

# The SEARCA DIARY



A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGIONAL CENTER  
FOR GRADUATE STUDY AND RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURE

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## A YEAR OF MILESTONES

As we celebrate our anniversary,  
we express our pride on what SEARCA  
with its partners has achieved.  
We have come a long way.

With new milestones in place,  
we set our sights anew to what's ahead.

Photo by Daniel Cubillas

## SEARCA celebrates several milestones on its 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary

Under the helm of Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA's ninth Director, the Center celebrated its 43<sup>rd</sup> founding day with the following highlights: conferment of the second Dioscoro L. Umali Achievement Award in Agricultural Development (story on page 3), recognition of the FY 2009/2010 recipients of the SEARCA Seed Fund for Research and Training Grant (SFRT) (story on page 3), awarding winners of a photo contest and on-the-spot painting contest of SEARCA's newest information hub called *Knowledge Center on Climate Change: Adaptation in Agriculture and Natural Resources Sectors in Southeast Asia* (story on page 4), and the SEARCA Loyalty Awards. H.E. Jesli A. Lapus, Secretary of Education of the Philippines, graced the event.

"We are proud that we have been true to our mandate all these years and that these 43 years have been in the service and for the benefit of agricultural and rural development of Southeast Asia. But we must add that the credit does not solely belong to SEARCA. In reality, we have come this far through the support

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## SEARCA celebrates/ from page 1

of the many partners and benefactors who share our aspirations for the region,” said Dr. Saguiguit in his opening remarks.

Joining SEARCA in the celebration were its alumni and scholars, partners and representatives from government agencies and the diplomatic corps, and members of the Los Baños Science Community.

Dr. Saguiguit shared, “personally, this year’s anniversary is special for me because while I have served SEARCA for a good number of years now, this year’s celebration is my first as SEARCA’s Director. It is an honor to serve SEARCA in this present capacity because it is for this institution that my father, Dr. Gil F. Saguiguit, Sr. [SEARCA’s first Deputy Director], poured his energy and devoted most of his professional life. I am now tasked to carry out his legacy. My father desired nothing more than what was good and beneficial for the Center and its stakeholders.”

Secretary Lapus lauded SEARCA for its myriad contributions to higher education, research, and learning, not only in the Philippines, but also in

other Southeast Asian countries. He said that the work that SEARCA does helps uplift the state of education and alleviate poverty in the Philippines. “A better equipped human resource base is key to development,” he furthered.

As of June 2009, SEARCA has awarded a total of 1,274 scholarships (1,250 full, 24 PhD Research). Apart from its graduate education offerings, SEARCA also organized conferences, workshops, and discussions as well as implemented research projects to generate knowledge in support of agricultural and rural development. Seven international/regional workshops, conferences, and roundtable discussions on burning issues such as biofuels development, climate change, global financial crisis, and sustainability science were conducted in FY 2008/2009. Six research projects and two book writing projects were conducted and eight new SFRT grants were awarded. SEARCA also had nine learning events on topics such as agricultural biotechnology, environmental economics, and higher education management. These learning events gathered 173 participants from 14 countries.

SEARCA, like in previous years, took the opportunity during the celebration to recognize members of its staff who have offered their services and expertise to the Center in the past years. The five SEARCA Loyalty Awardees are:

- **Alicia D. Revilla**, Information Systems Specialist, 15 years;
- **Nova A. Ramos**, Training Specialist, 20 years;
- **Edna Lisa A. Albufera**, Head of Internal Audit Unit, 20 years;
- **Mary Ann R. Martinez**, Management Specialist, 20 years ; and
- **Angelito R. Menguito**, Property and Supply Assistant, 20 years.

In the afternoon program of the anniversary, SEARCA staff members had a time of fun and relaxation with games and other activities. Indeed, an anniversary is not just a yearly commemoration of a past event; it is also a moment to strengthen a commitment. For SEARCA and its staff, that commitment is to continually enable institutions for agricultural and rural development in a globalizing Southeast Asia. (MAFABad)

## 43<sup>rd</sup> ANNIVERSARY PHOTO GALLERY

### Anniversary Speakers



Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla emcees the morning event.



Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba closes the anniversary celebration...



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. SEARCA Director



Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco UPLB Chancellor



H.E. Jesli A. Lapus Secretary of Education, Philippines



The SEARCA Loyalty Awardees of FY 2008/2009.



The UP Rural High School Choir enchants the guests with their classic renditions.



Secretary Lapus receives a token from Dr. Saguiguit and Dr. Velasco. The token is the third prize winner in the elementary category of SEARCA KC3’s on-the-spot-painting contest.

## THE SEARCA DIARY

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The SEARCA staff gamely pose for a wacky shot.

Happy 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary!



## 8 Southeast Asians get seed fund for research

Eight Southeast Asians received grants from SEARCA's Seed Fund for Research and Training (SFRT). The awardees were recognized during the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Celebration of SEARCA on 20 November 2009. SEARCA has given 41 such grants so far since it established SFRT in 2005.

SFRT is an annual competitive grant aimed at providing assistance to selected Southeast Asian researchers to enable them to carry out promising initiatives supportive of agricultural and rural development. Each grant is up to US\$15,000.

The new grantees and their research studies are:

### FROM INDONESIA (2)

- Dr. Sunarso, Faculty of Animal Agriculture, University of Diponegoro, *Combining High Rate Anaerobic Biodigester (HiRAB) and Membrane Separation Technology to Increase Biogas Production Efficiency from Slaughterhouse Wastes*
- Mr. Wahyu Andy Nugraha, Faculty of Agriculture, Trunojoyo University, *A Preliminary Study to Develop Coral Reefs Conservation Zones in Kangean Archipelago, East Java, Indonesia Using GIS and Remote Sensing Applications*

### FROM THE PHILIPPINES (4)

- Mr. Feleciano R. Bejar, Samar State College of Agriculture and Forestry, *Management Practices and Morphological Characterization of Indigenous (Native) Chickens in Samar Province*
- Dr. Margaret M. Calderon, Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, College of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of the Philippines Los Baños, *Payments for the Environmental and Cultural Services (PECS) of the Ifugao Rice Terraces of the Philippines*
- Dr. Hilconida P. Calumpang, Institute of Environmental and Marine Sciences, Silliman University, *Mangrove Rehabilitation in Ticao I., Masbate, Philippines*
- Ms. Beatriz C. Jadina, Department of Agronomy and Soil Science, Visayas State University, *GIS-aided Biophysical Characterization of Leyte Landscape in Relation to Landslide Occurrences*

### FROM VIETNAM (2)

- Dr. Le Nguyen Doan Khoi, School of Economics and Business Administration, Cantho University, *Pangasius Quality Management and Market Access of Small-scale Farmers in the Mekong River Delta, Vietnam*



Three recipients of SEARCA's Seed Fund for Research and Training Grant hold their award certificates on 20 November 2009 during SEARCA's 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Celebration. They are (L-R): Dr. I Nyoman Widiasta, representing Dr. Sunarso from Indonesia, Mr. Feleciano R. Bejar, and Dr. Margaret M. Calderon. Flanking them are: Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco (left), UPLB Chancellor; H.E. Jesli A. Lapus (second from left), Secretary of Education, Philippines; and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (right), SEARCA Director

- Mr. Nguyen Van Kien, Plant Resources Center, *Utilization of Salinity-tolerant Sweet Potato Varieties toward Improved Livelihood and Productivity for the Salinity-prone Coastal Areas in Thanh Hoa Province of Vietnam*

Applications for SFRT grants are received by SEARCA on or before 1 August of each year. More information on this grant may be found at [www.searca.org/web/research/sfirt/](http://www.searca.org/web/research/sfirt/). (MAFABad)

## Thai professor feted for achievements in buffalo research



Prof. Charan Chantalexhanna holds the Umali award trophy after being conferred as the second recipient of the Dioscoro L. Umali Award in Agricultural Development. With him are (L-R): Dr. Emil Q. Javier, NAST Philippines President; Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; Ms. Nelia T. Gonzalez, DLUF President; and H.E. Jesli A. Lapus, Secretary of Education, Philippines.

A Thai professor was recognized for his numerous contributions in the field of animal science, particularly on buffalo research. Dr. Charan Chantalexhanna, Professor Emeritus at Kasetsart University and President of University Council at Thaksin University, was conferred the second Dioscoro L. Umali Award in Agricultural Development. The award was given on 20 November 2009 during SEARCA's 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary celebration.

The Dioscoro L. Umali Achievement Award is a collaboration among SEARCA, the National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines (NAST), and the Dioscoro L. Umali Foundation (DLUF). It was launched in 2007 by Hon. Fidel V. Ramos, former Philippine President.

It was his humble beginnings that inspired him to succeed in life. Born in 1936 at Songkhla, Thailand to a family with meager resources, Prof. Charan was placed in the care of a nanny whom he grew to love as his own mother. He calls her mama. He shared, "I wanted to give mama a good life that is why I persevered to finish my education. I wanted to show her how grateful I am to her for taking care of me."

