry produce, or a combination of these.

In a process termed pyrolysis, the agricultural waste materials are placed in a tight container and burned in an oxygen-free environment. The end product of the burning is a charcoal-like product that is grounded into a fine powder and applied in a crop garden in the same way as chemical fertilizer.

Read more:

<https://gna.co.ug/2023/12/farmers-in-kitgum-reviving-soil-fertility-using-agricultural-waste/>

By Denis Opoka

Greater North News Agency

LAMWO | UGANDA

Turning Waste into Wealth through Black Soldier Fly Farming



Mr Richard Olanya, 30, scoops up two handfuls of squirming Black Soldier Fly larvae. "Brown and shiny, live gold," Mr Olanya says with a broad smile.

The Black Soldier flies he refers to as gold are alive only for a fleeting six weeks. But during that time, they reproduce generously, living 500-plus eggs in a single batch, and are fairly indestructible, having been known to survive up to two hours submerged in pure rubbing alcohol.

They eat in a writhing mound, thousands sharing a single serving of nearly any kind of organic waste.

Read more:

<https://www.africanchangestories.org/2024/02/06/turning-waste-into-wealth-through-black-soldier-fly-farming/>

By Okello Jesus Ojara

African Change Stories

ACCRA | GHANA

Consortium Strategizes to Address Inequalities in Ghana's Cocoa, Mining, and Salt Sectors



A consortium comprising Oxfam, Third World Network-Africa (TWN-Africa), SOMO, and the Huairou Commission is convening in Ghana to devise strategies aimed at tackling inequalities in the cocoa, mining, and salt sectors. The overarching goal is to ensure decent income for individuals involved in the value chain, particularly those at the grassroots level.

The four-day "*fair for all*" conference seeks to bolster civil society efforts in addressing these inequalities by collaborating with the private sector, advocating for responsible financial systems, enhancing governmental regulation, and advocating for fiscal and trade reforms. Participating countries include Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, Kenya, and Mozambique, with support from Brazil, Italy, Palestine, and the Netherlands.

Read more:

<https://ghstandard.com/consortium-strategizes-to-address-inequalities-in-ghanas-cocoa-mining-and-salt-sectors/26634/>

By Samuel Asante

The Ghanaian Standard

MUSANZE | RWANDA

ACORD Rwanda Plants Traditional Trees to Promote Agroecological Farming



The families associated with ACORD Rwanda, comprising individuals trained in advancing agroecology, embarked on a project to promote traditional agroforestry by planting indigenous trees mixed with crops, aimed at conserving their sovereignty and ensuring their historical significance.

A total of more than 3500 indigenous trees are being planted per hectare across 2 hectares in Murago cell of Gataraga Sector, comprising different types that include trees with natural pesticides to combat pests, as well as those that enhance soil productivity such as *Desmodium*, *Pennisetum purpureum*, *Calliandara*, *Grevillea*, *Alnus*, and *cedrela adorata*.

Read more:

<https://www.teradignews.rw/en/acord-rwanda-plants-traditional-trees-to-promote-agroecological-farming>

By Kwizera Juvenalis

Teradig.news

BARINGO | KENYA

How Agroecology is Empowering Indigenous Kenyan Women to Secure Land Rights and Tame GBV



The vast green canopy formed by thousands of the prolific and invasive *Prosopis Juliflora*, locally known as Mathenge trees welcome your sight into the Salabani village of Baringo County, home to the indigenous Njemps/Ilchamus community who since time immemorial, have heavily banked and relied on pastoralism as their main economic activity in an environment characterized by semi-arid climatic conditions.

From a distance, under the scorching sun and occasional waves of brown dust particles flying in the air, a cluster of women sits together beneath the sprawling canopy of a majestic tree whose lush foliage casts a dappled pattern of shade upon the ground, providing a welcome relief from the relentless arid heat. Amidst the harsh climate and the challenges of semi-arid life, the Ilchamus women are championing a transformation towards food security, empowerment, equality, and

resilience against all odds.

Read more:

<https://www.talkafrica.co.ke/how-agroecology-is-empowering-indigenous-kenyan-women-to-secure-land-rights-and-tame-gbv/>

By Jackson Okata
Talk Africa

GISAGARA | RWANDA

Empowering Rwandan Farmers: Training Strengthens Agricultural Productivity



Agricultural government agencies emphasize the importance of providing farmers with knowledge because technological innovation significantly impacts a country's agricultural production.

Following the training provided by the Yalla Yalla group under a contract with the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB), some farmers working in irrigated areas of the Southern Province testify that the training received will contribute to increasing their returns differently than they did before.

