The SEARCA Governing Board Holds 50th Meet in Manila

The Year in Color: A Review of 2004

As 2004 draws to a close, The SEARCA Diary reviews the activities that kept the Center busy throughout the year.

On 1 October 2003, SEARCA put in place an organizational structure that trimmed down the Center to its core businesses, namely: Graduate Scholarship, Short-term Training, Research and Development, and Knowledge Exchange. This posed the overarching challenge of accomplishing more with less — less resources, less people, less options — while not losing sight of the need to continuously expand funding sources. This proactive stance set the tone for the implementation of the Center’s activities all through 2004.

The first half of the year 2004 saw the Center laying the groundwork for the onset of its Eighth Five-Year Plan. Covering the period July 2004 to June 2009, the plan promotes two strategic focus areas: (1) Agricultural Competitiveness and (2) Natural Resource Management. Through these focus areas, the Center sees itself contributing to the search for solutions to the twin pervasive problems of food insecurity and poverty. Endorsed by the SEARCA Governing Board during its 49th Meeting held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 15-17 October 2003, and approved by the SEAMEO Council at its 39th Conference in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 1-4 March 2004, the plan was further refined after a review of the then-newly constituted SEARCA Advisory Council.
rural development in Southeast Asia. Although economic growth has been remarkably rapid in the region, it has not been uniform across countries. Poverty and food insecurity remain pervasive in agriculture- and natural resource-dependent economies of the region. Studies have shown the vast majority of the poor are dependent on agriculture and agriculture-related industries for employment and income. Through its core service of strengthening institutional capacity, SEARCA works toward agricultural and rural development, which hold the key to sustained economic development and poverty reduction in the region.

SEARCA’s Governing Board is chaired by Mr. Tin Htut Oo, Director-General, Department of Agricultural Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Myanmar. The other GB members are Dr. Mohamad Yussof bin Haji Mohiddin, Director, Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, Brunei; Mr. Sam-Oeun May, Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Cambodia; Prof. Dr. Dodi Nandika, Director for Research and Community Services Development, Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education, Indonesia; Mr. Thongphanh Kousonsavath, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, National University of Lao PDR; Prof. Dato’ Dr. Mohd Zohadie Bardaie, Vice Chancellor, Universiti Putra Malaysia; Dr. Wilfredo P. David, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Los Baños; Dr. Tan Teck Koon, Associate Professor and Dean of Students, National University of Singapore; Mr. Veerasak Wongsombut, Secretary-General, Vocational Education Commission, Ministry of Education, Thailand; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dang Vu Binh, Rector, Hanoi Agricultural University, Vietnam; Dr. Arief S. Sadiman, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat, Bangkok, Thailand; and Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, Director of SEARCA.

All GB members attended the Meeting, except for the representatives of Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand, who instead sent Dr. Assanee Pachinburavan of the Ministry of Education of Thailand. Other attendees include Mrs. Puttachard Suphalucksana of Thailand’s Ministry of Education; and Dr. Djoko Suprapto, Deputy Director for Programs; Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., Deputy Director for Administration; and all the Department Managers and Unit Heads of SEARCA.

The Opening Ceremonies of the GB Meeting was also attended by the SEARCA Advisory Committee led by Prof. Solita C. Monsod, officials of various Philippine government agencies and international/regional organizations based in the Philippines, members of the diplomatic corps, and SEARCA staff. (AJT)
SEARCA welcomes institutions and emerging development issues in the region. The venue for articulating policy options on the region, the conference aims to provide a dialogue with policymakers from the Asian agricultural and rural development in Talks on “Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia: Ideas, Paradigms, and Policies Three Decades After” on 10-11 November 2005 in Manila, Philippines. This milestone event marks the beginning of the celebration of SEARCA’s 40th anniversary in November 2006.

Highly esteemed economists and development thinkers are being commissioned to examine how ideas on agricultural development have evolved since the 1970s vis-à-vis changes and the current situation in the region, how they have contributed to our understanding of agricultural and rural development issues, and how real-world events have enriched or revised these ideas and paradigms.

By bringing together an international group of acknowledged research scholars in agricultural and rural development in dialogue with policymakers from the Asian region, the conference aims to provide a venue for articulating policy options on emerging development issues in the region.

SEARCA welcomes institutions and organizations, both public and private, that would like to sponsor this rare conference or partner with SEARCA by funding specific sessions that are supportive of or complementary to their organization’s specific interests. For details of sponsorship and partnership, please contact Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager, through telephone (63-49) 536-2365 to 67 loc. 137, fax (63-49) 536-4105, or e-mail nmm@agri.searca.org.