The good heart of Prof. Charan is likewise evident in his 40 years of service and work for agriculture and development in Thailand, particularly, and Southeast Asia, generally.

Prof. Charan obtained his bachelor's degree in animal science and master's and doctor of philosophy degrees in animal breeding from Iowa State University, USA. He received a scholarship from the Civil Service Commission of Thailand for his bachelor's and master's studies, while his PhD was under a Rockefeller scholarship.

Throughout his active career and during his retirement years, Prof. Charan has been involved in research activities in various capacities. His major research areas have been focused on smallholder farming systems, especially cattle and buffalo genetic improvement.

In 1974, Prof. Charan began working full-time to safeguard buffaloes. His research work was mainly instrumental in the creation of "Kamphaeng Saen," a new beef cattle breed that is very popular among smallhold farmers in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries. He also initiated the conservation of water buffalo, leading to the establishment of Thailand National Buffalo Center and Association. He became the first President of the said organization. His work on buffalo conservation resulted in the use of the buffalo as a draft animal by farmers. It also highlighted the plight of buffaloes and farmers. "To rice farmers, the animal is their best and most loyal companion, and a valuable asset," said Prof. Charan.

Prof. Charan has been involved in teaching and training activities for local and international

Thai professor/ to page 13

## Brunei hosts 57<sup>th</sup> SEARCA Governing Board Meeting

Brunei Darussalam, through its Ministry of Education, hosted this year's annual meeting (57<sup>th</sup>) of the SEARCA Governing Board (GB). The meeting was held on 19-21 October 2009 at the SEAMEO Regional Center for Vocational and Technical Education and Training (VOCTECH) in Gandong, Brunei Darussalam. It is the second time that Brunei is hosting the SEARCA GB's annual meeting since the sultanate joined the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) in 1984.

The 57<sup>th</sup> GB Meeting's opening ceremonies had Yang Mulia Awang Haji Suhaila bin Haji Abdul Karim, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam, as guest of honor. Expressing his Ministry's pleasure at hosting the meeting, Yang Mulia Haji Suhaila in his keynote message underscored the importance of the board meeting, especially in charting "the future directions or the next plans to be carried out."

He shared his country's desire to achieve a "significantly higher percentage of self-sufficiency in agricultural products, especially staple food." He added that "Brunei is putting in place a long-term plan stipulating, amongst others, various plans to diversify its economy." He noted that presently, agriculture contributes only one percent of the country's gross domestic product. He pointed to the country's need for modern farming (including fisheries) and technology-based agricultural activities. With only around 1,000 workers engaged in the forestry, fisheries, and agriculture

sector, the Bruneian education official said that the current situation and directions of his country present opportunities for SEARCA to provide assistance to Brunei as the sultanate addresses issues pertinent to this sector.

The SEARCA GB, composed of a representative from each member country of SEAMEO, is the policymaking body of the Center. It conducts an annual evaluation of the Center's programs and budget. Among the agenda items for discussion in the 57<sup>th</sup> GB Meeting are: (a) SEARCA's Accomplishment Report and Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2008/2009; (b) Core Programs and Activities for FY 2009/2010; (c) Three-Year Budget (FY 2010/2011-FY 2012/2013); (d) Updates on the Dioscoro L. Umali Achievement Award in Agricultural Development; and (e) SEARCA's Actions on the Recommendations of the Graduate Fellowship Program Impact Assessment Study.

The 57<sup>th</sup> GB Meeting was Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr.'s first board meeting time in his capacity as new Director of SEARCA. (Dr. Saguiguit served as Deputy Director for Administration of SEARCA and Secretary-Treasurer of the SEARCA GB from July 2002 until his appointment as SEARCA Director on 13 July 2009.) Other meeting participants were:

- Representing Brunei Darussalam - Mr. Ibrahim bin Haji Abdul Rahman, Assistant Director of Technical Education, Ministry of Education
- Representing Cambodia - Dr. Men Sarom, Vice Rector, Royal University of Agriculture (in lieu of Dr. Chan Nareth, Rector of RUA)

- Representing Indonesia - Prof. Dr. Ir. H. Moehammad Munir, Director, Research and Community Services Development, Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education
- Representing Malaysia - Datuk Prof. Dr. Nik Mustapha bin Raya Abdullah, Vice Chancellor, Universiti Putra Malaysia
- Representing Myanmar - Dr. Myint Thaug, Rector, Yezin Agricultural University (in lieu of Mr. Tin Htut Oo, Director-General, Department of Agricultural Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation)
- Representing the Philippines - Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Los Baños
- Representing Thailand - Dr. Adul Apinantara, Agricultural Specialist of Thailand's Subcommittee for SEARCA, Ministry of Education (in lieu of Mr. Chaleyo Yoosimarak, Secretary-General, Vocational Education Commission, Ministry of Education)
- Representing Timor Leste - Mr. Abrao dos Santos, National Director of Higher and Technical Education, Ministry of Education (in lieu of Dr. Edmundo Viegas, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Education)

Lao PDR, Singapore, and Vietnam were unable to send their representatives.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Velasco of the Philippines. (LLTallafer)

## Winners of SEARCA photography, painting contests named

SEARCA organized two events showcasing the artistic side of Southeast Asians whilst promoting climate change adaptation within the region. The first is a Southeast Asia-wide photography contest. The theme was climate change adaptation, particularly focusing on agriculture and natural resource management (NRM) sectors. The other is an on-the-spot painting contest for the Filipino youth. It was aimed at eliciting ideas on how the youth views adapting to and mitigating climate change impacts.

Both activities are part of SEARCA's new initiative, the *Knowledge Center on Climate Change: Adaptation in Agriculture and Natural Resources Sectors in Southeast Asia*. KC3 aims to provide ready-to-access knowledge solutions for informed decision-making that will address the impacts of changing climate in the agriculture and natural resources sectors in Southeast Asia. It will document climate change adaptation in agriculture and NRM in Southeast Asia.

Contest winners were recognized during SEARCA's 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary held on 20 November 2009.

### ZOOMING IN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Two Filipinos and a Thai emerged as the top three winners of the 2009 SEARCA Photo Contest themed *Community-based Climate Change Adaptation: Best Practices in Southeast Asia*.

Mr. Nikki Sandino Victoriano, a professional photographer based in Antipolo City, Philippines, won first place with his entry titled *Planting Bamboo*. The entry titled *Sandbags* by Mr. Vinai Dithajohn from Bangkok, Thailand, and *Bicycle-friendly City* by Mr. Dionisio Salvador, Jr. from Marikina City, Philippines ranked second and third, respectively.

The top winning photograph depicts a farmer propagating bamboo seedlings to mitigate



Winners of SEARCA's photography and painting contests were recognized during SEARCA's 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Celebration held on 20 November 2009. With them are: Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco (left), UPLB Chancellor; H.E. Jesli A. Lapus (second from left), Secretary of Education, Philippines; and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (right), SEARCA Director.

the negative impacts of climate change. Being more able to absorb water, bamboos can help rejuvenate degraded lands. They also help in carbon sequestration and produce large biomass, enabling ground moisture conservation.

Winners of SEARCA/ to page 12



## 57<sup>TH</sup> SEARCA GOVERNING BOARD MEETING PHOTO GALLERY



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director, delivers the welcome remarks.



Dr. Adul Apinantara of Thailand delivers the opening remarks.



Yang Mulia Awang Haji Suhaila bin Haji Abdul Karim, Deputy Permanent Deputy Permanent Secretary of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam, delivers the keynote address.



Mr. Abrao dos Santos of Timor Leste



Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco (foreground) of the Philippines presides over the meeting as Chair-designate.



Yang Mulia Awang Haji Suhaila bin Haji Abdul Karim (right) receives from Dr. Saguiguit a prototype of the *Southeast Asian Agriculture and Development Primer: Brunei Darussalam*, a publication series produced by SEARCA. Expected to be completed in 2010, the Brunei volume was written by Dr. Haji Amzah bin Haji Abdul Rahman, Head of International Trade; Pg Hajah Rosidah bt Pg Hj Metussin, Assistant Director of Agriculture; and Hajah Aidah bt Haji Hanifah, Acting Deputy Director, all of the Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, Brunei Darussalam. Dr. Haji Amzah is a SEARCA graduate alumnus having obtained his PhD in economic development from Universiti Putra Malaysia through a SEARCA scholarship grant.



H.E. Mr. Jurin Laksanawisit (second from left), Minister of Education of Thailand and President of the SEAMEO Council, drops in to say hello to the SEARCA GB shortly after Board meeting's opening ceremonies. H.E. Mr. Jurin was in Brunei as part of his program of visits to the SEAMEO member countries and regional centers. With him are (L-R): Dr. Haji Awang Yussof Haji Awang Mohamad, Acting Director of SEAMEO VOCTECH, Dr. Saguiguit, and Dr. Paryono, VOCTECH Deputy Director.