Read more:

<https://www.teradignews.rw/autonomisation-des-agriculteurs-rwandais-la-formation-renforce-la-productivite-agricole/>

By Kwizera Juvenalis
Teradig.news

NAIROBI | KENYA

Inside Kenya's Seed Control Battle:

Why Smallholder Farmers Want to Share Indigenous Seeds



A group of 15 smallholder farmers in Kenya petitioned the country's High Court, seeking to compel the government to review sections of a law that bans the sharing and exchange of uncertified and unregistered seeds.

Rural smallholder farmers in Kenya rely on informal farmer-managed systems to acquire seeds through seed saving and sharing but the Seeds and Plant Varieties Act is limiting them. Kenya's government enacted the law in 2012 with the aim of developing, promoting, and regulating a modern and competitive seed industry, but farmers are pushing for its review.

Read more:

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2024/02/inside-kenyas-seed-control-battle-smallholder-farmers-want-share-indigenous-seeds/>

By Jackson Okata

Inter Press Service News Agency

NAIROBI | KENYA

Road to COP29: Highest Climate Ambitions Needed to Decarbonize World



The road to COP29 has begun in earnest in the backdrop of a global climate report indicating that not only was 2023 the warmest year in a 174-year climate record, it was the warmest by far. Record-breaking temperatures, combined with El Niño, pushed vulnerable and poor nations in the Global South to the frontlines of extreme and severe weather events.

It was a climatic carnage in Africa with fatal floods in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, and Libya's storms and floods that wiped out a quarter of a city. Deadly cyclones in countries such as Malawi, severe drought in Kenya, and a months-long winter heatwave in Southern African countries. Read more:

Road to COP29:

Highest Climate Ambitions Needed to Decarbonize World | Inter Press Service (ipsnews.net)

By Joyce Chimbi

Inter Press Service News Agency

KOTIANG | KENYA

Under the Scorching Sun Kenyan Farmers Find New Ways to Beat Climate Change



In the tranquil village of Kotiang, perched on the shores of Lake Victoria in Kenya's lakeside region, Yvonne Atieno, a dedicated mother in her early thirties, tends to her fish pond under the relentless equatorial sun. Her young daughter eagerly joins her mother in this nurturing endeavor. Yvonne, a certified accountant by profession, reflects on how her decision to embrace regenerative farming has not only enriched her life but also imparted invaluable life lessons.

"In this pursuit, unlike traditional employment, I harbor no anxieties about retirement," she shares. "It is profoundly rewarding, especially when I rise early each morning to witness the flourishing of my African vegetables."

Read more:

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2024/01/scorching-sun-kenyan-farmers-find-new-ways-beat-climate-change/>

By Robert Kibet
IPS

NAIROBI | KENYA

New Era: Unlocking Africa's Agriculture Potential Through CGIAR TAAT Model



The road to COP29 has begun in earnest in the backdrop of a global climate report indicating that not only was 2023 the warmest year in a 174-year climate record, it was the warmest by far. Record-breaking temperatures, combined with El Niño, pushed vulnerable and poor nations in the Global South to the frontlines of extreme and severe weather events.

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Road to COP29:

Highest Climate Ambitions Needed to Decarbonize World | Inter Press Service (ipsnews.net)

By Joyce Chimbi
Inter Press Service News Agency

NEBBI | UGANDA

Nebbi Locals Tipped on Land Rights



West Nile region has for a long while faced land governance challenges and opportunities. Although the region is known for its fertile land and agricultural potential, the locals face issues related to land tenure insecurity, land grabbing, gender disparities in land ownership, limited information and access to justice as well as land management practices.

Read more:

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/nebbi-locals-tipped-on-land-rights--4554860>

By Kevin Githuku

Daily Monitor

DAKAR | SENEGAL

Report Calls for Agroecological Rethink of Africa's Food Amid \$61b Industrial Plan



Civil society groups have criticized a new \$61 billion initiative to industrialize African food systems, calling the plan a "significant threat to small-scale farmers." The groups, under the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), say the initiative by the African Development Bank (AfDB) will marginalize smallholders through its one-size-fits-all approach, increase dependency on multinational corporations for seeds and agrochemicals, and lead to the loss of land and biodiversity.

"The emphasis on principal commodity crops, mechanized farming tools, and standardised land tenure systems condenses the practices into a uniform effort aimed at agro industrialization," AFSA said in a report.