Research Team Completes Environmental Baseline Study

One of the most significant and rapidly growing causes of land-based pollution of the South China Sea is the environmentally unsustainable industrial-scale livestock production. To counter this, China, Thailand, and Vietnam jointly proposed a project on “Livestock Waste Management in East Asia” to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

The joint project is geared toward the adoption of a regional approach that will ensure that countries significantly involved with or affected by this problem are included and their most common interest in the ecosystem of the South China Sea are emphasized, promoting important cross-country synergies. It also ensures that benefits of the project can be replicated throughout the region bordering the South China Sea and that the project benefits are transferred to Cambodia, Lao PDR, and the Philippines.

Funded by GEF through the World Bank, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization/ Livestock, Environment, and Development Initiative (FAO/LEAD) was selected as the executing agency. SEARCA, in turn, was contracted by FAO to conduct the “Environmental Baseline Study (EBS): Nutrient Migration to South China Sea” as part of project preparation.

SEARCA fielded the research team of Dr. Rodrigo Badayos, a pedologist and expert in agricultural waste utilization, and Prof. Moises Dorado, a hydrologist and expert in agricultural waste management, both of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).

Dr. Badayos and Prof. Dorado worked closely with local researchers from China, Vietnam, and Thailand, as well as with other international researchers of the project. The research estimated the current migration of nutrients (N and P) from inland agricultural sources to the South China sea, and contributed to the definition of criteria for the selection of farms and villages that will have access to matching grants for the development of manure management plans. In the same manner, it provided information on nutrient fluxes required to prepare the project’s Monitoring and Evaluation plan and contributed to the development of the project regional component by having identified tools and methods of supranational relevance.

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Committee, on 20 May 2004. Composed of men and women prominent in the academic, scientific, and business communities of Southeast Asia, the Advisory Committee provides counsel to the Center on strategies in carrying out its mandated tasks.

July 2004 signaled the start of the first full fiscal year of implementation of the Eighth FYP. Within the second half of 2004, SEARCA partnered with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Myanmar for a three-year agricultural capacity program for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam. It implemented the Training of Trainers (ToT) in Assessing Development Projects’ Impacts on Poverty, the first of a series of similar training courses first contained in the Center’s Eighth FYP. SEARCA also continued to implement and improve the weekly Agriculture and Development Seminar Series (ADSS), where perspectives, scientific findings, and research results in agriculture, development, and related fields are discussed by high-profile local and foreign speakers. The second half of 2004 also saw SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan spearheading the Center’s pursuit of leading discussions on emerging development issues and concerns, when he presented the groundbreaking study on “The Population-Poverty Nexus: The Philippines in Comparative East Asian Context” on several national fora and conferences.

While this issue reports on the Center’s activities for the last quarter of 2004, it is with a sense of accomplishment that the SEARCA Diary looks back on the rest of the year just past.
APAARI Holds Postharvest Consultation

Postharvest initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region gained new heights with the conduct of an Expert Consultation on Postharvest organized by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) on 1-3 December 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand. With the theme “Ensuring Food Security and Value Addition for Enhanced Income,” the conference provided a venue for interaction between and among Asian-Pacific country representatives and the prioritization of postharvest research and development supportive of the region.

At the same conference, the Food and Agriculture Office and the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (FAO-GFAR) adopted a market-oriented strategic framework on postharvest for the Asia-Pacific region. Arrived at through three separate postharvest initiatives of FAO, GFAR, and the Global Postharvest Forum (Ph Action) over the past three years, the strategic framework concretized the postharvest action agenda for the region by fitting in the regional priorities generated during the December 2001 Asia-Pacific regional consultation conducted by APAARI through SEARCA.

Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, SEARCA Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager and Coordinator of the 2001 Asia-Pacific postharvest consultation, presented the Asia Pacific Region’s priorities as they fit into the Rome 2003 finalized Strategic Framework. Recent regional developments and the “fresh” information passed by the conference’s previous sessions were likewise incorporated in the analysis. Four main priority areas were identified, namely: policy and food safety, rural enterprise development, supply chain integration, and capacity building.

Working Groups were formed around these four themes, in relation to the specific interest of the respective institutions represented by the 70 participants from 19 countries. The conference ended on a high note, with the agreement to operationalize the strategic priorities through the selection of specific topics for development into regional or global partnership programs, with FAO-GFAR taking the lead. (NMManalili)

Amsterdam Workshop Marks Completion of Regoverning Markets Project

The initial phase of the multi-region collaborative research project titled “Regoverning Markets:Securing Small Producer Participation in Restructured National and Regional Agri-food Systems” ended in November 2004. This was a nine-month project initiated by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) based in the United Kingdom (UK), with SEARCA coordinating the Southeast Asian region. The global project, funded by the UK Department of International Development (DFID), assessed the challenges faced by primary producers and their economic organizations in negotiating market access and improving terms of trade in specific agricultural supply chains.

The project culminated with the Regoverning Markets International Workshop held on 15-19 November 2004 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The workshop discussed the challenges of the small farmers, supply chain participation and coordination, investment in traditional markets, capacity building of producer organizations, poverty reduction, and trade policies.