Mr. Ibrahim bin Haji Abdul Rahman (right) of Brunei Darussalam receives a thank-you gift and meeting souvenir from Dr. Saguiguit. Mr. Ibrahim headed the GB Meeting's organizing committee in Brunei Darussalam.



The GB Meeting's support staff from SEARCA, (L-R): Ms. Lily L. Tallafer, Ms. Susan V. Fernandez, Ms. Edna Lisa A. Albufera, Ms. Adoracion T. Robles, and Ms. Fe D. dela Cruz, pose for a souvenir photo with the wife of Dr. Moehammad Munir of Indonesia, at the entrance of Kampong Ayer Cultural & Tourism Gallery.



Dr. Moehammad Munir (left) of Indonesia engages in an intent discussion with Dr. Paryono, Deputy Director of SEAMEO VOCTECH, at one refreshment break of the GB Meeting.



After the business sessions, the SEARCA GB Meeting participants were treated to a tour of the famed Kampong Ayer (water village). Photo shows (L-R) Prof. Dr. Nik Mustapha of Malaysia, Dr. Men Sarom of Cambodia, and Dr. Myint Thuang (partly hidden) of Myanmar on board one of the tour boats.



The 57<sup>th</sup> GB Meeting participants, secretariat, and organizers pose for posterity at the lobby of Kampong Ayer Cultural & Tourism Gallery.



The Ministry of Education of Brunei treats the 57<sup>th</sup> GB Meeting participants to traditional music and food during the welcome dinner it tendered on 19 October 2009.



## Agri-biotech KM to address agri challenges in Asia



The participants of the *International Conference on Knowledge Management (KM) in Agricultural Biotechnology: The Asian Experience* held in Bangkok, Thailand.

The two-day conference was titled *International Conference on Knowledge Management (KM) in Agricultural Biotechnology: The Asian Experience*. It had 87 participants composed of policymakers, technology and R&D managers in agriculture and natural resource management, development planners, researchers, program officers, and extension, communication and knowledge managers/officers from 13 countries: Australia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and USA.

KM in pushing agri-biotech further in advancing agriculture and rural development.

Dr. Thira Sutabutra, chairman of Thailand's National Research Council (TNRC), stressed in his keynote message KM's importance as it streamlines efforts to enhance knowledge sharing among countries. KM initiatives should be incorporated in capacity-building through social learning and field application; networking and peer mentoring; workshops for reflection and synthesis; and development and publication of knowledge and learning materials in various formats.

The conference revolved around four themes:

- *Agricultural Biotechnology and Knowledge Management*: role of agri-biotech in mitigating agricultural challenges in Asia and its implications for KM, global scenario of biotech/genetically modified (GM) crops adoption, and mobilization of knowledge for bioenterprise
- *KM Platforms on Biosafety Governing Agri-biotechnology*: country experiences on biosafety framework and regulations, and KM platforms in biosafety in the context of Southeast Asia
- *Capacity-building for KM*: country experiences in building capacities on KM in agri-biotech and collaborative KM initiatives on biotechnology

Asian countries have shown tremendous increase in crop productivity due to agricultural biotechnology. Agricultural biotechnology serves as a vehicle for economic growth and for enhancing environmental and social benefits; however, the knowledge generated from this field must be managed to aid decision-making and help shape the future direction of agricultural biotechnology.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, cited the pivotal role of agri-biotech in improving food quality and contributing to food security worldwide. "SEARCA has, over the years, also considered agricultural biotechnology, along with food safety, as an important area that aligns well with the Center's twin emphases on agricultural competitiveness and natural resource management," he said.

Recognizing knowledge management (KM) in agri-biotech as a potent force in addressing sustainability and dealing with major challenges in Asia, SEARCA, together with partners, organized an international conference aimed at regional collaboration on KM in agri-biotech in Bangkok, Thailand on 1 – 2 October 2009.

Dr. Saguiguit noted that contributions and impacts of agri-biotechnology are dovetailed with information and communication strategies that resulted in much knowledge and intellectual capital among Asian countries. These countries with knowledge-based economies need proactive

Agri-biotech/ to page 13

## University Consortium Board meets, approves new collaborative projects



Dr. Toshiro Matsuda (right), President of Tokyo University of Agriculture Educational Corporation, holds the Royal Thai Decoration, and is being congratulated by Dr. Sornprach Thanisanwanyankura, Vice President for International Affairs, Kasetsart University.

The Executive Board of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) held its 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting at Tokyo University of Agriculture

(TUA) in Tokyo, Japan on 12-13 November 2009.

The meeting resulted in agreements to carry out new collaborative projects starting 2010 as follows: 1) Dissertation Doctorate Program Scholarships for the UC, two slots of which will be jointly funded by TUA and the UC, and one slot to be jointly funded by TUA and SEARCA; and 2) Research-based Internship Program of four University of British Columbia students taking up Master of Food Science and the Master of Food Resource Economics to be hosted in any of the UC members.

Aside from the new projects, the UC Executive Board also approved the management and financial reports of the UC Secretariat as well as the following activities for 2010: 1) student and faculty exchanges; 2) thesis grants; 3) production of a new UC brochure and poster; 4) information dissemination activities; 5) conduct of the 23<sup>rd</sup> UC Executive Board Meeting; and 6) hiring of

contractual UC Secretariat staff on an output basis to assist in coordination of UC activities and in developing project proposals for the UC. The Board also discussed the possibility of developing an international master's course to be offered by UC members.

The awarding of the Royal Thai Decoration to Dr. Toshiro Matsuda, TUA Educational Corporation President, coincided with the UC meeting in TUA on 12 November 2009. The Decoration was granted to Dr. Matsuda in honor and recognition of Dr. Matsuda's contribution to the advancement of agricultural research and development in Thailand up to the present. All participants of the UC Executive Board meeting and faculty and staff of TUA witnessed the awarding ceremony.

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) will host the 23<sup>rd</sup> UC meeting in November 2010.

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# Philippine Forum on Climate Change Adaptation Measures held



Dr. James Roumasset (center), Professor of Economics at University of Hawaii at Manoa, is congratulated by Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan (left), Chair of the NAST Task Force on Climate Change, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, after his presentation on *Climate Change Policy: Implications and Challenges for Asia*.

To help strengthen the Philippines' ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change, a *National Forum on Climate Change, Vulnerability, and Poverty* was held on 16 November 2009 in Manila. The Forum's theme was *Mainstreaming Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Philippine Development Agenda*.

The Forum was organized by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Philippines through the NAST Task Force on Climate Change (TFCC), in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) of the Philippines, SEARCA, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Participated in by experts, scientists, and policymakers, the meeting provided a venue for discussing, analyzing, and understanding the specific ways that farming and fishing communities can adapt to reduce the effects of climate variability and climate change, and how such communities can be helped. Moreover, it highlighted how climate change is exacerbating the poverty situation in the Philippines and discussed policy interventions that can be put in place to make the country more agile in confronting the challenges of climate change, while ensuring that

such interventions do not crowd out resources intended for meeting poverty reduction and food security goals.

"For the Philippines (as well as most other developing countries), responding to the challenge of climate change is complicated by the fact that the country is faced with serious pre-existing development problems, particularly persistently high poverty and a widely degraded natural and man-made resource base," explained Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, NAST TFCC Chair and former SEARCA Director.

The Forum came out with a statement that urges the Philippine government as well as the country's private sector and science community to work together to:

- (1) Identify, develop, and support appropriate adaptation practices and technologies, including those currently used by farmers, fisherfolk, and other stakeholders, and focus efforts and resources on refining such practices for more scaled up applications.
- (2) Formulate policies and instruments that would enable a more effective public-private sector partnership in managing risks resulting from climate variability.
- (3) Formulate a rational population policy and action program in the face of the challenges of climate change and resource scarcity.
- (4) Owing to the archipelagic nature of the Philippines, give commensurate attention to climate change adaptation measures relating to the marine environment and resources.
- (5) Expand and deepen public awareness of factual climate change issues and solutions.
- (6) Develop decision tools and simulation models that would provide quantitative assessments of the effects, consequences, and sustainability of policy options on climate change adaptation.

The Forum Statement was formally presented by NAST to DOST and the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change during the meeting's closing session.

Keynote paper presenters were Dr. James Roumasset, Professor of Economics, University of Hawaii at Manoa (*Climate Change Policy, Implications and Challenges for Asia*), and Dr. Graciano P. Yumul, Jr., DOST Undersecretary for Research and Development (*Philippine Framework for Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change*).

