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## **THOMAS OBERTHÜR JOINS STAFF OF IPNI AS REGIONAL DIRECTOR, SOUTHEAST ASIA PROGRAM**

March 1, 2010 — Norcross, Georgia, USA — Dr. Thomas Oberthür is joining the staff of the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) as Director for the Southeast Asia Region. He will be based in Penang, Malaysia, and will serve as the leader of IPNI's programs of agronomic research and education in the region. Dr. Oberthür succeeds Dr. Christian Witt in this responsibility. Dr. Witt has joined the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as Senior Program Officer for Soil Health, Agricultural Development Program. He will be part of a team focusing on farmer production and agricultural development, targeting Africa and South Asia.

“With his strong skill sets related to problem solving and strategic thinking, plus his expertise in relationships between agricultural product quality and farming systems management, Dr. Oberthür will be a valuable addition to our scientific staff,” said IPNI President Dr. Terry Roberts. “We welcome Thomas to the staff and feel assured he will continue the high standards of positive results for the IPNI program in Southeast Asia.”

In 1999, Dr. Oberthür received his Ph.D. in Geography at the University of Western Australia, Perth. His dissertation was on improving land resource information and its management in heterogeneous rain-fed environments. In 1994, he received the degree of Diploma Engineer (equivalent to Master of Science) degree through Leipzig University and the International Rice Research Institute. His thesis research was on spatial soil fertility management in irrigated rice. In 2004, he earned Project Management Certification through Crawford Masters Class in Management in Sydney, Australia.

Most recently, Dr. Oberthür worked for the Australian Center for Agricultural Research in research and program operations management. He was responsible for a wide range of adaptive and

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market driven research projects in Eastern Indonesia. From 2007 to 2008, he was with Ecoagriculture Partners (EP) in program operations management and project development. Previously, Dr. Oberthür was with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in research and program operations management, from 1999 to 2007. As a manager and senior soil scientist, he had a scientific focus on site-specific soil and land management, spatial analyses of production systems, causal relationships between agricultural production and natural resources, and the use of commercial data in agriculture. His experience also includes soil survey and data analyses for the national agronomic soil map for the rice lands of Cambodia, spatial analysis of soils in rice-based cropping systems in the Philippines and other countries, and contributions to the conceptualization and introduction of precision agriculture in tropical farming systems. Dr. Oberthür has worked extensively with the food sector industry and served as an adviser to projects related to coffee-growing communities.

As a prolific writer and presenter, Dr. Oberthür has contributed to more than 10 books and book chapters, 15 peer-reviewed papers, nearly 20 conference papers, and four technical papers.

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*For further information, please visit the IPNI website: >[www.ipni.net](http://www.ipni.net)<*

*Digital photo of Dr. Oberthür available at >[www.ipni.net/pr](http://www.ipni.net/pr)< or on request.*

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