

# The SEARCA DIARY



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

VOL.41 NO.4 DEC 2012



## WHEN LANDS BLEED DRY

Frequent droughts is but one of many climate change impacts that exacerbate the pressures to produce more food with less water and less land in the face of unabated population growth.

Photo by Agung Basuki

## Climate change links to food security discussed at int'l conference

Over 150 researchers, academicians, policymakers, and development workers representing 21 countries attended the *International Conference on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Food and Environmental Security* held at SEARCA on 21-22 November 2012.

The scientific meeting was jointly organized by SEARCA and the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) through its Interdisciplinary Program on Climate Change (IdPCC), with the Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) as a major sponsor.

Serving as a platform for exchange on the latest knowledge on climate change impacts and adaptation linked to food security and environmental sustainability, the conference had four plenary presentations and 41 papers presented in four parallel sessions.

The session themes were (1) Status, Prospects, and Practices on Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture, Climate Change Impacts and Vulnerability,

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Participants and organizers of the *International Conference on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Food and Environmental Security* held at SEARCA on 21-22 November 2012.

Climate Change Adaptation and Agriculture; (2) Institutional and Economic Aspects of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation; (3) Systems and Tools for Analyzing Climate Change Impacts and Vulnerability; and (4) Regional and South-South Collaboration in Research and Development.

New knowledge and experiences in climate change science and adaptation strategies, disaster risk reduction, climate risk management, climate change adaptation planning and management, and vulnerability and impacts assessment tools shared at the conference are intended to be upscaled to benefit the majority of Southeast Asia and other regions that are bearing the brunt of adverse climate change effects on food and environmental security.

#### Collective action needed

In his welcome remarks, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, urged institutions to pursue collaborative efforts to “generate concerted rather than dispersed and fragmented results.” He added that “we can only do so much with our limited resources; hence we must strategically invest in initiatives that can make the most.”

This was affirmed by Dr. Paul S. Teng, Senior Fellow (Food Security) at the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies of the Rajaratnam School of International Studies and of SEARCA, when he said “dealing with climate change effects especially on food security will require a multi-sectoral, multi-lateral, multi-disciplinary, integrated approach” in his keynote address.

The conference thus also served as a venue for promoting partnerships and linkages among

tion (ARHE); and Dr. Juan M. Pulhin, Professor and Dean, College of Forestry and Natural Resources (CFNR), UPLB.

#### Benefits of tapping into networks

A panel on Networking for Research and Development (R&D) and Capacity Building on Climate Change and Food and Environmental Security drew attention to the networks in various regions that support R&D and capacity-building activities, including training opportunities on counterpart funding arrangements. It was recommended that collaborations across agencies (public and private; local, national and global scale) in R&D and/or education sectors be strengthened. Moreover, the need to mainstream research findings in the local and national governance systems to ensure sustainability of the networks was emphasized.

The panelists were Ms. Hiroko Kodaka, Associate Program Manager, Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN); Dr. Maria Victoria Espaldon, Chair, UPLB IdPCC and UPLB Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension; Dr. Ninomiya; Dr. Herminia A. Francisco, Director of the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEP-SEA); and Dr. Berthold Seibert, Project Director, ASEAN Biodiversity Centre-GIZ Biodiversity and Climate Change Project (ACB-GIZ BCCP).

In her closing remarks, Dr. Puja Sawhney, Regional Coordinator of APAN, committed APAN's continued support of networking and capacity development activities on climate change adaptation in the Asia-Pacific region, and said it will strengthen the partnerships nurtured through SEARCA in this conference.

APAN is a partnership among various institutions including the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment in Japan, the United



GIL C. SAGUIGUIT, JR.



REX VICTOR O. CRUZ



NADEREV SAÑO



PAUL S. TENG



FELINO P. LANSIGAN



WILLIAM D. DAR



SEISHI NINOMIYA



PUJA SAWHNEY

different sectors for collaborative capacity development and research and development activities on climate change adaptation. It involved holistic discussion on institutional, policy, governance, culture, and economic aspects of climate change science.

Meanwhile, Dr. William D. Dar, Director General of the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), stressed the need to harness the “power of science” to address the “rising perfect storm”—including climate change, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, food crisis, energy crisis and population explosion—threatening all of humankind.

