

## Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Policies, Plans, and Programs in Agriculture: A Training-workshop

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### BACKGROUND

Agriculture, considered to be the country’s backbone in achieving food security and economic well-being, is now threatened by climate change and other extreme weather events. This is primarily because of the country’s location, geography, and vulnerability to periodic El Niño and La Niña phenomena.

Responding to the need to “systematically integrate the concept of climate change in various phases of policy formulation, development plans, poverty reduction strategies and other development tools and techniques” as mandated under The Philippine Climate Change Act 2009, the Department of Agriculture (DA), adopted the Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA) as a nationwide initiative and a communication strategy focusing on two core issues of climate change in agriculture: adaptation and mitigation.

The DA-AMIA Framework has four strategic objectives, namely: (1) increase the adaptive capacity and productivity potentials of agriculture and livelihood by modifying commodity combinations to better meet weather issues and natural resource endowments, (2) redefine Strategic Agricultural Fisheries Development Zones (SAFDZ) by including climate change vulnerabilities as part of mapping variables, (3) redefine the agriculture development planning framework by including key factors associated with climate change, and 4) develop a new framework and plan for the provision of “new” government agricultural services towards accelerated development of climate-smart agriculture and fisheries industries. To achieve these objectives, one of the strategies that has been identified under this initiative is to mainstream climate change in agricultural development of the country across DA functions and agencies with technical and managerial capacity building as one of the components.

Parallel to national efforts, the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) has developed with regional partners and universities an Umbrella Program on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Southeast Asia (CCHAM) toward an Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD) (2014-2019). It is envisioned to serve as a platform for collaborative research and development (R&D), knowledge management, and capacity development on climate change adaptation and resiliency in Southeast Asia.



### TRAINING-WORKSHOP PARTNERS



## ABOUT SEARCA

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) is one of the 21 regional centers of excellence of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). Founded on 27 November 1966, SEARCA is mandated to strengthen institutional capacities in agricultural and rural development in Southeast Asia through graduate scholarship, research and development, and knowledge management. It serves 11 SEAMEO member countries, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam. SEARCA is hosted by the Government of the Philippines on the campus of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in Laguna, Philippines. It is supported by donations from SEAMEO member and associate member states, other governments, and various international donor agencies.

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Along its mandate of building capacities in ISARD in Southeast Asia, SEARCA has offered and implemented a range of capacity-building initiatives including an **Online Course on Responding to Climate Risks in the Agriculture and Natural Resources** through the UP Open University. These initiatives were undertaken with the end in view of not just keeping policy makers and decision makers well-informed on the impacts of climate change but also of enhancing their capacity to effectively integrate adaptation to climate change into development strategies, policies, plans, programs, and investments.

## OBJECTIVES

The Training-workshop aimed to enhance the capacity, awareness, and understanding of DA-AMIA Teams and focal persons from the Regional Field Offices (RFOs) on how to effectively and systematically integrate adaptation considerations into policies, plans, and programs. Specific objectives include the following:

1. Understand climate change impacts and the need to integrate climate change adaptation (CCA) into policies, action plans, and project interventions in the agriculture sector;
2. Identify appropriate approaches for integrating CCA into policies, plans and programs at the national, regional, sectoral, and project levels; and
3. Apply these systematic planning steps to selected cases in agriculture including its allied fisheries and forestry sectors towards developing flagship CCA initiatives.

## OUTCOMES

Twenty-three representatives of the DA-AMIA teams, DA regional field offices (RFOs), and attached agencies and corporations participated in the workshop. The training-workshop adopted the systematic methodology for integrating climate change adaptation into policies, plans and programs developed and widely tested by the German Agency for International Cooperation (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH or GIZ*). The methodology was based on an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Policy Guidance on mainstreaming climate change into development cooperation. SEARCA adopted the following four core modules: (1) Applying a climate lens, (2) Assessing vulnerability, (3) Identifying adaptation options, and (4) Selecting adaptation options.

One of the main outputs of the activity was the application of systematic adaptation assessment to four (4) selected real project cases given by the participants. The findings were presented in a marketplace setting whereby participants rotated in visiting each market stall and this positively contributed to knowledge sharing on the current and future challenges and opportunities presented by climate change at the project level. In the exercise, participants learned that an effective climate resilient planning requires the availability of relevant climate data, involvement of several groups of stakeholders and key actors, and allocation of adequate financial resources to support adaptation actions.

## CONCLUSION

The systematic climate change adaptation assessment is a participatory approach which draws strength from the mix of perspectives of the various stakeholders such as policy makers, project managers, development planners, climate change experts, technical staff and local people including farmers. Thus, taking into account climate change considerations and integrating adaptation into the various phases of policy formulation, development plans and programs provide an essential opportunity to make more climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries sector.