There has been a growing international interest in the fast spreading popularity of khat, a naturally occurring stimulant plant, which contains the amphetamine-like cathinone. The chewing of khat leaves is a traditional habit in some African and Arab countries and the plant is grown traditionally in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Yemen, Somalia, South Africa and Madagascar. It has also become a popular drug among immigrants from these countries living in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand (even though it is illegal in most of these countries). Since 1970, the former niche crop khat has had an explosion-like boom - now being one of the most important pillars and cash crops of several national economies in the khat belt. Today, millions of farmers and small traders depend on khat; at the same time, the dramatic ecological, social and health consequences of this boom are more and more visible. In spite of the widespread use of khat around the globe, the needs of khat producers, traders and users are hardly recognised or met within mainstream developmental and economic programmes as well as health and social services. The complexity of khat is a challenge to European legislation and international developmental aid.

The first major international conference on khat, which was organised by the International Council against Alcohol and Addiction (ICAA) and held in Madagascar in 1983, focused on the religious, social, botanical, chemical and pharmaceutical aspects of khat. The ESF-LiU Research Conference will now bring together selected young and established researchers from different academic fields in order to present and discuss the current state of knowledge on the multi-faceted and swiftly changing issues related to khat at the Horn of Africa, in Europe and elsewhere. This conference will foster the interdisciplinary exchange and discussion among economists, social and political scientists, natural scientists, social and medical scientists, healthcare and social care professionals, health service providers, as well as policy makers, international organisations and community groups.

The programme will include scientific contributions of eminent scholars in their field in the following topics:
1. Economic, ecological and political issues of khat use
2. The changing culture of khat use
3. Pharmacological, medical and psychological issues related to khat use
4. Legislation, regulation and international scheduling

We encourage all interested participants, especially young scientists, to submit abstracts of their work for paper presentations or posters.

**Invited Speakers will include**
- Ahmed Al-Motarreb, Sana’a Univ., YE
- Qahtan Al-Asbahi, UN Development Program/National Water Resources Authority Sana’a, YE
- Susan Beckerleg, Univ. of Warwick/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK
- Kamaldeep Bhui, Queen Mary, Univ. of London, UK
- Neil Carrier, Oxford Univ., UK
- Ray Croucher, Queen Mary, Univ. of London, UK
- Gessese Dessie, Awassa Univ., ET
- Hussein Ahmed Fulli, Addis Ababa Univ., ET
- Peer Gatter, Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED), SY
- Ezekiel Gebissa, Kettering Univ., US
- Paul Griffiths, European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction, PT
- Degol Hailu, International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)/UNDP, BR
- Peter Kalix, Univ. of Geneva, CH
- Günther Schlee, Max Planck Institute of Social Anthropology, DE
- Julie G. Vitoria-Williams, World Bank, Sustainable Development Department, US

**Application Form & Programme available from**
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**Closing Date for Application 5 July 2009**
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