



**Jan. 20, 2006**

## **Noted Kenyan ethnobotanist to speak at UWSP**

A Kenyan authority on ethnobotany is the third speaker in the GEM "Critical Issues" International Seminar Series on the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point campus.

Ethnobotany is the study of how people of various cultures or regions use indigenous plants, whether for food, medicine, religious or other purposes, and Samuel T. Kariuki will discuss the important potential of such plants in sustaining health and livelihoods in Africa today.

Kariuki's presentation is scheduled for 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 24, in the Melvin R. Laird Room in the Dreyfus University Center.

Kariuki's research and teaching spans more than two decades. His research activities include evaluation of the efficiency and safety of medicinal plant extracts used to treat East Coast Fever; investigation of plants in Kenya containing essential oils, biological activities and bioprospecting of essential oils; and community-based production of biopesticides and organic fertilizers.

The GEM Critical Issues series is free and open to the public. It is hosted by the Global Environmental Management Education Center (GEM) with funding through grants from the UW System Institute for Race and Ethnicity, USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The 2005-2006 series theme is "indigenous knowledge for sustainable development."

GEM Director Victor Phillips observed that native cultures have in many cases existed for centuries in a sustainable manner that preserves the resources on which they depend, which holds important lessons for the future. Indigenous knowledge may help modern societies grapple with challenges of shrinking resources and increasing strain on the environment.

Kariuki is one of five renowned speakers scheduled to discuss sustainability from the perspective of indigenous cultures' traditional knowledge, spirituality, community and health. Additional information about the GEM Critical Issues International Seminar Series and Kariuki is on the Web at [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/GEM/CriticalIssuesFiles/CriticalIssues0506.htm](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/GEM/CriticalIssuesFiles/CriticalIssues0506.htm).

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