The other plenary speakers were Dr. Seishi Ninomiya, Professor, Institute for Sustainable Agro-ecosystem Services, University of the Tokyo; Dr. Reinhold G. Muschler, Latin American Chair for Agroecology and Agrobiodiversity, Center for Agricultural Research and Higher Educa-

#### THE SEARCA DIARY

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# Lao government hosts 60<sup>th</sup> SEARCA Governing Board Meeting

The 60<sup>th</sup> meeting of SEARCA's Governing Board (GB) was hosted by the Lao government, through its Ministry of Education and Sports, on 16-18 October 2012 in the National Heritage city of Luang Prabang in the northern part of the country. It was the second time that the country hosted such meeting.

As SEARCA's highest policymaking body, the GB comprises representatives of the SEAMEO member-countries. Its annual meeting is an essential forum to take stock of the Center's accomplishments in the past year, discuss its plans and strategies, and help in direction-setting.

H.E. Kongsy Sengmany, Vice Minister of Education and Sports of Lao PDR, graced the meeting's opening ceremony together with other Ministry of Education officials and representatives from leading universities in Lao PDR. He acknowledged and thanked SEARCA for its contributions to human resource development and capacity building in agriculture in Lao PDR since his country joined the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) in 1974.

The GB, on the other hand, highly commended Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, for his leadership and the Center for its many accomplishments in fiscal year 2011/2012 and the successful implementation of the first two years of the Ninth Five-Year Development Plan. They noted in particular the internationalization of SEARCA's programs and the Center's efforts in helping develop the young and strategic universities in Southeast Asia and in strengthening the capacities of agriculture ministries in the SEAMEO member-countries.

Dr. Saguiguit led the SEARCA delegation to the meeting. With him were Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Acting Program Head for Research and Development; Ms. Susan V. Fernandez, Unit Head, Management Services; Ms. Judith M. Manzano, Unit Head, Internal Audit; Ms. Adoracion T. Robles, Executive Coordinator; and Ms. Fe D. dela Cruz, Administrative Assistant, Office of the Deputy Director for Administration.

The other meeting participants were:

- Representing Brunei Darussalam – Mr. Hj. Md. Sharifuddin Hj. Md. Salleh, Acting Director, Department of Technical Education, Ministry of Education (in lieu of Mr. Denis Ho Mun Tai of the Department of Technical Education)
- Representing Cambodia – Dr. Ngo Bunthan, Rector, Royal University of Agriculture
- Representing Lao PDR – Dr. Sitha Khemmarath, Vice President for Academic Affairs of

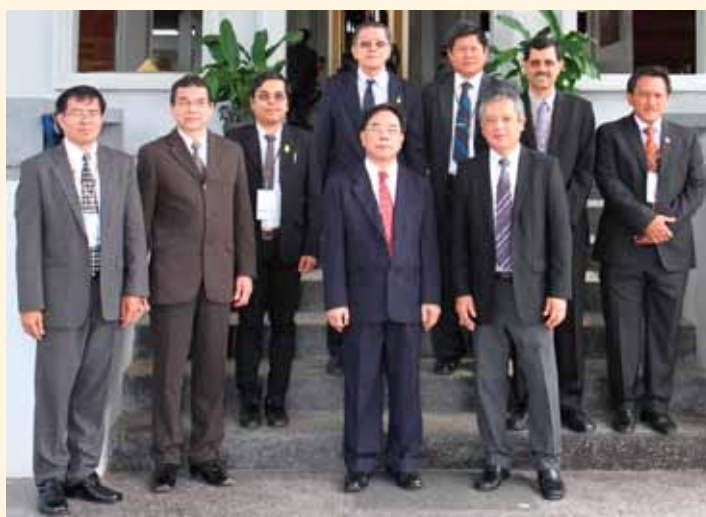
Savannakhet University

- Representing Malaysia – Dr. Bujang Kim Huat, Deputy Dean, School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) (in lieu of Dató Dr. Ir. Radin Umar bin Radin Sohadi, Vice Chancellor of UPM)
- Representing the Philippines – Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Los Baños
- Representing Singapore – Dr. Prakash Kumar, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, National University of Singapore.
- Representing Thailand – Dr. Adul Apinantara, Senior Advisor, Sub-committee for SEARCA, Thailand (in lieu of Dr. Chaipreuk Sereerak, Secretary-General, Vocational Education Commission, Ministry of Education)
- Representing Timor-Leste – Dr. Edmundo Viegas, Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, National University of Timor Lorosae
- Representing Vietnam – Dr. Tran Van Dien, Rector, College of Agriculture and Forestry, Thai Nguyen University
- Representing the SEAMEO Secretariat – Dr. Witaya Jeradechakul, Director

Two observers, one each from Lao PDR and Thailand, were also present at the meeting. On the other hand, Indonesia and Myanmar were unable to send their representatives.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Khemmarath of Lao PDR. (LLDDomingo)

## 60<sup>th</sup> GBM Photo Gallery



Members of SEARCA's GB and meeting observers pose for posterity.