An international seminar held on 18 November 2004 also highlighted the completion of the project. It was conducted to review the major findings of Project Phase I. It also engaged a group of policymakers and influential actors in a dialogue about key policy implications and identification of knowledge gaps for further research study.

Panel discussions focused on the key implications for producers, and research and policy and development assistance were integrated during the seminar. Brainstorming and discussions on proposal development for another collaborative research (Phase II) were also held.

The workshop was attended by the Southeast Asia project team composed of Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Coordinator for Southeast Asia and Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager of SEARCA, country writers Dr. Larry Digal of UP Mindanao, Philippines and Dr. Phan Thi Giac of Nong Lam University, Vietnam, and SEARCA endorsed panelist, Dr. Nipon Poapongsakorn of the Thailand Development Research Institute.

The country and regional reports as well as the seminar presentations of the Regoverning Markets project are posted at www.regoverningmarkets.org. (LACTumlos)

Officials and staff of SEARCA underwent a Center-wide Adventure-Based Counselling (ABC) workshop in February 2004, a novel teambuilding exercise aimed at instilling esprit de corps team membership and encourage open communication and camaraderie among SEARCAns. The Center tapped Harness, Incorporated, a pioneer in adventure-based counseling in the Philippines, to conduct the activity in Casa San Pablo, a secluded nature resort south of Los Baños, Laguna.
Biodiversity Project Expected to Earn Income

A research project on the conservation and utilization of endemic, rare, and economically important plants in the three barangays (villages) of Don Victoriano, Misamis Occidental, Philippines aims at biodiversity conservation and income generation for the community. The project is part of the activities conducted by the Biodiversity Research Programme (BRP) for Development in Mindanao. The project outputs include a plant nursery and greenhouse constructed in Brgy. Mansawan, Don Victoriano, which was inaugurated on 15 October 2004.

BRP had earlier conducted a study on the participatory inventory and assessment of the plant resources in Barangays Mansawan, Gandawan, and Lake Duminagat of Don Victoriano. When the results of this study were presented to the community, they identified a possible livelihood project that would also serve as a strategy in conserving the remaining biodiversity in Mt. Malindang. They recommended putting up a nursery and greenhouse to care for and propagate seedlings collected from the forest. This current research project was BRP’s response to this recommendation from the community.

The construction and management of the nursery and greenhouse are a joint effort of the community and the researchers. The local researchers collect the seeds of fast-growing trees and grow them in the nursery. The local community has also undergone training in silviculture, horticultural practices, and nursery operation and management to sustain these efforts once the BRP researchers turn over its full management to the community when the programme ends.

To generate income, the local community plans to sell seedlings to visitors of Mt. Malindang, and will request them to plant these along the roads and trails leading to the forest. The income generated from this activity will be used for the maintenance and operation of the nursery and greenhouse.

The BRP is currently implementing 13 research studies in the pilot research area, which touches on the protected natural park in the uplands, a marine protected area on the coast, and headwater streams of Layawan River in the province of Misamis Occidental, southern Philippines. Research results will serve as inputs to the development of strategies leading to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in Mt. Malindang and its environs. (CSFule and RYAdan)

SEARCA to Hold Conference on Water Governance and Poverty

SEARCA, in collaboration with institutional partners, will conduct a two-day Regional Conference on Water Governance and Poverty with the theme “Enhancing Competitiveness, Reducing Poverty: A Call for Effective Water Governance in Southeast Asia,” on 9-10 March 2005 in Metro Manila, Philippines.

This conference was conceptualized in response to the continuous exploitation of water resources to meet the demands of an increasing population and those of an economy that has become more integrated and globalized. In Southeast Asia, agriculture is the largest consumer of water, accounting for approximately 88% of water use. Hence, water fuels the engines of food production, particularly in developing economies.

However, the efficiency with which water distribution and related services are delivered greatly depends on an effective water governance system. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) cites effective water governance as the “key to sustainable water management and poverty eradication.” The pursuit of water initiatives, establishment of institutional mechanisms, and use of appropriate management tools and capabilities to govern the resource all promote effective and efficient water governance.

The conference aims to raise the importance of water governance in regional development and poverty alleviation agenda; develop a framework for enabling policies and programs toward equitable and sustained water access; identify priority water development initiatives and funding mobilization strategies; and identify areas for collaborative endeavors in the region that will lead to the alleviation of water poverty.

It will feature a Keynote Paper and five Thematic Papers on water governance, research and development, water use and allocation, funding of water resource development initiatives, and issues and concerns in water-related disasters.