Read more:

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/03/report-calls-for-agroecological-rethink-of-africas-food-amid-61b-industrial-plan/>

By Aimee Gabay

Mongabay News

KABAROLE | UGANDA

The Green Peas locally known as “Obukwamimbi” are purely a Farmer’s Variety



There are so many different types of green peas grown around the country but these specific green peas locally known as “Obukwamimbi in the Lukonjo language are grown in the mountains of the Kabarole district in Western Uganda and attract a price that a new person to visit the community would first ask why it is that way. As a sack of these peas costs 300,000 to 350,000 UGX. *“If they can cost this amount, it catches your attention”.*

Pillemon Matte a 42-year-old and a father to 9 children, a mukonjo by the tribe, and a small-scale farmer in Nyakitokoli B village, Karangura Sub-county is a farmer who will wholeheartedly tell you with a big smile on his face what this crop means to him and the entire community.

Read more:

<https://www.ugstandard.com/the-green-peas-locally-known-as-obukwamimbi-are-purely-a-farmers-variety/>

By Sharon Shatra Muzaki
UG Standard Media

FORT PORTAL | UGANDA

Environmentalists Rally for Action Against Plastic Pollution



Environmentalists have urged the public to take a proactive stance in the battle against plastic pollution notably affecting wetlands and rivers. The prevalent issue stems from continuous dumping by the population, manifesting prominently in Fort Portal City on the riverbanks of River Mpanga and its tributary of Mugunu.

Read more:

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/environmentalists-rally-for-action-against-plastic-pollution-4550622>

By Alex Ashaba
Daily Monitor

JINJA | UGANDA

“Equip us with skills and more educational programs”

the Women in Namagera Town Council Cry Out



International Women's Day is celebrated on March 8th every year around the world. In honor of this day, the Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda organized a Women's Gathering against gender inequality in Namagera Town Council (T/C), Jinja district, Uganda.

Under the theme "*Promoting women economic empowerment for development*" to support women to achieve sustainable development and gender equality.

This Gathering brought women together from different walks of life, including community leaders, women small-scale farmers, farmer leaders, and professionals who engaged in critical conversations around key inequality issues affecting women such as access to production resources, and socioeconomic and political circle issues.

Read More:

<https://www.ugstandard.com/equip-us-with-skills-and-more-educational-programs-the-women-in-namagera-to-wn-council-cry-out/>

By Sharon Muzaki
UG Standard Media

ACCRA | GHANA

Consortium to Deepen Efforts to Address Trade, Economic Inequalities in Africa



Oxfam, Third World Network Africa, SOMO, and the Huairou Commission, are holding a four day Fair4All conference to increase civil society efforts in that regard. Among others they would work with the private sector to find alternative business models, increase pressure on actors for a responsible financial system, improve governmental regulation and advocate for fiscal and trade reforms.

Read more:

<https://gna.org.gh/2024/02/consortium-to-deepen-efforts-to-address-trade-economic-inequalities-in-africa/>

By Francis Ntow
Ghana News Agency

ANSWERS TO AGROECOLOGY QUIZ 4

Here are the responses to the quiz in the fourth issue. Please let us know how many you got right. If you don't have the questions, please download the fourth issue of the Agroecology post from the website

1. What is the primary goal of integrating agroecological practices in farming systems?

Answer:

✓ ***Enhance sustainability and resilience***

2. Which of the following is a key principle of agroecology?

Answer:

✓ ***Biodiversity enhancement***

3. How does agroecology contribute to pest management in farming?

Answer:

✓ ***Diversified cropping systems***

4. What role does local knowledge play in the implementation of agroecological practices?

Answer:

✓ ***Essential for success***

5. What is the impact of agroecology on water conservation in agriculture?

Answer:

✓ ***Enhanced water conservation***

6. In agroecological farming, what is the emphasis on in terms of seed selection?

Answer:

✓ ***Local and traditional seed varieties***

7. How does agroecology address the issue of soil erosion in farming systems?

Answer:

✓ ***Promotes soil conservation practices***

8. What is a fundamental aspect of agroecology in promoting social equity?

Answer:

✓ ***Empowering local communities in decision-making***

9. Can agroecological practices be adapted for use in both small-scale and large-scale farming operations?

Answer:

✓ ***Applicable to both small-scale and large-scale farming***

10. How does agroecology contribute to climate change mitigation in agriculture?

Answer:

✓ ***Enhances carbon sequestration and reduces emissions***

AGROECOLOGY QUIZ 5

The Agroecology Quiz sessions aim to create awareness and build knowledge of agroecology. We challenge you to take some time to answer these quiz questions and look for the right answers in the next issues of the Agroecology Post.

