RESHAPING AGRICULTURE
AND DEVELOPMENT
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

An Experts Consultation Forum

2 August 2018
SEARCA, Los Baños,
Laguna, Philippines

Background and Rationale

By 2050, the global population is projected to reach ten billion, up from eight billion today. Large numbers of people entering the middle class, in countries like China and India, the Southeast Asian region included, and adopting middle-class eating habits — like consuming more meat, which requires more grain — only adds to the burden.

To close the food gap, worldwide farm productivity will have to increase by 60 percent in 2050. But increasing climate risks and uncertainties exacerbate Southeast Asia’s reduced ability to increase food production for its own growing population, given the degraded condition of its natural resource base, among other challenges such as its ageing farm population and urbanizing food habits.

Against this backdrop of challenges, various stakeholders in 2014 asserted their analyses and solutions in the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture’s (SEARCA) 2nd International Conference on Agricultural and Rural Development in Southeast Asia (ARD2014). From this conference, SEARCA harvested Farms, Food, & Futures: Toward Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development in Southeast Asia, published in 2016, its 50th year. In the book, high-level ARD experts have mapped, along the parameters of resilience, equity, and integration, their syntheses of the answers in the areas of productivity improvement, inclusive value chains, sustainability and poverty reduction, food security and food safety, institutions and governance, and regional cooperation and integration.

Objectives

In general, the experts consultation forum on Reshaping Agriculture and Development in Southeast Asia aims to distill from current developments and emerging scenarios the opportunities and challenges for direction-setting and strategizing towards an integrated agenda in agriculture and development in Southeast Asia so as to be able to proactively address these rapid changes.

1. Analyze opportunities and challenges for agriculture and development in the Southeast Asian region in the next five to ten years;

2. Calibrate the thrusts and themes where regional and national institutions and networks in Southeast Asia may collaborate and complement one another along the current and projected gaps/needs of the region in AD; and

3. Recommend directions and innovative approaches in the pursuit of shared regional mandates / goals and programs.

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But the rapidly changing environment of agriculture and development (AD) calls for constantly keeping our ears close to the ground to stay in tune with AD’s shifting landscape. Among the changes to contend with are technologies in agriculture internet of things (IoT) and their potentials in sustainable agricultural intensification; China’s Belt and Road Initiative that physically links China with ASEAN countries across national boundaries giving way to regional/cross-border value chains; and emergence of a new breed of educated family farmers including farm tourism operators who are rediscovering agriculture as a venture or better lifestyle. Yet the uncertainties of climate change, and of challenges to the inclusion and integration of smallholder farmers in the current movement toward agricultural transformation, remain as important challenges.

A one-day experts consultation forum on Reshaping Agriculture and Development in Southeast Asia is thus proposed to draw out high-level analyses and scenarios in order to distill emerging opportunities and challenges that would bear upon collaborative arrangements for agriculture and development in the Southeast Asian region.

Panel of Experts

Dr. Paul P.S. Teng, NTU, Singapore
Dr. Cielito F. Habito, ADMU
Dr. Doris Capistrano, ASFCC
Dr. Bui Tan Yen, IRRI-Vietnam/CCAFS
Dr. Julian Gonsalves, IIRR
Engr. Samuel M. Contreras, DA-BSWM
Dr. Sudhir Yadav, IRRI
Dr. Maria Victoria O. Espaldon, UPLB
Dr. Karen Eloisa T. Barroga, PhilRice
Mr. John Garrity, USAID
Mr. Roger F. Barroga, PhilRice
Mr. Vinci N. Roxas, RKF
Dr. Wei Fang, NTU, Taiwan
Mr. Sven Yeo, Archisen Pte. Ltd., Singapore
Dr. Grahame Dixie, Grow Asia
Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Nexus AS
Dr. Larry Chee-Yoong Wong, CESD, Myanmar and ISIS, Malaysia
Dr. Rolando T. Dy, UA&P
Dean Larry N. Digal, UPMIn
Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, SEARCA
Mr. Tomas A. Cabuenos, Jr., GIZ Philippines
Ms. Tan Thi Shu, Sapa O’Chau, Vietnam
Dr. Mina T. Gabor, ISST
Ms. Gigi Pontejos-Morris, MoCA Family Farm
Mr. Jonjon Sarmiento, PAKISAMA

The Forum at a Glance

8:00 Registration
8:30 Opening and Context-setting
9:30 Session 1: Managing Climate Uncertainties and Water Scarcity
11:00 Session 2: The Promise of Information Technology
13:30 Session 3: Agro-industrial Value Chains and Integration of Smallholders
15:30 Session 4: Farm Tourism and Family Farming
16:30 Session 5: Towards an Integrated Agenda for Agriculture and Development in Southeast Asia
17:45 Appreciation and Closing