



NETHERLANDS AND SEARCA

SEARCA's headquarters was constructed with funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada and the Government of the Philippines.



Established in 1966, the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) is one of the 26 specialist institutions of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), a treaty organization that promotes regional cooperation in education, science, and culture.

The SEAMEO member countries are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. The associate member countries of SEAMEO are Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The Philippines is one of the founding member countries of SEAMEO, which was established in 1965.

SEARCA's objectives are to:

1. Provide high-quality graduate education and training in agriculture;
2. Promote, undertake, and coordinate research addressing the development needs and problems in agriculture of the region; and
3. Disseminate the findings of agricultural research and experimentation.

SEAMEO SEARCA

College, Los Baños, Laguna 4031, PHILIPPINES

Tel: (63-49) 536-2290, (63-49) 554-9331 to 9336, (63-2) 8657-1300 to 1302

E-mail: post@searca.org

Website: www.searca.org



Our Vision

A leading enabler and champion of excellence in agriculture and rural development in Southeast Asia

Our Mission

To elevate the quality of life of agricultural families through sustainable and resilient livelihoods and access to modern networks and innovative markets



Our Strategic Objectives

- Access new and innovative financial services
- Adopt new, sustainable, and resilient production technologies and systems
- Integrate with modern postharvest and logistics system
- Gain access to and operate in modern networks and markets





supports the
UN Sustainable Development Goals



Our Strategic Intent

SEARCA, in the next five years, commits to BETTER, BIGGER, and SMARTER outcomes and impact on the agriculture industry and its stakeholders, most especially the larger proportion of resource-poor farmers, by delivering better services through more context-relevant and valuable services to even more beneficiaries in more effective and efficient ways.

Alongside other global, regional, and national organizations, SEARCA aligns its direction towards contributing to the achievement of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that address global challenges to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. SEARCA commits to contribute and allocate resources for the achievement of five SDGs which directly align with its mandate and focus, with an emphasis on creating partnerships (SDG17). Moreover, SEARCA also touches three other SDGs as it tries to achieve the five.

■ GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Through the representatives of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Secretariat (SEAMES), the Netherlands government committed US\$52,000 to support SEARCA scholarships for fiscal year 1970/1971.

In the 1970s, SEARCA implemented a Netherlands-funded **Fellowship in the Region** program, which enabled SEARCA research staff to undertake studies leading to the MS degree in agricultural economics. Among those who were awarded scholarships under this program was Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. former SEARCA Director.

► SHORT-TERM TRAINING

From 1974 to 1976, the *Fellowship in the Region* program funded by the Netherlands awarded scholarships for one-year non-degree studies to trainers and researchers who specialized in agribusiness, research management, documentation and scientific literature service, and social laboratory. A total of 14 training grants were awarded to 1 Indonesian, 1 Malaysian, 9 Filipinos, and 3 Thais under the program.

Moreover, the Netherlands government, through its Embassy in Manila, provided a US\$60,000 grant to finance a regional training course on postharvest technology held at SEARCA on 9 July-3 August 1979. The four-week intensive course was jointly conducted by the **SEARCA Southeast Asia Cooperative Post-Harvest Research and Development Programme**, University of the Philippines Los Baños, and National Grain Authority of the Philippines. The 40 training participants from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand learned the fundamentals of postharvest, including grading, drying, storing, and milling.

Training activities were also conducted under the auspices of SEARCA's postharvest program, which was funded by the Netherlands government along with two Canadian international development agencies and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Said training activities included the following:

- Institution and teaching of an innovative graduate training course on grains processing at Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) in cooperation with IPB faculty and the Wageningen University
- Training Course on Postharvest Prevention of Waste and Loss of Food Grains (19 November-7 December 1979; Manila, Cabanatuan City, and SEARCA, all in the Philippines)
- Workshop on Tropical Agriculture (12 November 1980, the Netherlands)



Ambassador C.T.F. Thurkow, the Netherlands envoy to the Philippines, addressed participants on 9 July 1979 at the opening of a Netherlands government-funded course on Grains Postharvest Technology held at SEARCA.

- IPB/LHW/NUFFIC Regional Seminar on Farm Mechanization (26 January-1 February 1981; Indonesia)
- International Course on Food Science and Technology (January 1981; Wageningen)

Other Netherlands-funded training were:

- First Regional Training Program on On-Farm Trials for Training Technology Verification (19 February-16 March 1990, SEARCA)
- Regional Refresher Course Seminar for International Course on the Design of Community Forestry (ICDCF) Alumni from South and Southeast Asia (22 February-5 March 1999; Isabela State University, Philippines)
- Regional Refresher Course for Rural Extension and Plant Protection (5-16 November 2001; IAC)
- Refresher Course on Supply Chain Management (3-14 November 2003; SEARCA)
- Training Course on Gender and Rural Transformation in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam: Planning and Implementing Gender Mainstreaming (18 November-6 December 2002; SEARCA)



RESEARCH AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

► VISITING SCIENTISTS PROGRAM

SEARCA launched its **Visiting Scientist Program** was launched in 1969 in support of the Center's graduate and research programs. As a component of SEARCA's manpower development program, it complemented the Center's primary academic activities and those of the Graduate School of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), the Center's host institution. Under the program, scientists, and experts from the SEAMEO member countries and from other parts of the world were affiliated through SEARCA with units of UPLB. During their stay at SEARCA, these scientists and professors either teach special courses or conduct research.