For more information, please contact Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager, through telephone (63-49) 536-2365 to 67 loc. 137, fax (63-49) 536-4105, or e-mail nmm@agri.searca.org. (NGRogel)

In 2004, SEARCA inked several Memoranda of Agreement with Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corporation (QUEDANCOR), an attached agency of the Philippine Department of Agriculture. On 8 March 2004, SEARCA and QUEDANCOR agreed to collaborate in undertaking a long-term capacity building for 30,000 Self-Reliant Team (SRT) Leaders of QUEDANCOR’s credit programs. The signatories were (L-R): Mr. Neil Patrick C. Riconalla, Acting Senior Vice President, QUEDANCOR; Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan; Mr. Nelson Buenaflo, President and CEO QUEDANCOR; and Dr. Nicomedes D. Briones, Manager of SEARCA’s Consulting Services.
SEARCA Director Presents Population-Poverty Connection to Corporate Foundations

Thirty to forty years ago the Philippines’ economic performance fared better in comparison with its neighbors. However, in the years that followed, the question that has been asked is what went wrong?

The League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) attempted to provide some answers with the holding of the Third Economic and Socio-Political Briefing at the Filipinas Heritage Library in Makati City, Philippines on 25 November 2004. LCF is a network of corporate associations and corporations focused on social development efforts in the country.

SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan and Dr. Benjamin S. Diokno, both of the University of the Philippines School of Economics, were the representatives from the academe.

Dr. Balisacan gave the highlights on how population matters in the economic performance and poverty of a country, taken from the study “The Population-Poverty Nexus: the Philippines in a Comparative East Asian context.” He had also presented the results of this study at the House of Representatives as well as to the Senate a few months ago.

On the other hand, Dr. Diokno outlined the fiscal woes that the country faces and imperative measures to be taken in order to avert the crisis, based on the paper “The Deepening Crisis: the Real Score on Deficits and the Public Debt” written by 11 professors from the UP School of Economics.

The resource persons from the business sector were Mr. Washington Sycip, founder of SGV & Company, and Mr. Peter Wallace, founder of The Wallace Business Forum. Both representatives agreed with the points given by the academe but cautioned on what, in reality, can be achieved under current conditions. For instance, rapid population growth must be stemmed and stronger tax reforms must be undertaken, however, neither has been forcefully addressed to date. The call, then, was for strong leadership and a system of government that could adequately respond to the needs of the nation.

The ensuing discussion reiterated that a good investment climate requires stability, consistency, and continuity, among others. In these aspects, the Philippines is losing out to its neighbors. It had been noted that the country has one of the lowest infrastructure spending in the region, further making it less attractive to potential as well as existing investors. And if the status quo holds for the Philippines, it will not be long before the rest of the region manages to overtake the country too.

Cambodia MAFF Staff Learn About Inland Fishery Management

Cambodia’s Tonle Sap is the most important inland wetland in Southeast Asia. This large wetland system supports one of the world’s most productive freshwater fisheries and the ecosystem is essential to the survival of many globally significant species. However, in recent years, unsustainable exploitation of its natural richness has become a threat to the Tonle Sap. In November 2001, the Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project (TSEMP) was launched, for the lake’s basin’s sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity.

One of the initiatives under the TSEMP is...
the capacity building of staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF), who are tasked to implement, develop, facilitate, and manage the existing community fisheries within the Tonle Sap.

SEARCA was tapped to design and conduct an overseas study program for 16 MAFF staff. The program was conducted on 8-12 November 2004 in Laguna, Philippines. It was aimed at providing the MAFF staff meaningful learning opportunities and practical knowledge of and skills in community-based inland fishery management in the Philippines, for application in the Tonle Sap context.

The study program covered an overview of lake management in the Philippines, discussion of participatory/community-based approaches for community fisheries, visits to and interaction with the staff and stakeholders of the Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development (PCAMRD), Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR). The participants also received briefings on the initiatives of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council’s (FARMC) in Laguna de Bay, Tadlac Lake, Sampaloc Lake, and Taal Lake.

At the end of the study tour, the participants submitted two action plans, namely: a) Capacity Building on Community Fisheries Management and Development, prepared by the National Group, and b) Community Fisheries Strengthening at Tonle Sap Lake Region, prepared by the Provincial Group.

**SEARCA ADSS Continues to Draw Crowd**

The weekly SEARCA Agriculture and Development Seminar Series (ADSS), launched in August 2003, continues to be a venue for dynamic and vibrant discussion of scientific findings, research results, and perspectives within the purview of agriculture and development. It has had high-profile researchers and practitioners from the academe, government, and industry as resource persons. Open to the public and held at the Center every Tuesday at 4:00 p.m., the ADSS is attended by students, academics, scientists, and other members of the Los Baños community and beyond. The following seminars were given from October to December 2004:

- **7 December 2004**
  Environment and Natural Resource Accounting: How Much is the Dao Tree Really Worth? by **Dr. Nicomedes D. Briones**, Professor, School of Environmental Science and Management, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)

- **30 November 2004**
  Ripples of Hope Over Troubled Waters: The Calancan Bay Experience by **Ms. Wanah Maria Ayessa H. Yelo**, Executive Assistant, ODDP, SEARCA

- **23 November 2004**
  Fish for the Future: An Assessment of the Fishery Conservation Policies of the Philippines by **Dr. Maribec A. Campos**, Consultant, SEARCA