The Forum's parallel workshops were preceded by a brief presentation on the landscape framework by Dr. Rodel D. Lasco, Philippine Coordinator, World Agroforestry Center. The workshops discussed the challenges confronting the uplands, lowlands, and the coastal and marine areas vis-à-vis the impacts of climate change. Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, Dean, College of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Dr. Felino P. Lansigan, Professor, Institute of Statistics, College of Arts and Sciences, UPLB; and Dr. Laura T. David, Associate Professor, Marine Science Institute, UP Diliman, served as resource persons and facilitators. Moreover, cross-cutting concerns were discussed by Dr. Antonio D. Ligsay, Chief, Research Management Division, Philippine Council for Health Research and Development, DOST, and Dr. Leonardo Liongson, former Director, National Hydraulic Research Center, College of Engineering, UP Diliman.

The outputs of the parallel workshops are expected to be used as inputs to the crafting of future policies, as well as development of simulation models and other decision tools that would provide quantitative assessments of the effects, consequences, and sustainability of policy options on climate change adaptation. (LLTallafer)

## University Consortium/ from page 6

Participants of the meeting were:

### From Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), Indonesia

- Dr. Herry Suhardiyanto, Rector; Dr. Khairil Anwar Notodiputro, Dean of Graduate School; Dr. Rinekso Soekmadi, Director, Directorate of Collaboration and International Programs

### From Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Indonesia

- Dr. Triwibowo Yuwono, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture; Dr. Arman Wijonarko, Vice Dean of Collaboration and Student Affairs, Faculty of Agriculture; and Dr. Masyhuri, Director, Center for World Trade Studies

### From Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Malaysia

- Dr. Nik Mustapha Raja Abdullah, Vice Chancellor; and Dr. Hasanah Mohd. Ghazali, Dean, School of Graduate Studies

### From Kasetsart University (KU), Thailand

- Dr. Sornprach Thanisawanyankura, Vice President for International Affairs; Dr. Somsakdi Tabtimthong, Director, International Affairs Division; and Dr. Norongchai Pipattawanong, Director of Agro-Ecological System Research and Development Institute

### From University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Philippines

- Dr. Oscar B. Zamora, Dean of Graduate School; and Dr. Cristeta N. Cuaresma, Secretary of Graduate School

### From University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada

- Dr. Mahesh Upadhyaya, Associate Dean, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences Graduate Studies;

### From University of Queensland (UQ), Australia

- Dr. Richard Williams, Professor and Coordinator, Faculty International Programs, Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Veterinary Science;

### From TUA, Japan

- Dr. Ohsawa Kanju, President, Dr. Akimi Fujimoto, Director of International Programs, and Dr. Mariko Uehara, Deputy Director of International Programs, TUA, Japan

### From SEARCA

- Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., Director, and Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager of Graduate Scholarship Department

The UC was established in September 1989 through SEARCA's initiative. Its founding members are IPB, UGM, UPM, KU, and UPLB. On the other hand, UBC, UQ, Georg-August University of Goettingen in Germany, and TUA are associate members. SEARCA serves as the UC Secretariat. (ECCedicol)

# Snapshots

## SEARCA reaches out to flooded communities

The string of disasters that has hit Southeast Asia has put climate risk management at the forefront of development challenges in the region. Typhoons Ketsana, Parma, and Mirinae caused severe damages to Vietnam, the Philippines, Lao PDR, and Cambodia, amplifying the need for effective disaster risk management. Typhoon Ketsana alone claimed at least 696 lives in these four countries.

In the Philippines, Typhoon Ketsana (locally code-named Ondoy) dumped an extraordinary amount of water along its path, causing floods in many areas. Though SEARCA was spared from the disaster, the neighboring villages and towns were inundated. Particularly, the localities of Bambang, Malinta, and Bayog were submerged due to overflowing water from Laguna Lake.

The Center's Socio-Cultural Committee spearheaded activities that reached out to the flooded communities. Staff members volunteered to distribute rice, canned goods, clothing, and other donations to the affected families in Los Baños on 6 October 2009. The Center's outreach helped 260 families. The staff volunteers were assisted by Ms. Hanna Erika Erasga, a social worker from the Los Baños Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office. (MAFAbad with input from EFGenosa and EDRodriguez)



SEARCA staff volunteers distribute food packs to affected families.



The Laguna State Polytechnic University was one of the hardest hit schools in Los Baños. Students and teachers had to use small boats to get to the place after the storm.



SEARCA ladies pose for a souvenir shot with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit (fifth from right), SEARCA Director, and Mr. Ricardo A. Menorca (left), Head of General Services Unit during the University of the Philippines Los Baños Loyalty Day on 10 October 2009.



(L-R) Dr. Saguiguit, Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba, Deputy Director for Administration; Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, Manager, Knowledge Management Department, and Ms. Carmen Nyrhia G. Rogel, Project Development Specialist, discuss with Dr. Dae-Seob Lee, Fellow, Korea Rural Economic Institute, the nature of SEARCA's work, its core programs, and future outlook during his visit to the Center on 4 December 2009.



Thirty students from Universiti Putra Malaysia visited SEARCA on 8 December 2009 to learn more about the Center's programs and offerings. Ms. Lily L. Tallafer (ninth from right), Special Projects Coordinator-Networks and Linkages, and Ms. Leah Lyn D. Domingo (eight from right), Graduate Scholarship Specialist, led the briefing.

## SEARCA Christmas Party 2010 - 22 December 2009



SEARCA scholars perform a Christmas-themed dance number.



Ms. Maritess U. Suarez of the General Services Unit (GSU) lip syncs a Filipino Christmas ballad in her group's presentation. She won Best Actress for her performance. Mr. Delfin T. Paz (picture in the photo frame), also of GSU, won the Best Actor award.



Three officials from the Central Institute for Medical Science Information of Hanoi, Vietnam visited SEARCA on 10 December 2009. They are Ms. Bao Duong Thi Thu, Vice-Director of Medical Library; Mrs. Thi Linh Ha Nguyen, Deputy Chief of International Cooperation Division; and Dr. Tai Dinh Van, Chief of Editing and Publishing Division. They were received and briefed by Dr. Lorna M. Calumpang (leftmost), Head of SEARCA's Knowledge Resources Unit, and Ms. Tallafer.

## Peñalba is SEARCA's new deputy director



SEARCA welcomes Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba as its new Deputy Director for Administration effective 15 November 2009.

Dr. Peñalba is a Professor at the Animal and Dairy Sciences Cluster of the College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). He brings with him an extensive experience in administration. He was Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs in UPLB (1997-1999), Director for Extension (1995-1997), and Director of the Institute of Animal Science (1988-1995).

He had also headed professional and civic organizations including the Philippine Society of Animal Science, Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society of Agriculture-UPLB Chapter, and Cavite State University Alumni Association. He received the 2007 Outstanding Citizen Award from the Municipal Government of Los Baños for his voluntary service to the municipality. In the same year, he received a Distinguished Alumni Award for Swine Research and Industry Development from the UPLB College of Agriculture Alumni Association.

Dr. Peñalba had written numerous publications in his several decades as an academic professor and researcher. He had led over 60 research projects. His researches and publications are on livestock (particularly on pigs, rabbits, and horses), and poultry.

"Dr. Peñalba is a great addition to the SEARCA family. His administrative capacity coupled with his track record in research and the academe will certainly further the Center's goals" said Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director.

Dr. Peñalba earned his PhD in animal breeding from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA under a World Bank scholarship; and his MS in animal science (swine production) and BS in agriculture from UPLB. (MAFAbad)



## Increased investments in RDE needed to raise productivity of Philippine agriculture

Increasing productivity growth includes going back to basics: increasing investments in research & development, extension, education, dissemination of new technologies and better planting materials, rural infrastructure, and enabling access to producer services. Moreover, government reforms for the sector can also be more effective through decentralization and civil society engagement, establishing monitoring, evaluation and accountability systems and making R&D, extension and irrigation programs more participatory. Multi-lateral trade liberalization in global agriculture and the growing public outlays for agriculture are likewise issues affecting productivity growth.

These findings were discussed at the *National Forum and Dialogue on Productivity Growth of Philippine Agriculture: Sources, Prospects, Policies*, one of the concluding activities of the Productivity Growth in Philippine Agriculture (PGPA) project, which was held on 25 November 2009 at the Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) in Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines. The forum discussed the project's results and showed these with selected stakeholders.

Among those who attended the forum were experts and officials from the academe and government agencies, namely Aklan State University, Central Luzon State University, University of Rizal System–Tanay, University of Asia and the Pacific, Sugar Regulatory Administration, Bureau of Postharvest and Research Extension, Livestock Development Council, Philippine Coconut Authority, Bureau of Animal Industry, Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, and GMA Corn and Livestock programs.

Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba, SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration, said in his opening remarks that the project aims “to meet the challenge of providing empirical bases for policymaking and planning, specifically for the agricultural sector” and “to quantify variables that will help us fully grasp the various factors that affect agricultural productivity in the Philippines”.

Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, PGPA Project Leader and former SEARCA Director, and Dr. Roehlano M. Briones, PGPA Project Manager, jointly presented the summary of the results of the PGPA studies. Growth in the total factor productivity (TFP) of rice, sugarcane, and livestock were relatively low as revealed by the various case studies. On the other hand, poultry and aquatic products showed

rapid productivity growth. Mango registered negative growth in South Luzon, while banana in the region covering Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan showed low but positive productivity growth. Also, factors such as education, access to credit, training, marketing and postharvest facilities, and certainty of tenure were found to have a positive effect on agricultural productivity.

The study on rice identified seeds, irrigation, farmer training, credit, postharvest facilities, and market support as some of the determinants of TFP growth. The aquaculture sector study attributes the sector's fast TFP growth to better telecommunications services, access to credit, roads, and R&D. On the other hand, TFP growth obtained in the poultry and livestock case studies was explained by commercialization of operations, introduction of superior production technologies, and alignment of domestic feed prices with world prices. In the sugarcane study, the TFP growth is explained by institutionalized approach to training and extension, dispersal of high-yielding varieties, and increase in infrastructure such as nurseries and farm machineries. The TFP growth in coconut is attributed to training, access to credit, age of the farmer, and intercropping. Lastly, the banana study showed technological progress as a factor in TFP growth, while negative values in scale efficiency and technical efficiency resulted in a negative TFP growth in mango. (PMVCasal)

## Former SEARCA Deputy Director bids final *Adieu*



In December 2001, Dr. Soekartawi, then SEARCA's Deputy Director for Graduate Scholarship and Research and Development, bid goodbye to his SEARCA family to assume the directorship of the SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Center (SEAMOLEC) in Jakarta, Indonesia. SEARCA gave him a grand send-off, complete with dances, testimonials, and musical numbers -- a testament to how well he was loved and respected in the Center and the Los Baños community.

On 12 November 2009, Dr. Soekartawi bid his final goodbye to his beloved family and friends. This time, he left without fanfare, going home to his Creator peacefully in his sleep.

The news of Dr. Soekartawi's passing away came as a shock to his SEARCA family, and probably to most of his friends and colleagues. After all, he never gave a hint of any sickness. He was always his jolly old self whenever he visited SEARCA, exchanging jokes with the staff.

Dr. Soekartawi had been a well-known researcher and a prolific writer in his country (Indonesia). At SEARCA, he had been known to have a high sense of personal discipline. In one of the interviews he had with a SEARCA staff for the Center's monthly in-house newsletter, Dr. Soekartawi said that as a father, there were three main things that he wanted his three children to learn. These are “to know and do what is right, to help those who are in difficulty, and to be prayerful.” Noting that fundamental things are learned from home, he said that this was the main reason why he strived to inculcate goodness among his children, for “to be a good man is a difficult thing to do.”

Dr. Soekartawi was also a good manager, exacting from himself what he likewise wanted from others. He organized people, made them work together, and considered them as persons first and employees second.

These traits endeared Dr. Soekartawi to SEARCAns. And we are one in grieving with his family -- Ibu Dina, Sandy, Luthfi, and Ariff -- for the loss of such a good man. He was, as Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, former SEARCA Director, puts it: “...a decent man and a good friend of Filipinos.”

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, who was the Research and Development Department Manager during Dr. Soekartawi's time in the Center, has the following words for him: “It was a pleasure working with Dr. Soekartawi. His pleasing disposition and jovial manner bridged the culture gap with the Filipino staff of the Center as well as our multi-cultural clientele. It would have been the other way around had he not been a person who was easy to work with. Clearly this was his “secret weapon,” which could

Former SEARCA Deputy/ to page 14

# Alumni Notes

## 3 VIETNAMESE ALUMNI GET PROMOTED

Dr. Nguyen Tuan Son and Dr. Mai Thanh Cuc of Hanoi University of Agriculture (HUA) and Dr. Bui Dung The of Hue University have been promoted by the government of Vietnam to Associate Professors.

Dr. Son is presently Associate Dean of HUA's Graduate School. He obtained both his MS and PhD in agricultural economics from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in 1997 and 2002, respectively, as a SEARCA scholar. Likewise, Dr. Cuc obtained through SEARCA's support his Master of Management and PhD in community development from UPLB in 1995 and 2002, respectively. He is with HUA's Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Economics and Rural Development. Dr. The is with the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Economics, Hue University. He pursued his PhD in agricultural economics in UPLB also as a SEARCA scholar from 1996 to 1999. (LLTallafer)

## SUKENDAH APPLIES FOR PATENT RIGHTS



Dr. Sukendah poses with a *Kopyor* farmer when she collected samples in Jember East Java Indonesia.

Two research results of Dr. Sukendah, a coconut genetics researcher and faculty member of UPN "Veteran" University in Surabaya, Indonesia, have been registered for patent rights with Indonesia's Directorate General of Intellectual Property.

Her inventions are titled: (1) Clonal Propagation Method of *Kopyor* Coconut through Somatic Embryogenesis and (2) Early Detection of *Kopyor* Coconut Using Specific Molecular Marker  $\alpha$ -D Galactosidase Gene.

*Kopyor* coconut is a mutant that cannot be propagated by conventional technique. Dr. Sukendah wrote, "after graduating from UPLB almost 10 years ago, I have been consistently conducting coconut research and developing in vitro *Kopyor* (similar to the Philippines' *Makapuno*) coconut seedling. (She obtained her MS in plant genetic resources and management from UPLB in 2001 through a scholarship program of SEARCA in cooperation with the International Plant Genetic Research Institute, now called Bioversity International.)

Her paper titled *Isolation and Analysis of DNA Fragment of Genes Related to Kopyor Trait in Coconut Plant* (Sukendah, Hugo Volkaert, Sudarsono) was recognized as Best Original Paper by the Journal of Indonesian Biotechnology in December 2009.

Dr. Sukendah completed her doctorate in August 2009 from Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) in Indonesia, also through a SEARCA scholarship; her dissertation was *In Vitro Propagation and Molecular Analysis of Kopyor Coconut*. She conducted some portions (e.g., molecular analysis) of her dissertation research at the Center for Agricultural Biotechnology of Kasetsart University in Thailand in September 2008-January 2009 with funding from the Directorate General of Higher Education of Indonesia.

She is currently working on the development of *Kopyor* dwarf coconut as a new germplasm source by apical meristem splitting and somatic

embryogenesis, with a grant from the Directorate General of Higher Education of Indonesia also. Moreover, an agreement has been signed by her university, IPB, and Indonesian Coconut and Palms Research Institute to further develop *Kopyor* coconut. The project focuses on in vitro propagation, molecular analysis, and breeding. (LLTallafer)

## DYAH ISMOYOWATI HEADS UGM CENTER



Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia has appointed Dr. Dyah Ismoyowati as Director of the Center for Rural and Regional Development Studies (PSPK UGM) effective 1 January 2010.

Dr. Dyah is with UGM's Faculty of Agricultural Technology. She obtained her MS and PhD in agricultural economics from UPLB (1994) and UGM (2004) as a SEARCA scholar.

"I do hope our Center ... will have an opportunity to build cooperation with SEARCA and SEARCA-related networks in the near future since we have a common interest in rural and regional development..." wrote Dr. Dyah. (LLTallafer)

## SEARCA GRADUATE ALUMNI BAGS AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES MODERNIZATION ACT (AFMA) BEST R&D PAPER AWARD



Dr. Yolanda T. Garcia, SEARCA graduate alumna, poses with Dr. Nerissa D. Salayo, her co-author of the award-winning paper titled *The Role of Infrastructure Developments on Market Price Formation of Major Aquaculture Species in the Philippines*.

Dr. Yolanda T. Garcia, Associate Professor of the College of Economics and Management, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), received the *AFMA Best R & D Paper (socioeconomic category)* award in October 2009 during the *21<sup>st</sup> National Research Symposium (NRS)* organized by the Bureau of Agricultural

Research of the Department of Agriculture (DA-BAR) of the Philippines. The paper is titled *The Role of Infrastructure Developments on Market Price Formation of Major Aquaculture Species in the Philippines*. It was co-authored by Dr. Nerissa D. Salayo of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)/Aquaculture Department.

"I am honored by the award and grateful to SEARCA for providing the funds to conduct this study," said Dr. Garcia.

The NRS is an annual event of the DA-BAR to promote R&D and to highlight significant research results in agriculture and fisheries. It is a venue also for recognizing outstanding Filipino researchers and scientists for their efforts and achievements on relevant R&D results that have great impact at the grassroots level.