1.

Does agroecology advocate for the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge into farming practices?

Yes No

2.

Does agroecology prioritize agroforestry techniques for enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services on farms?

Yes No

3.

Is agroecology aligned with the principles of food sovereignty, emphasizing local control over food systems?

Yes No

4.

Does agroecology involve the implementation of participatory research methods, engaging farmers in the scientific process?

Yes No

5.

Does agroecology aim to challenge conventional notions of productivity, emphasizing resilience and ecosystem health over maximum yields?

Yes No

6.

Is agroecology compatible with large-scale industrial agriculture practices?

Yes No

7.

Does agroecology address issues of food justice and equity within the global food system?

Yes No

8.

Does agroecology incorporate principles of social agroecology, focusing on community empowerment and collective decision-making?

Yes No

9.

Is agroecology a dynamic field that recognizes the importance of adaptive management in response to changing environmental conditions?

Yes No

NOTE: Look out for the correct responses to the quiz in our next issue of the Agroecology Post

10.

Does agroecology challenge the dominance of monoculture farming systems by promoting crop diversification and polyculture practices?

Yes No

11.

Does agroecology prioritize building synergies between agricultural production and local ecosystems?

Yes No

12.

Does agroecology emphasize the importance of cultural context and indigenous knowledge in shaping sustainable farming practices?

Yes No

13.

Is agroecology concerned with fostering resilience in agricultural systems to mitigate the impacts of climate change?

Yes No

14.

Does agroecology advocate for the use of agroecosystem analysis to understand the complex interactions within farming systems?

Yes No

15.

Is agroecology compatible with conventional industrialized farming methods that heavily rely on external inputs?

Yes No

16.

Does agroecology promote farmer autonomy and empowerment through initiatives such as seed saving and participatory plant breeding?

Yes No

17.

Does agroecology recognize the interconnectedness between agricultural practices and broader socio-economic factors such as poverty and inequality?

Yes No

18.

Is agroecology solely focused on maximizing individual farm productivity without considering broader environmental impacts?

Yes No

19.

Does agroecology advocate for the restoration of degraded landscapes through practices like reforestation and soil regeneration?

Yes No

20.

Is agroecology primarily a theoretical framework without practical applications in modern agricultural systems?

Yes No

NOTE: Look out for the correct responses to the quiz in our next issue of the Agroecology Post



ATTENTION!

JOURNALISTS AND COMMUNICATORS ACROSS AFRICA

Have you previously covered stories related to critical issues impacting our environment, food systems, and communities? Are you passionate about agroecology and its role in shaping a sustainable future?

We invite you to share your previously published stories that delve into various key oppressions within the realm of agroecology.

We are particularly interested in stories on the following topics:

1. **Greenwashing:** Exposing deceptive marketing tactics employed by corporations to appear environmentally friendly while engaging in harmful practices.
2. **GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms):** Investigating the implications, controversies, and socio-economic impacts of genetically modified crops.
3. **Biopiracy:** Uncovering the exploitation and appropriation of indigenous knowledge and genetic resources by corporations for profit.
4. **Food Apartheid:** Highlighting systemic inequalities in access to nutritious food, often based on race, class, or geographic location.
5. **Food Politics:** Analyzing the political dynamics shaping food production, distribution, and consumption, and their effects on communities.
6. **Industrial Agriculture:** Examining the environmental degradation, health risks, and social injustices associated with large-scale, monoculture farming.
7. **Genome Editing or Gene-Editing in Plants:** Exploring the ethical, regulatory, and ecological implications of manipulating plant genomes.

Your stories will contribute to raising awareness, fostering dialogue, and catalyzing positive change towards a more just, sustainable, and resilient food system in Africa and beyond.

Submission Guidelines:

1. **Share links or copies of your previously published stories on the specified topics.**
2. **Ensure stories are accessible for review.**
3. **Submissions must be original and previously published.**
4. **The stories you're submitting should have been published in 2023 or 2024.**

Selected stories will be featured in a dedicated copy of The Agroecology Post and distributed widely to amplify your message and influence policymakers, activists, and the public.

Join us in amplifying communities' voices, challenging oppression, and championing agroecology as a pathway to a healthier planet and people.

Submit your previously published stories by **13th June 2024** to:

 [**study@agroecology-school.org**](mailto:study@agroecology-school.org).

For inquiries and further information, write to:

 [**study@agroecology-school.org**](mailto:study@agroecology-school.org).

Together, let's ignite change through the power of shared narratives!



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Eastern and Southern Africa
Small Scale Farmers' Forum
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