- **16 November 2004**
  The Philippines’ Integrated Coastal Management Experience and Challenges by **Mr. Cesario Pagdilao**, Deputy Director, Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development (PCAMRD)

- **9 November 2004**
  Reforming the Bureaucracy: What is the Way Forward? by **Com. Karina C. David**, Philippine Civil Service Commission

- **26 October 2004**
  The Southeast Asian University Consortium in the Future: Options and Prospects by **Dr. Ledivina Cariño**, Professor, NCPAG, University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD)

- **19 October 2004**
  Population and Development by **Dr. Corie Veloso**, Communication Management Consultant

- **5 October 2004**
  Harnessing “Earthworm Power” for Rural Development in the Philippines by **Dr. Rafael D. Guerrero III**, Executive Director, PCAMRD

SEARCA welcomes individuals, institutions, and organizations to present recent research results, studies in progress, and the like, in the ADSS. For arrangements, please contact Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager, through telephone (63-49) 536-2365 to 67 local 137, fax (63-49) 536-4105, or e-mail nmm@agri.searca.org.

Participants in the FAO-SEARCA workshop on alleviating hunger and food insecurity in Asia, held in Cha-am, Thailand on 24-26 March 2004 pose for posterity. They include SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan (seated, third from left); H.E. Shin Sakurai MP, current chair of the Food Security Committee of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) (seated, fourth from left); and Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager of SEARCA (standing, second from left).
The members of the SEARCA Advisory Committee and the Center’s officials hold their first meeting on 20 May 2004: (L-R) Dr. Djoko Suprapto; Dr. Evamarie P. Capareda; Dr. Gelia T. Castillo; Mr. Cesar E. A. Virata; Prof. Solita C. Monsod; Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan; Mr. Senen C. Bacani; Dr. Ronald P. Cantrell; and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. The SEARCA Advisory Committee, composed of men and women prominent in the academic, scientific, and business communities of Southeast Asia, provides counsel to the Center on strategies in carrying out its mandates.
The Iloilo leg of the SEARCA-implemented “Strengthening Capacity of Self-Reliant Team (SRT) Leaders of QUEDANCOR in Agribusiness and Credit Management” training program was attended by SRT Leaders who availed of QUEDANCOR’s Swine Production Loan Program in the Western Visayas, Philippines area — hog farmers from the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, and Iloilo. This leg was conducted by SEARCA on 14-18 June 2004.
Germany Meeting Tackles New Directions for UC

The 15-year old Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) needs repackaging, that is, a redefining of objectives, depth, breadth, and focus in light of present demands in agriculture education and human resource development in the Southeast Asian region. This was the major decision made by the 15 UC Executive Officers and Coordinators, who represented seven of eight UC members, and the UC Secretariat during the 17th University Consortium Executive Officers and Coordinators Meeting held in Goettigen, Germany on 17-19 November 2004. It was hosted by the Georg-August University of Goettingen, the newest UC associate member.

The UC’s founding members are Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) and Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Indonesia; Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM); Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand; and University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). The two other associate members are University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada and University of Queensland (UQ) in Australia. SEARCA initiated the establishment of the UC in 1989 and serves as the UC Secretariat.

The decision was made after lengthy deliberation on the results of the UC Evaluation conducted by an external team to look at the consortium’s accomplishments, impact, and value-adding aspect in the region. Among the possibilities presented by the evaluation team on the UC’s future (i.e., expansion, improvement, status quo, or abolition), the UC Executive Board chose “improvement” as the way to go in the immediate future.

Following the decision, the group conducted a SWOT analysis for the UC. The group then identified five overarching goals for the UC, namely: 1) Enhancement of Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources; 2) Ecologically/Environmentally Sustainable Development; 3) Internationally Competitive Agriculture Production; 4) Natural Resource Management; and 5) Food Security and Poverty Reduction. In the next five years, the UC’s primary goals are food security and poverty reduction, with the following strategic priorities: 1) sustainable management of natural resource systems; 2) food and agriculture policy and agribusiness development; 3) biotechnology in agriculture; 4) food and health; and 5) information and communication technology (ICT), bioinformatics, and data management in agriculture.

Mechanisms and processes to carry out a capacity-building program to address the primary goal of food security and poverty reduction in Southeast Asia include: student exchanges; faculty exchanges for teaching and research; thesis support; international conferences; collaborative/joint programs; short courses and workshops on skills building; communication/information...
DAAD-SEARCA Fellows Discuss North-South Scientific and Academic Networking

Six fellows who were recipients of scholarship grants from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and SEARCA, as well as officials of DAAD, SEARCA, and the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) met in Goettingen, Germany to discuss possibilities for North-South networking and collaboration. The meeting, with the theme, “Scientific and Academic Networking within Southeast Asia and between Southeast Asia and Germany,” was held parallel with the 17th UC Executive Officers and Coordinators Meeting (please see related story on page 10) in Goettigen, Germany on 17-19 November 2004.