Dr. Garcia is a graduate alumna of SEARCA, having obtained her PhD in agricultural economics from UPLB in 1997 through a scholarship of the Center. Apart from serving as faculty member of UPLB, she has also served as consultant to various international organizations. From 2001 to 2004, she led the Philippine team in a *Sustaining Fisheries and Aquaculture Production to Benefit Poor Households in Asia Project* of the Asian Development Bank, World Fish Center, and DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines. (MTBFerino)



## Timorese admitted to UPLB master's programs



Mr. Natalino B. Martins



Mr. Afonso Alves de Jesus Candido

Two Timorese have been accepted to the Graduate School of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) upon completion of their six-month Academic Bridging Program conducted also at UPLB. Their bridging program was funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Caritas Australia Timor Leste and Mr. Candido is a member of the Faculty of Economics, Institute of Business, Timor Leste.

DAAD is likewise supporting their master's programs. Since 2001 up to present, DAAD has supported the MS studies of 26 Timor Leste nationals. Of these, 12 had completed their MS programs, while nine are ongoing scholars. Five Timorese elected not to pursue their studies.

SEARCA's Academic Bridging Program provides assistance in upgrading the BS degree of agriculture graduates from selected countries in Southeast Asia, including Timor Leste, to enable them to qualify for admission to graduate programs in universities that have SEARCA's Graduate Scholarship Program. (LLDDomingo)

Beginning November 2009, Mr. Natalino B. Martins and Mr. Afonso Alves de Jesus Candido will pursue their master's studies. Mr. Martins is majoring in animal science and Mr. Candido in public affairs. Mr. Martins is with

## Thesis Abstracts

### REPLACEMENT OF FISH MEAL BY POULTRY BY-PRODUCT MEAL, CORN GLUTEN MEAL, AND SOYBEAN MEAL IN THE DIETS OF SEABASS (*LATES CALCARIFER*) FINGERLINGS.



Thanh Hai Hoang  
Vietnam  
MS in Aquaculture  
University of the Philippines  
Visayas

This study aimed to assess the replacement of 40 percent of the protein in fish meal (in the control diet) with soybean meal, corn gluten meal, poultry by-product meal, and a mixed protein (1.5:1:2.5 ratio) in the diets of Asian seabass (*Lates calcarifer*). Five experimental diets were formulated to meet about 49 percent dietary protein of seabass. The control diet contained Danish fish meal as the sole protein source. One hundred fifty fish with initial body weight of  $4.59 \pm 0.29$ g were randomly assigned to 15 rectangular glass aquaria of 45 liter capacity and fed twice daily for 8 weeks.

No water problem was experienced during the experiment; all water parameters were within acceptable range. In comparison with initial lipid content (4.99%), feeding seabass. The test diets resulted in high lipid levels (19.69–22.93%) while crude protein increased slightly at the end of the experiment. The ash and moisture content in the final body of seabass decreased. There were no significant differences between the control diet and the mixed protein diet in terms of percentage weight gain (%WG), specific growth rate (SGR), and protein efficiency ratio (PER). The %WG ( $498.9 \pm 27.1$ ) and SGR ( $3.2 \pm 0.08$ ) were highest in fish fed the control diet and lowest ( $347.1 \pm 24.6$ ) and ( $2.7 \pm 0.1$ ) in those fed the poultry by-product diet. Similar trends were observed in PER, protein retention

(PR), and condition factor (CF). The feed conversion ratio (FCR) was influenced by the different dietary treatments. Feeding seabass the control diet resulted in the significantly lowest FCR compared with those fed the other test diets. Seabass fed with poultry by-product diet exhibited the highest FCR and was significantly different from those fed the control diet, soybean diet, and mixed protein diets. Survival of seabass in all treatments ranged from 93.3 to 100 percent.

The results did not show any remarkable difference between the control diet and the mixed protein diet on hepatosomatic index (HIS) and viscerasomatic (VSI) of seabass juvenile. Results from the present study demonstrated that the mixed protein diet, which replaced 40 percent of the fish meal protein, could be applied to feed to juvenile seabass without adverse effects on growth and body composition. It was also nutritionally adequate and economical.

### FARMER-DRIVEN APPROACH AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO FARMER EMPOWERMENT IN THE VILLAGE EXTENSION SYSTEM OF LAO PDR



Souvanthong Namvong  
Lao PDR  
MS in Extension Education  
University of the Philippines  
Los Baños

The study sought to analyze the farmer driven approach and its contribution to the implementation of the village extension system (VES) in six districts of selected provinces in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR).

Descriptive method of research was used with 126 respondents, consisting of farmers, village extension workers/head of production groups, village authorities, and district staff directly involved in the Laos Extension for

Agriculture Project (LEAP). Pearson Correlation and Spearman's Rank Correlation were used to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables; the Point-bisetered correlation was used for dichotomous variables.

Results revealed that both individual (age, ethnic group, income, perceived effectiveness of VES, and motivation) and organizational-related factors (local government unit support, linkage mechanism, community members' responsiveness and cohesiveness, and feeling of ownership) influenced the extent of participation of stakeholders in the VES projects.

Moreover, respondents were unanimous in saying VES empowered them through acquisition of individual and collective assets and capabilities which made them more capable in actively partaking in the activities of VES in their respective villages.

With the findings of the present study, it is deemed necessary that VES establish interventions of broader coverage to increase farmers' participation in all phases of the project cycle. Training provided in partnership with other institutions should emphasize not only "hard" but also "soft" skills, including those necessary to promote farmer-to-farmer extension such as communication skills development, public speaking, and leadership to boost confidence of stakeholders. Home-based programs like weaving and handicraft making are worth considering to support sustainable livelihood. Increased visibility of government staff, distribution of quality and simplified extension materials to attract a wider readership, and creation of cooperatives and group savings funds are also suggested. Finally, it is recommended that the concept of empowerment be expanded in practice to embrace the promotion of collective assets and capabilities. Relative to this, further study on the promotion or the creation of common funds recommended.

## Winners of SEARCA/ from page 4

The second placer, taken in Ayutthaya province, Thailand, shows workers placing bags of sand to strengthen the frontal wall and flood defense barrier of Wat Chai Watthanaram, a Buddhist temple on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River. The site, a major tourist attraction, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The third placer illustrates a community-based practice in Marikina City, Philippines. To raise environmental awareness among its constituents, Marikina's local government constructed and developed a bicycle lane to encourage the use of this environment-friendly mode of transportation. Unlike motor vehicles, bicycles do not emit carbon dioxide. Bicycling is also a good form of exercise.

The 2009 SEARCA Photo Contest ran from 3 August to 30 October 2009; it harvested a total of 130 entries from the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, India, and Bangladesh. The judging of photo entries was held on 11 November at SEARCA.

Dr. Nicomedes D. Briones, professor from the School of Environmental Science and Management, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Prof. Edmund Centeno who teaches photography at the College of Development Communication, UPLB; and Mr. Joel Cardenas, a freelance graphics artist based in Los Baños, Laguna served as judges.

Winners received US\$500 (first place), US\$300 (second place), and US\$200 (third place).

### BRUSH STROKES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

On 10-12 November 2009, SEARCA held an on-the-spot painting contest dubbed "Color Our World Beautiful." The contest had 86 participants from various schools, colleges, and universities in Laguna, Philippines and from nearby provinces. Divided into three categories, the top winners for each category were: Ms. Anna Valerie B. Corre of University of Perpetual Help System (elementary level); Mr. Jayson G. Cristobal of Calamba Bayside National High School (high school level); and Mr. Jhunly A. Lazaro of the Laguna State Polytechnic University (college level).

The contest provided students a platform to express what they think of climate change through the creative and visual arts. Mr. Lazaro (college level winner) said that through his artwork, he hopes to help awaken people on the need to combat climate change and to protect the earth by conserving energy and planting trees. Ms. Palles (elementary level contestant) of Little Jesus Learning Center in Calamba City said



**1<sup>st</sup> Place, Photography Contest**  
Planting Bamboo  
by Nikki Sandino Victoriano

"we can do our share in solving (the impacts) of climate change by reducing, reusing, recycling, and by showing the members of our family and our neighbors how to protect the environment."

