Global Farm Tourism Summit
Managing Climate Risks Through Sustainable Farm Tourism

17-19 July 2018
Summit Ridge Hotel, Tagaytay City
Cavite, Philippines

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE
Tourism is seen as one of the most lucrative and sustainable industries, needing only minimal amount of resources, except for transportation.

In the call for a sustainable future, there is growing interest in more healthy forms of travel and experience. Farm tourism is one such nature-seeking activity that provides a different kind of pleasure and experience.

Farm tourism is the business of attracting visitors and travellers to farm areas, generally for educational and recreational purposes, that encourages economic activity and can provide both farm and community income.

An enhanced consciousness of healthy living, reconnecting with nature, and thirst for new experiences has led people to rediscover agriculture through farm tourism.

This global trend has created new livelihoods for farm families and contributed to the rural economy.

The International School of Sustainable Tourism (ISST), with partners including the Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), Tourism Promotions Board of the Philippines (TBPPHL), and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), continues in its mission to bring farm tourism in the Southeast Asian region and other regions to new heights through the Global Farm Tourism Summit (GFTS2018).

GFTS2018 gathered vast experiences, practices, insights, technologies, and products from all over the world. It opened channels and networks from one country to another for farm tourism development.

OBJECTIVES
The Summit aimed to:
1. Increase awareness on the benefits of adding a tourism component to farms;
2. Share best practices and success stories from local and international experts;
3. Provide experiential learning through farm visits;
4. Promote farm tourism destinations, travel packages, and products;
5. Provide a venue to promote and sell raw farm produce such as vegetables and fruits, packaged food items, non-edible souvenir items, or other innovative retail items that would showcase country’s products and services; and
6. Create a directory for farm tourism establishments and sites for network building.

PARTICIPANTS
GFTS 2018 had over 300 attendees, including international speakers from South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, United States of America, and participants from Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. They were composed of officials and staff from national and local government agencies, nongovernment organizations, civil society organizations, higher education institutions, and private organizations. Tertiary and high school students, entrepreneurs, farmers, farm tourism enthusiasts and advocates, travel agents, and individuals interested in sustainable and farm tourism also participated in the event.

HIGHLIGHTS
Opening Ceremony
- On behalf of Cavite Governor Jesus Crispin C. Remulla, Dr. Ruperto Sangalang, Consultant of the Office of the Governor, thanked all the summit attendees for attending the event despite the inclement weather. He said that Tagaytay is one of the top farm tourism destinations in Region IV-A and expressed the hope that there will be exchange of ideas that would enhance the promotion and addressing of issues in tourism and agriculture, in general.
- Dr. Mina T. Gabor, ISST President, proudly reiterated that the Philippines competed with India in hosting GFTS 2018. She noted that farm tourism should be disseminated to people, especially millennials who will be agents of change towards sustainable development. She said that in terms of empowerment in farm tourism development, the Philippines is one of the top promoters among Southeast Asian countries because of its highly diversified culture, which is an advantage since the country has a lot to offer.
- Dr. Fernando C. Sanchez, Jr., Chair of SEARCA’s Governing Board and Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) stated that GFTS 2018 is an important attempt to bring practitioners of farm tourism from all over the world to share their knowledge, success stories, and experiences that could further fuel their worthwhile fledging industry.
- On behalf of DOT Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, Asec. Roberto Alabado III expressed the department’s support to GFTS 2018. He shared his personal experience on how the farm tourism industry grew in their region when he was the regional DOT director. He also conveyed the importance of connection between farmers and people/tourists to relay the value of agriculture in the overall economic makeup of the Philippines. He stressed that under Sec. Romulo-Puyat’s leadership, farm tourism and culinary tourism will be at the forefront of DOT’s programs.
Conference Proper

The conference featured four plenary sessions, two panel discussions, and a field trip to the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) in Silang, Cavite.

Plenary 1 was on sustainable practices and opportunities in farm tourism. It highlighted how farming can be perceived as sexy and how millennials can play a larger role in farm tourism, how women empowerment can propel farm tourism, along with new sustainable practices in farming.

Plenary 2 was on climate-smart farm tourism, with two major topics: investment planning towards climate-smart farm tourism and climate resilient crops.

Plenary 3 was on organic farming, which featured best practices in farm tourism in the Philippines and New Zealand.

Plenary 4 was on empowering local government units (LGUs) for farm tourism. It featured the experiences of farm tourism providers and the assistance that LGUs give in terms of ordinances in two provinces in the Philippines (Surigao del Sur and La Union) and one province in Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

Panel Discussion 1 focused on unique farm stay experiences in Vietnam and the Philippines while Panel Discussion 2 was on farm tourism country models in South Korea, Japan, and the Philippines.

At the IIRR, participants were toured in the Institute’s facilities and were briefed about its programs that assist the farm tourism sector, as well as its marketing and partnership strategies to advocate for agricultural education and social entrepreneurship.