With financial support from DAAD, the six fellows who attended the meeting were Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, Director, SEARCA; Dr. Zosimo Battad, President, Pampanga Agricultural College, Philippines; Dr. Maimunah Ismail, Head, Department of Professional Development and Continuing Education, Universiti Putra Malaysia; Dr. Charnnian Yosraj, Leader, MJU Return the Native Orchids to the Forest and Lecturer, Animal Science Department, Maejo University, Thailand; Dr. Dang Thanh Ha, Lecturer, Department of Economics, Nong Lam University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; and Dr. Muhammad Nur Aidi, Lecturer, Department of Mathematics, Institut Pertanian Bogor, Indonesia.

During the opening ceremony on 17 November 2004, Prof. Dr. Horst Kern, President of the Georg-August University of Goettingen (GAUG), welcomed the meeting participants and expressed his enthusiasm on the expected outcomes of the parallel meetings on the sharing of experiences between two networks, the UC and the Southeast Asian-Germany (SEAG) Network.

On 19 November 2004, the participants visited the DAAD office in Bonn. Dr. Hanns Sylvester, Head of the Development Cooperation Department of DAAD, together with Ms. Monika Brodke and Ms. Suzanne Scherzer of the South and Southeast Asia Section, welcomed the DAAD-SEARCA fellows as well as the UC participants. Dr. Sylvester emphasized that the link up of the DAAD-SEARCA alumni/fellows network with the SEAG network provides a good chance for both groups to collaborate on relevant activities and projects, while keeping up their connections and maintaining a lifelong relationship with DAAD.

In behalf of the DAAD-SEARCA fellows, Dr. Battad presented a proposal to the DAAD on the “Role of DAAD-SEARCA Alumni in Poverty Reduction in Southeast Asia” for possible co-funding with the Regional SEARCA Fellows Association. The proposal involves the conduct of mini-workshops and conference on the topic. Dr. Sylvester suggested that the fellows submit a full proposal as a cooperative activity between SEAG and DAAD-SEARCA alumni/fellows networks. In behalf of the two groups and SEARCA, Dr. Balisacan extended his deep appreciation to DAAD for its continued support to SEARCA’s human resource development program and expressed optimism for more fruitful collaboration in future activities.

DAAD has been assisting SEARCA in its agricultural human resource development since 1975. As of end of Academic Year

Miss Deborah Landey, resident representative of UNDP, is shown signing documents during the second regional meeting of the UNDP-managed Small Grants Program for the Protection of Tropical Forests (SGP-PTF) held on 22 June 2004 in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, while Hon. Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn and SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan look on.
Nagoya U, AAACU To Implement Two Projects

Nagoya University (NU) and the Association of Asian Agricultural Colleges and Universities (AAACU) are implementing two projects that have the long-term goal of developing an integrated agriculture curriculum for AAACU that would cover a more holistic approach to teaching, learning, and research in agriculture and sustainable development to keep pace with developments in agriculture.

The projects, which feed into each other, are titled “Development of Agriculture Curriculum and Database of Human Resources for AAACU” and “Development of e-Learning as a Tool for Distance Education in Agriculture and Bio-industry in AAACU”. Both will be implemented until December 2006.

They are funded by NU and AAACU, in cooperation with participating AAACU members. Both projects were formally confirmed by AAACU’s Governing Council during its meeting on 29 September 2004 in NU, Nagoya, Japan.

Dr. Akira Yamauchi, Associate Dean of NU’s Graduate School of Bioagricultural Sciences, said the project on curriculum and database development will involve the collection of data on strong programs in existing agriculture curricula, credit systems, and faculty/research expertise. It will also collect information on existing courses that the participating AAACU members are willing to transform into e-learning courses. Such information will be used for the catalogs of courses and database of human resources that the project will produce through SEARCA, which serves as the AAACU Secretariat.

The other project aims to transform existing courses into e-learning modules for on-line teaching and learning. Dr. Yamauchi stressed that the project will ensure that the faculty members involved in the development of e-courses are properly trained in delivering on-line teaching using appropriate courseware. He added that e-learning is just a tool to enhance delivery of existing courses.

A task force will be formed to serve as a working group for the curriculum development and e-learning projects.

SEARCA Has Eight New Fellows

SEARCA has eight new fellows from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. They completed their graduate studies at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Indonesia, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), and University of the Philippines Visayas (UPV) from July 2004 to November 2004.

Ms. Radhiah Zakaria (Indonesia) completed her MS in Forest Botany from UPM in July 2004. Her thesis is titled “Systematic Studies on Guttiferae Juss. and Hypericaceae Juss. of Peninsular Malaysia.”

Ms. Dyah Ismoyowati (Indonesia) obtained her PhD in agricultural economics from UGM in October 2004. Her dissertation is titled “The Existence, Performance, and Prospects of Sugar Industry in Java, Indonesia.”