The other winners and entries with special citations are:

#### Elementary level:

2<sup>nd</sup> prize – Katya Marea M. Palles  
Little Jesus Learning Center – Calamba  
3<sup>rd</sup> prize – Harold Arsenius D. Quezada  
Lopez Elementary School

#### Special citation:

- Luis Daniel R. Yonzon  
– Lopez Elementary School
- Nikolo Anton F. Lahoz  
– Canossa College, San Pablo

#### High School Level:

2<sup>nd</sup> prize – Vanessa Cherry Pearl Escucha  
Philippine High School for the Arts  
3<sup>rd</sup> prize – Abigail Joyce B. Sorono  
Philippine High School for the Arts

#### Special citation:

- Franzell Dexter Marin  
– Morning Star Montessori School, Inc.
- Khemshelly T. Fandialan  
– Canossa College, San Pablo

#### College Level:

2<sup>nd</sup> prize – Alexandro L. Maghari  
San Pablo Colleges  
3<sup>rd</sup> prize – Jhonaliza T. Cristobal  
City College of Calamba

#### Special citation:

- Marben S. Correje – City College of Calamba
- Kianelli Ann M. Palles – University of Perpetual Help Systems

The criteria for judging were composition and visual impact, relevance to the theme, technique, and creativity/originality. Judges were Prof. Leticia



**1<sup>st</sup> Prize, Elementary School Level**  
Untitled by Anna Valerie B. Corre  
University of Perpetual Help System, Calamba City  
Medium: Oil Pastel



**1<sup>st</sup> Prize, High School Level**  
Hour Glass by Jayson G. Cristobal  
Calamba Bayside National High School,  
Medium: Acrylic



**1<sup>st</sup> Prize, College Level**  
Blooming Circle by Jhunly A. Lazaro  
Laguna State Polytechnic University, Sta. Cruz, Laguna  
Medium: Oil Pastel

E. Afuang of the Institute of Biological Sciences, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Prof. Ma. Teresa DV. Arejola of the Department of Humanities College of Arts and Sciences, UPLB; and Dr. Lorna M. Calumpang, Head of the Knowledge Resources Unit of SEARCA. Winners received cash prizes ranging from US\$40 to US\$200. (RMMDedicatoria/BPJoven)



## Thai professor/ from page 3

university students since 1962. Most of these students majored in animal science and genetics and now hold positions of influence in various institutions. They came mostly from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Thailand, under the SIDA/SAREC Master's degree program. Through the funding support of Japanese International Cooperation Agency/Thailand, many other Southeast Asians such as from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Cambodia, had been trained in sustainable agriculture for development and extension under his supervision.

He is well known for his contributions to cattle and animal science research as well as smallholder farming systems development. He served as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research from 1986 to 1990. In 1994, he served as a member of the Implementing Advisory Group to consolidate the International Livestock Center in Africa and the International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases to form the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). He became Vice Chairman of ILRI's Board of Trustees in 1995-2000.

Aside from his demonstrated track record in university administration and research and as an educator, he served the Thai government as Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives in 1979-1980.

During his keynote presentation, Prof. Charan shared his views on sufficiency economy. Sufficiency economy is a philosophy developed by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand to lead his people in a balanced way of life and to be the main sustainable development theory for the country.

According to Prof. Charan, the philosophy could be profitably employed by all. "People can use

### PROF. CHARAN'S Umali Award Citation:

A scientist, educator, researcher, extension worker, and international servant in agriculture and rural development, Prof. Charan Chantalakhana has tirelessly worked for the promotion of smallholder farming systems. His pioneering work on cattle and buffalo genetic improvement led to the development of a new cattle breed called "Kamphaeng Saen." Needing lower levels of inputs and growing to weights three times those of the native cattle, the Kamphaeng Saen breed has helped small dairy farmers reduce the cost of production and expand dairy herds in Thailand and other parts of Southeast Asia, particularly Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

He initiated the establishment of the Thailand National Buffalo Center and Association, of which he was the first president. He was also a founding member of the Asian-Australasian Association of Animal Production Societies (AAP) and a co-founder of the Asian Buffalo Association (ABA) in 1992. The latter has been active in the promotion of buffalo science in Asia. Prof. Charan has likewise served in

various capacities in advisory and technical associations.

Throughout his career, Prof. Charan has actively mentored students and trainees in the field of animal science and genetics, many of whom now hold key positions in Thailand and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Even after retirement in the late 1990s he has continued to work with young students, scientists and farmers, forming a group of researchers from universities and smallholder dairy farmers to investigate the impacts of smallholder dairy farms on environment and waste management.

Prof. Charan's decades of sterling and committed service have contributed in no small measure to the well-being of farmers in Thailand and in the region. His work has touched the lives of millions of people, especially those in developing countries who are primarily dependent on agriculture for livelihood.

the philosophy, starting with self-assessment and estimating how one can grow in an efficient manner, while not hurting the environment," he said.

"Focus on benefiting the majority of the population before thinking of personal welfare. The best way to promote sustainable growth is to strive for optimum benefit," he added.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, said, "People like Prof. Charan Chantalakhana serve as a ray of hope for agricultural and rural development in Southeast Asia. Prof. Charan

is a pillar in buffalo research in the region. His work and contributions in the past 40 years have strengthened animal science and genetics as a whole. His life is indeed reflective of Dr. Dioscoro Umali's own contributions, a true trailblazer in agricultural development."

The Umali Award seeks to promote agriculture by recognizing exemplary individuals who have advanced agricultural development in Southeast Asia. Beginning 2008, the Umali Award has been conferred annually during SEARCA's anniversary celebration and comes with a cash prize of US\$10,000 and a plaque. (MAFABad)

## Agri-biotech/ from page 6

• *KM and Networking*: diverse experiences on knowledge sharing and exchange, North-South and South-South partnerships, networking, and communication initiatives on agri-biotech

A workshop was also conducted where the participants were divided into small groups to discuss relevant components of a regional collaborative initiative on KM in agri-biotech.

The participants concurred that KM interventions should be taken into account

to leverage innovation and productivity. Agricultural challenges on food security, environmental sustainability, climate change, and energy security need to be addressed with crop biotechnology as a possible option. Participants affirmed that Asian countries need to utilize biological knowledge to greater productive value and identify gaps in the process chain, from product development to utilization.

SEARCA's conference partners were the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-

biotech Applications, Program for Biosafety Systems – Southeast Asia, Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II, Center of Excellence for Agricultural Biotechnology and Biosafety, and Biotechnology Information Center of Kasetsart University. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, Asia Bio Business Ltd., National Taiwan University, Food and Fertilizer Technology Center for Asia and the Pacific, Office of the Gene Technology Regulator Australia, CropLife Asia, and the Office of the Multilateral Trade and Agricultural Affairs of the US Department of State also supported the event. (RBLapitan)

## SEAMEO Centers scale up climate change awareness among teachers, students



The participants of the Teachers' Seminar-Workshop pose for a souvenir photo with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (fourth from right), SEARCA Director, and other SEARCA staff.

Several centers of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) have jointly embarked on a project aimed at creating awareness among high school teachers on climate change and its impacts on food supply. The project is spearheaded by the SEAMEO Regional Center for Education in Science and Mathematics (RECSAM) based in Penang, Malaysia.

In a collaboration meeting held on 26-28 October 2009 at Penang, Malaysia, Dr. Azian T.S. Abdullah, SEAMEO-Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics (RECSAM) Director, presented the conceptual framework, budget, and proposal for additional funding from sponsors for the potential extension of the project. She stressed that a Teacher's Guidebook is expected to materialize from the initiative. SEARCA was represented in the meeting by Dr. Lorna M. Calumpang, Head of the Center's Knowledge Resources Unit.

Toward the production of the teachers' guidebook, SEARCA conducted a two-day seminar-workshop titled *Climate and Food Supply: The Threats of Climate Change to Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries* on 3-4 December 2009. Participants were 12 teachers from six different schools within the Los Baños community.

The schools represented are: Los Baños National High School, Los Baños Community High School, Christian School International, Maquiling School Incorporated, Lopez Elementary School, UP Rural High School, and the Philippine High School for the Arts.

The first day of the seminar-workshop focused on furthering the teachers' knowledge of climate change and its impacts on agriculture and fisheries through lectures by experts. The participants later crafted learning modules on their subjects of expertise. Each of the learning modules produced were presented in a plenary session for critiquing.

The modules are going to be pretested scheduled in January-February 2010, after which they shall be refined and finalized as SEARCA's input to the project's teachers' guidebook. (BPJoven)

## SEARCA, UC Berkeley provide scholarship for environmental leadership program

SEARCA widens its training offerings through its new partnership with the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley). Beginning 2010 until 2014, SEARCA and UC Berkeley will provide a joint scholarship with the Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) to enable a highly qualified Southeast Asian professional from an influential organization engaged in agriculture, rural development, or natural resource management (NRM) to participate in the annual Beahrs ELP summer course.

The Beahrs ELP interdisciplinary summer certificate course on Sustainable Environmental Management aims to enhance sustainable

development knowledge, policy analysis, management and leadership around the world. It provides mid-career professionals an opportunity to interact with UC Berkeley faculty and each other to improve their understanding of the complex social, economic, and biophysical aspects of natural resource and environmental management.

The *Special SEARCA-Beahrs ELP Training Scholarship in Environmental Leadership in Southeast Asia* is open to development practitioners, technical advisors, and academics from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines,

Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam who are involved in sustainable agriculture, rural development or NRM. They must be affiliated with the government, a nongovernment organization, or a policy-oriented academic institution that is concerned with environmental management/sustainable agriculture.

The training scholarship covers the scholar's roundtrip airfare and other travel related expenses; the ELP summer course registration fee; and a modest allowance for meals and incidentals not covered by the registration fee.