Dr. Hendrikus Albertus Luning, an agricultural economist at the Agricultural State University (now known as Wageningen University and Research Centre or Wageningen UR), was appointed as SEARCA Visiting Scientist of Development Economics from 1975 to 1976 under the Technical Assistance Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He worked on the *Study on the Process of Regional Planning* which developed a model composed of pragmatic guidelines and directives for regional planning and implementation. The model was envisioned to identify relevant sectors under the regional planning framework, formulate and evaluate development programs and projects, and provide insights into the magnitude of their relative importance to regional economic development in the context of available resources and target groups.

One of the outputs of the study was a book titled *The Need for Regionalized Agricultural Development Planning: Experiences from Western Visayas, Philippines* authored by Dr. Luning.

Another Dutch served as SEARCA Visiting Scientist in postharvest research and development. He is Dr. Hendricus (Harry) Theodorus Leonardus van Ruiten, Milling Specialist, who also served on the technical team of the **Southeast Asian Cooperative Post Harvest Research and Development Programme**.



Former SEARCA Director J.D. Drilon (second from right) presents a plaque of appreciation to Dr. Hendrikus Albertus Luning for initiating the *Study on the Process of Regional Planning*. Looking on are SEARCA officials, including Dr. Gil F. Saguiguit (second from left), Deputy Director for Administration.

► RESEARCH PROJECTS

WE Can Do It: Empowering Women in Agriculture

In April 2024, SEARCA and PPSA (Philippines Partnerships for Sustainable Agriculture) hosted the **WE Can Do It: Empowering Women in Agriculture** Forum on March 13, 2024, in Taguig City, Philippines. This event was co-organized by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands.

Southeast Asian Cooperative Post Harvest Research and Development Programme

The Netherlands government supported the SEARCA-administered project titled **Southeast Asian Cooperative Post Harvest Research and Development Programme** and appointed Dr. Ruiten as a specialist member of the program's technical team. Also collaborating in the project was the Netherlands University Foundation for International Cooperation and the Directorate for International Technical Cooperation of Netherlands (DTH). Aside from the Netherlands, the program was also supported by the Canadian IDA, IDRC of Canada, and USAID.

Dr. Ruiten together with N.C. Teter assisted in organizing a Paddy Bulk Handling Workshop sponsored by Lembaga Padi Dan Beras Negara of Malaysia at Anak Bukit, Kedah, Malaysia on 7-9 June 1983.

The program worked in grains postharvest to help provide cooperation and coordination between countries and donors to make optimum use of the facilities in the Region, and to facilitate the collection and transfer of available knowledge among the institutions and organizations of the region (see [training activities under this program on page 3-4](#)). The program as a whole is geared toward action and technology rather than toward organization and policy.

The program collaborated with the UPLB Institute of Agricultural Engineering and Technology to test a mechanical paddy thresher manufactured in the Netherlands for use in developing countries. SEARCA facilitated the importation of the unit to be tested.

Upon the request of IPB, the program developed a full-semester, three-credit course in Grains Postharvest Engineering for the MS program of the university. The course was first offered in a condensed frame to 15 students from 18 September to 17 October 1979. For the full implementation of the course, three Program technical team members were appointed as Visiting Professors.

National Biodiversity Research Program in the Philippines

Funded by the Netherlands government through the Advisory Council for Scientific Research in Development Problems (RAWOO), this project coordinated activities for the establishment of a Philippine Biodiversity Program. It started with a Philippine mission conducted by RAWOO in 1996 during which it found the need to generate a National Biodiversity Research Agenda based on participatory, multisectoral, and multidisciplinary consultation process and thus formed a collegial body called Philippine Working Group (PWG) chaired by then SEARCA Director Percy E. Sajise.

The series of meetings produced *The Philippine Research Agenda for Biodiversity Conservation* which contained the state of biodiversity research in the Philippines, priority concerns on biodiversity, biodiversity research agenda, and its expected outputs. The document was presented to different government institutions in The Netherlands, including the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Development Council. This resulted in an agreement to continue supporting activities leading to more specific and refined Philippine Research Agenda for Biodiversity Conservation, initially focusing on Mt. Malindang on the island of Mindanao.



The Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme for Development in Mindanao: Focus on Mt. Malindang and its Environs (BRP)

BRP was a partnership between Philippine and Dutch academic, research, government and nongovernment agencies, which were committed to “undertake and promote collaborative and interdisciplinary research that will enable sustainable use of biological resources, and effective decision-making on biodiversity conservation, to improve livelihood and cultural opportunities (of communities).” It started its activities in July 2000 for a period of five years.

The Netherlands Ministry for Development Cooperation (DGIS) provided funding support for the BRP through SEARCA for 2000-2005. SEARCA served as the National Secretariat. A Joint Philippine-Dutch Programme Committee (JPC), in which three Filipino researchers and three Dutch researchers have a seat, served as the programme’s policy- and decision-making body.

BRP conducted research and support activities in the province of Misamis Occidental, northern Mindanao, a geographic wedge covering the coastal areas of Murcielagos Bay in the north up to Don Victoriano in the south, including portions of the protected natural park on the north peak of Mt. Malindang. At least 10 research projects were completed under BRP.

The BRP had two major phases:

1st generation research projects and support activities (Years 1 to 3)

- Research projects produced information, inventories, and assessments needed as baseline data and profiles on biodiversity and human-biodiversity-ecosystem interactions. Methodology development was also crucial in this phase.
- Support activities in this phase promoted capability building for researchers and their institutions, local stakeholder participation, information dissemination, and networking.

2nd generation research projects and support activities (Years 3 to 5)

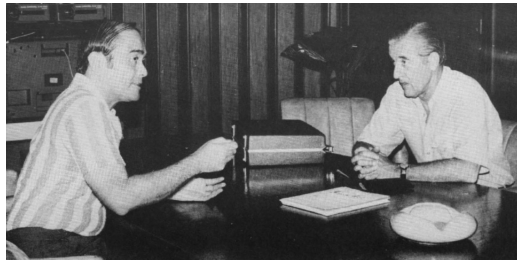
- Research projects attempted to explain human-biodiversity interactions and their impact on biodiversity; and provided knowledge for formulating alternative strategies and policies. The strategies and policies pertained to habitat restoration, biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihood development.
- Support activities at this stage built capacities of local stakeholders and institutions to adopt alternative development strategies and policies. National and international linkages were pursued to disseminate results and learning with potential application to other biodiversity areas in the Philippines.

Agro-Industrial Development Planning in Mekong Subregion

The Netherlands, through the International Agricultural Center (IAC), was also a partner of SEARCA in its Agro-industrial Development Program (AIDP) which was established to enhance institutional and human resource capability in sustainable agro-industrial development where rural and agribusiness development are strategic prerequisites. Starting in 2002, SEARCA and IAC jointly conducted the 18-month **Agro-industrial Development Planning: A sub-regional Capacity Building Initiative** which focused on Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Myanmar, and was also supported by Japan Foundation Asia Center and Khon Kaen University, Thailand.

EU Intersard-Asia IT&C project

SEARCA also signed a memorandum of agreement with the Netherlands-based ETC Foundation to implement the project called **EU Intersard-Asia IT&C**, which aimed to build a network of Asian and European partners to share information on best practices and technologies for rural and peri-urban development, and sustainable



management of natural resources through a web-based information system. The project (2002-2003) was funded by the European Union under its Asia-IT&C program.

Other Research Activities

Other research and related activities on which SEARCA had collaborated with Dutch organizations included the following:

- Impact Evaluation of Common Funds for Commodities (CFC) in the Philippines, which was funded and co-implemented by CFC
- Royal Tropical Institute Scouting Mission for Asia, which was financed by the Directorate for International Cooperation of the Netherlands to identify appropriate modalities and types of support to enhance development processes in Asian countries.
- Pre-feasibility Study on the Establishment of an Integrated Agri-food Park in the Philippines, which was funded by the Food and Bio-based Research of Wageningen University (April-December 2013)

► TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

SEARCA also cooperated with Netherlands-based organizations in the conduct of technical workshops, including the following:

- Workshop on the Preparation of Practical Agro-climatic Information, with the Netherlands-based Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (1990)
- International Workshop on Management Information System for Agricultural Research, with the Netherlands-based International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) (1990)
- Seminar on Co-Management of Natural Resources in Asia: A Comparative Perspective, with Leiden University (1998)
- International Conference-Workshop on Biodiversity and Climate Change in Southeast Asia: Adaptation and Mitigation, with funding from the Netherlands government (2008)

KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES

The Netherlands is a recipient of SEARCA's knowledge products which are produced and distributed to promote a learning culture that applies science- and research-based analyses. Contents of these knowledge products are gleaned from international conferences, results of research projects, as well as the tacit knowledge of researchers, decisionmakers, and practitioners who participate in SEARCA's short-term training programs and other learning events. The products include a semi-annual journal titled Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development, books, monographs, and other publications, which are made available in print and online.