Five of the new fellows obtained their graduate degrees from UPLB in October and November 2004. Their respective names, nationalities, degrees, and areas of specialization, and the title of their theses are as follows: Ms. Chatchavij Thanomthim, Thai, PhD in Agronomy, “Effect of Metalaxyl on the Root System of Corn (Zea mays L.) and Its Possible Use for Improved Crop Competitive Ability”; Mr. Prum Somany, Cambodian, PhD in Development Communication, “Communication and Inter-agency Linkages for Sustainable Agriculture in the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia”; Ms. Virgilia A. Aberin, Filipino, PhD in Soil Science, “Genesis, Morphology, Characteristics of Soils in Mount Mayon, Philippines”; Mr. RB J. Gallego, Filipino, MS in Forestry, “Establishment of a Resource Information System for Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT) Reservation Area in Aurora Province, Philippines”; and Mr. Yusof A. Sucol, Filipino, MS in Veterinary Medicine, “Virus Isolation, Clinico-Pathological Observations and Immunohistochemical Detection of Porcine Circovirus-2 (PCV-2) from Pig Farms with Suspected Cases of Postweaning Multisystemic Wasting Syndrome (PMWS) in Luzon, Philippines.”

Ms. Andi Besse Patadjai (Indonesia) completed her MS in Fisheries at UPV in November 2004. Her thesis is titled “Nutritional Value of Fish Silage with Gracilaria sp. and Abalone Viscera as Poultry Feed.”

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attitude toward non-seaweed farming were significantly related to the nature and extent of participation of women in seaweed farming operations. Likewise, average level of productivity of seaweed was highly and significantly associated to joint husband and wife decisions and the degree of exposure of women to various forms of media.

SEARCA, AAACU Agree to Co-publish

SEARCA and the Association of Asian Agricultural Colleges and Universities (AAACU) have agreed to co-publish selected issues of the Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development (AJAD).

AJAD is a new international, refereed journal launched by SEARCA in 2004. It aims to provide information and analysis on topics within the broad scope of agriculture and development. It also promotes greater awareness of the latest findings in research, state-of-the-art technologies, new methodologies, and policy concerns in agriculture and development.

The agreement to co-publish was one of the proposals approved by the AAACU Governing Council during its meeting on 29 September 2004 in Nagoya University, Nagoya, Japan. SEARCA is an associate member of AAACU and serves as its secretariat. Moreover, the SEARCA Director is AAACU’s Executive Secretary.

As part of the co-publication agreement, the AAACU President will serve as a member of AJAD’s editorial board, which is composed of internationally renowned and respected development thinkers and researchers. Moreover, each AAACU member will be provided a complimentary copy of the journal.

For more information on AJAD, please communicate with The Editor, Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development, SEARCA, College, Laguna 4031, Philippines, or visit www.searca.org.

SEARCA Has Seven New Scholars

SEARCA has awarded five graduate scholarships to a Cambodian (1), Myanmar (1), Filipino (1), Vietnamese (1), and Timor-Leste (3) nationals to pursue their MS programs at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).

Full scholarships for two-year MS programs were awarded to Mr. Pheak Sothea, Cambodian; Mr. Dam Viet Bac, Vietnamese, MS in Forestry; Ms. Maria Isabel Da Silva, Timorese, MS in Agronomy; Mr. Carlito M. Code De Araujo, Timorese, MS in Animal Science; and Mr. Joao Boavida Da Cruz, Timorese, MS in Agronomy. All of them began their graduate programs in November 2004. Mr. Sothea’s scholarship is co-funded by the ASEAN Foundation and SEARCA, while that of Mr. Bac is supported in full by SEARCA. On the other hand, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) funds the scholarships of the Timor-Leste nationals.

SEARCA and DAAD also awarded one-year graduate scholarships to Ms. Lotis A. Monzales, Filipino, to support her MS in Veterinary Medicine program at UPLB and Ms. Khin Myo Thant, a Myanmar national, who is pursuing her MS in Agronomy at UPLB also.

Communication and

produced by CARDI have been utilized and transferred to the farmers mostly through farmers’ meetings, community organizing, leaflets, posters, school programs, and magazines.

DAAD-SEARCA Fellows

2003-2004, 218 DAAD-SEARCA fellows had completed their MS and PhD studies with support of DAAD; and there are 35 ongoing DAAD-SEARCA scholars. The fellows are automatic members of the Regional SEARCA Fellows Association established in 1992 with country chapters (sub-networks) namely: the Malaysian SEARCA Fellows Association (MASFA), established in 1993; the Indonesian SEARCA Fellows Association (ISFA) Bogor and Yogyakarta chapters, 1994; the SEARCA Fellows Association of the Philippines (SFAP), 1995; the Thai SEARCA Fellows Association (TSFA), 1996; and the Vietnamese SEARCA Fellows Association (VISA), 1996. The association chapters in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar have yet to be formed.