The 2010 Beahrs ELP summer certificate course in Sustainable Environmental Management is scheduled on 25 June to 17 July 2010 at UC Berkeley. (JVBaruan)

### Former SEARCA Deputy/ from page 9

be disarming and usually paved the way for success in all his endeavors, particularly those that concerned his responsibilities in the Center. When he first joined SEARCA, public speaking was not his forte, but six years thence, he was a consummate speaker, able to lace his speeches with anecdotes and humor. Again, this worked to his great advantage.

"Dr. Soekartawi took care of the Center's graduate education program with passion. He related closely with scholars of various nationalities who saw in him a father figure while at SEARCA. Dr. Soekartawi also worked hard to get donor funds to augment SEARCA's financial resources for its graduate degree and short-term training programs. He is credited for developing the

so-called "Indonesian Model" of funding in the Center. Through his efforts, he was able to tap the Indonesian government's human development funds and channel them to SEARCA scholarships and development projects specifically focused on Indonesian nationals.

In Dr. Soekartawi, I have lost not only a colleague but a friend. My sincere condolences to his wife Dina and his sons, all of whom he dearly loved. SEARCA is privileged to have had the opportunity to work with such an outstanding person."

Dr. Soekartawi, we fondly bid you a final *adieu*. (NARamos)



## SEAMEO Council President expresses confidence in SEARCA's programs



H.E. Mr. Jurin Laksanawisit, Minister of Education of Thailand and concurrently SEAMEO Council President, receives from Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, an institutional gift during his visit to SEARCA on 19 December 2009. The gift is a wooden replica of the Growth sculpture found in front of SEARCA's building.

The inscription reads: "Growth as a process best describes the thrust of SEARCA. It takes different directions, speed, and degree. The Growth Monument, consisting of 11 stylized human figures linked internally on a square base, concretizes the synergy amidst the diversity of the SEAMEO member countries toward a more prosperous Southeast Asia."

H.E. Mr. Jurin Laksanawisit, Minister of Education of Thailand, and concurrently President of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Council, visited SEARCA on 19 December 2009. In his address, he commended SEARCA for its commitment, dedication, and achievements. He also expressed his confidence in the Center's current and future programs.

"These [activities] will improve the livelihood and well being of agricultural and rural communities throughout Southeast Asia, and promote a way

of life in harmony with the region's ecosystems," said H.E. Mr. Laksanawisit.

Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco, Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), which hosts SEARCA's headquarters and facilities, was on hand to welcome the SEAMEO Council President and his delegation to the university.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, presented to H.E. Mr. Laksanawisit the accomplishments of SEARCA in Fiscal Year

2008/2009 and an overview of the current Ninth Five-Year Plan.

"If one were then to ask, what drives SEARCA? We could say that it is in enhancing the resilience of Southeast Asia's rural poor; enabling them, and institutions helping them in the face of increasing vulnerability caused by an environment that has become more fragile and unpredictable...to make a difference in the lives of farming communities in the region," Dr. Saguiguit shared.

H.E. Mr. Laksanawisit was accompanied by high officials of Thailand's Ministry of Education, among them, Dr. Vichai Vanadurongwan, Vice Minister; Mr. Chaleyo Yoosimararak, Permanent Secretary; and Mr. Chinnapat Bhumirat, Secretary-General, Office of the Basic Education Commission; as well as Mr. Jonathan E. Malaya, Assistant Secretary, Department of Education, Philippines.

He and his party also visited the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). They were received and briefed by Dr. Achim Dobermann, Deputy Director for Research, on IRRI's general programs and collaborative activities with Thailand. (MAFABad)



H.E. Mr. Jurin Laksanawisit is welcomed by Dr. Achim Dobermann (second from right), Deputy Director General for Research, IRRI. Also in photo are (L-R): Dr. Saguiguit, Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba, Deputy Director for Administration, SEARCA; and Mr. Jonathan E. Malaya, Assistant Secretary, Philippine Department of Education, Philippines.

### Agriculture risk/ from page 16

research efforts have to offer. However, because the participants belong to different sectors and have varied interests, some expressed their desire for more skills-based knowledge specific to their needs.

As explained by the training's resource persons, there is no one recipe book or how-to guide in combating the effects of climate variability. However, plans for the third offering of the course will provide separate sessions for participants that use the top-down and the bottom-up/

community-based approaches in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Mr. Laganda of UNDP said top-down approaches focus on analyzing historic climate observations, current climate trends, and future climate scenarios in order to decide how priority risks can best be addressed, financed, and supported through targeted policy action. On the other hand, bottom-up approaches analyze existing resilience problems, vulnerabilities and their root causes, and evident barriers to action so as to better design interventions.

Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, SEARCA's KMD Manager, said that by separating the discussion of tools specific to these two general approaches, future training participants will be provided with information more relevant to their and their institution's needs. This will enable them to gain more specific information on how they can improve current efforts and contributions to their respective countries' adaptation to present risks and mitigation of future ones. (JVBaruan)

## Agriculture risk management training conducted



The participants and resource persons pose for a souvenir photo with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (eighth from left), SEARCA Director.

The attention given by mainstream media to climate change has not only heightened people's awareness of the phenomenon. It has also exerted pressure on governments to improve their current efforts to climate proof. Climate proofing involves improving a locale's resilience or capacity to cope with future climate risks. It is in this context that SEARCA mounted the *Second International Training in Responding to Changing Climate: Knowledge-based Strategies in Managing Risks in Agriculture and Environment*.

The training was held on 9-13 November 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. SEARCA's partners in this endeavor included the Southeast Asia Global Change SysTEM for Analysis, Research and Training Regional Center (SEA START RC), Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA), and UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok. The training had 28 participants from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka. The academic, research and development, and policymaking sectors were all represented, attesting to the region's need to holistically improve its capacity to address the multi-layer effects of climate change.

The training focused on providing its participants with research-based strategies to help improve their capacity to cope with the threats of climate variability. Discussed were tools used to project what it would be like when climate change impacts are more visible and could cause more risks to systems. Some of the specific topics tackled were: (1) risk analysis; (2) risks due to extreme weather events; (3) managing climatic and socioeconomic risks to rice production and aquaculture; (4) economic impacts and valuation of climate risks; (5) gender responsiveness in disaster risk management; and (6) framework for risk reduction in a changing environment.

A trip to Thailand's Samutsakhon Province exposed the participants to several model projects that aid the country's efforts in managing water resources and mangrove forests. Toward the end of the training, the participants created individually a strategic action plan that can be applied to their respective contexts.

Nine resource persons from the academe and various research and development institutions shared their technical expertise and experience in the field of climate and disaster risk management, namely:

- Dr. Felino P. Lansigan, Professor, Institute of Statistics, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)
- Dr. Anan Polthanee, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Khon Kaen University
- Dr. Anond Snidvongs, Director, SEA START RC
- Mr. Pedro B. Bueno, former Director General, Intergovernmental Organization of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA)
- Dr. Canesio D. Predo, Assistant Professor, Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, UPLB
- Dr. Herminia A. Francisco, Director, EEPSEA
- Mr. Gernot Laganda, Regional Technical Advisor for Climate Change Adaptation, UNDP Regional Centre, Bangkok
- Dr. Bernadette P. Resurreccion, Associate Professor, School of Environment, Resources & Technology, Asian Institute of Technology
- Dr. Daylinda B. Cabanilla, Associate Professor, Department of Social Forestry and Forest Governance, UPLB

### THE KEYWORD IS "NOW"

The need to commit to implementing climate change adaptation and mitigation measures was emphasized in the training. It was repeatedly pointed out that although climate change cannot

be prevented, adapting to the climatic changes experienced *now* and mitigating the possible risks to be faced in the future by acting *now* are ideal responses.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, SEARCA Director, pointed out that one main challenge lies in building a bridge between current efforts aimed at reducing vulnerability to extreme events and efforts to promote climate change adaptation. In the same vein, Mr. Suppakorn Chinvanho, SEA START RC Senior Advisor,

emphasized in his opening address that "now [is the] time to start shifting our thinking paradigm and look even farther into the future in order to come up with a process or mechanism that would lead to higher climate resilience of the agricultural sector."

### OFFSHOOTS

An expected offshoot of any international learning event is continued networking and knowledge sharing between and among the resource persons and participants. To facilitate this exchange, SEARCA's Knowledge Management Department (KMD) set up an online learning support platform wherein they can share knowledge resources and participate in online discussion forums.

Another welcome offshoot of the learning event is the creation of a Philippine climate change working group, initiated by the Filipino training participants. The group agreed that its first step would be to determine the gaps in current efforts by documenting what other organizations are doing in response to the climate change issue. This would minimize duplication of efforts and complement similar current initiatives. The group identified as first priority the sensitization of policymakers to the issue of climate change.

Although plans to formalize the group are still uncertain, the members have already involved SEARCA as its institutional partner.

### NEXT OFFERINGS

Generally, the training participants were satisfied with the information presented during the training. All appreciated the opportunity to hear about the climate change risk assessment tools that current

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