Germany Meeting

A workshop of UC coordinators to refine guidelines for funding, grants administration, operating procedures, and policy guidelines will be held in March 2005 at UGM. The 18th University Consortium Executive Officers Meeting will be held at UPM in September 2005, with a possibility for a back-to-back conference on a relevant topic identified earlier among the priority focus of the UC.

SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan spearheaded the Center’s pursuit of leading discussions on emerging development issues and concerns. On 22-23 September 2004, he spoke at the Third Asia Pacific Agriculture Policy (APAP) Forum held in Seoul, South Korea. The Forum, of which Dr. Balisacan is Secretary-General, was co-hosted by the Global Agriculture Policy Institute (GAPI), National Agriculture Cooperative Federation (NACF), and Korea FAO Association.
Factors Associated with Participation of Filipino Muslim Women in Seaweed Farming in Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines

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The study analyzed Filipino Muslim women’s participation in seaweed farming in Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines with a total of 246 women farmers as respondents. Results of the study showed that many of the challenges faced by Filipino Muslim women of Sitangkai today is common among women in other municipalities of Tawi-tawi. Over the past years, social and economic changes have intensified the demands placed upon these women in their varied roles to improve their social and economic conditions in order to attain family solidarity and stability. The mature rural woman running a business or selling in the local market is acceptable behavior. Women’s active participation in seaweed production in partnership with their husbands is another. Women farmers were equally involved with their husbands in the decision-making process on matters pertaining to household and seaweed farming activities.

Filipino Muslim women are faced with constraints to achieve their primary development goal of self-reliance due to their limited knowledge, skills, training, and education. They rely on learning through initiative and actual practice.

The study revealed that traditionalism and centering development paradigm.
SEARCA Officials, Staff, and Scholars Celebrate “Jazzed Up” Christmas

The SEARCA family celebrated Christmas with a day-long party last 17 December. With the theme “Jazz It Up at SEARCA,” the celebration emphasized the importance of recycling and resource conservation, as well as the virtue of looking at things always from a fresh perspective. It involved a Christmas tree-making contest, where participants could only use recycled materials found in the Center; a Christmas carol group presentation, where three pre-approved popular carols (two English and one Filippino) could be re-arranged and sung in one seamless novel presentation; and the crowning of the Ginoo at Binibining (Mr. and Ms.) SEARCA winners, which paired the most eligible singles in the Center.

For the first two activities, the Center was divided into three groups, namely: the Basement, Ground Floor, and Second Floor. While the Ground floor Group won the Christmas tree-making contest, it was the Basement Group that brought home the bacon during the Christmas carol-singing competition. To the delight of the crowd, SEARCA Deputy Director for Programs Dr. Djoko Suprapto and Human Resources Unit (HRMU) Head Ms. Terry de Belen were crowned Ginoo and Binibining SEARCA, respectively.

All SEARCA staff and scholars left the party bearing gifts and prizes, making their holidays more joyful. (AJTAragon)

SEARCA scholars (L-R) Khin Myo Thant, Do Thi Tam, Htay Htay Aung, Seinn Lei Aye, and Nguyen Thi Duong Nga count their winning cotton balls in a game during the Christmas party.

The wildly entertaining presentation of the Basement Group took home the first prize in the Christmas carol-singing contest.

SEARCA scholars (L-R) Pasuta Sunthornao, Sengdala Sulinthone, and Pramote Srisung sing sentimental love songs.

The Second Floor Group performs their “jazzed up” Christmas carol.

SEARCA officials and staff pose with Professor Randolf “Randy” S. David (third from left), whose lecture on 14 September 2004 was one of the most well-attended Agriculture and Development Seminar Series (ADSS) of the year. His paper was titled “The Philippines in 2004: Economy, Governance, and Public Morale”: (L-R) Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Research and Development Department (RDD) Manager; Ms. Nhyria G. Rogel, RDD Project Development Specialist; Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, Director; Dr. Djoko Suprapto, Deputy Director for Programs; and Ms. Majah-Leah V. Ravago, RDD Project Development Specialist.
SEARCA celebrated its 38th anniversary last 26 November with the theme “Celebrating the Colors of Southeast Asia.” Inspired by the rich and diverse cultures of the region it serves, the Center had simple but meaningful festivities. These included a flag raising ceremony, a variety show, and a food fair. The activities involved the Center’s officials, staff, and scholars, who, as SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan said in his Welcome Address, “are the very reason for SEARCA’s existence.”

Prior to the anniversary, all staff and scholars were divided into groups, each group representing a SEAMEO member country. Each country group prepared a cultural presentation for the variety show, and a native dish for the food fair. The groups of Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia later received awards for their outstanding cultural presentations.

SEARCA’s 38th anniversary gave the Center’s staff and scholars the opportunity to celebrate in a truly memorable way and have a greater appreciation of the establishment of the Center 38 years ago. (AJTAragon)