Dr. Saguiguit (third from left) with the GB Meeting's support staff from SEARCA (from left): Ms. Fe D. dela Cruz, Ms. Adoracion T. Robles, Ms. Susan V. Fernandez, Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, and Ms. Judith M. Manzano.

### Speakers at the Opening Ceremony



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr.



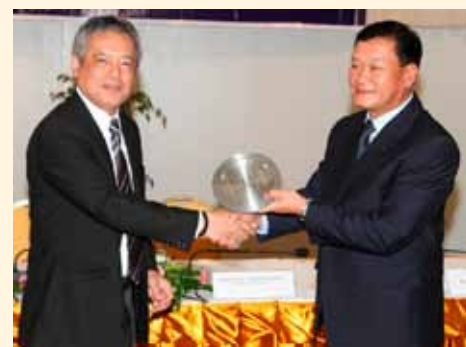
Dr. Witaya Jeradechakul



Dr. Sitha Khemmarath



H.E. Kongsy Sengmany



H.E. Kongsy Sengmany receives token of appreciation from Dr. Saguiguit.

## Regional workshop on REDD Plus held



Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay (front row, rightmost), Unit Head, Knowledge Resources; and Dr. Lope B. Santos III (second row, leftmost), Program Specialist, Project Development and Management; and Dr. Gil A. Mendoza (second row, fourth from left), SEARCA Consultant for REDD Plus, with the participants of the *Regional Workshop on REDD Plus* held on 1-2 November 2012 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The *Regional Workshop on Strengthening ASEAN Mechanisms for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD Plus)* was conducted on 1-2 November 2012 in Jakarta, Indonesia by SEARCA in coordination with the Agriculture Industries and Natural Resources Division (AINRD) of the ASEAN Secretariat, with funding support from the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program Phase II (AADCP II).

The workshop was attended by two representatives each from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, all of which are ASEAN Member States (AMS).

Also present at the workshop were Ms. Dr. Nur Masripatin, Director, Centre for Standardization and Environment, Ministry of Forestry and Coordinator of the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on Forest and Climate Change; Dr. Jeremy Broadhead of the Lowering Emissions in Asia's Forest (LEAF Program) of the United States

Agency for International Development (USAID); Pouchamarn Wongsanga, Senior Officer, and Ms. Amalia Agustina, Technical Officer, both of AINRD; Ms. Susan Wong, Senior Officer, Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat; and Ms. Catherine Frances J. Corpuz, AADCP II Senior Program Officer.

Two key documents developed under the REDD Plus Project implemented by SEARCA for the ASEAN Secretariat were presented by Dr. Gil A. Mendoza, SEARCA Consultant for REDD Plus and project leader. The documents presented were on: (1) *Methodological Approaches for Reference Level and MRV Systems and Assessment of Future Technical Assistance to Implement REDD Plus Effectively* and (2) *Guidelines for Establishment of Reference Emission Level (REL) and Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Systems for Implementing REDD Plus*.

Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay, Unit Head, Knowledge Resources and REDD Plus Project Coordinator, and Dr. Lope B. Santos III, Program Specialist,

Project Development and Management, both of SEARCA, assisted in the presentations.

Both documents will be revised to address comments on the presentations prior to submission to the ASEAN Secretariat.

The workshop provided a forum for the AMS not only to review the proposed methods and guidelines for REL/RL and MRV systems, but also to share their experiences in REDD Plus implementation in the region as regards existing laws and policies, current programs and projects related to REDD Plus, and a national strategy in place.

In addition, incentive schemes, and financing mechanisms were discussed. Some potential collaborative activities on REDD Plus implementation in the AMS were also identified, including initiatives on policy development, capacity building, and information sharing. (MVTicsay)

## New SEARCA Governing Board members appointed

New Representatives of Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia to the SEARCA Governing Board (GB) were appointed in December 2012.

Mr. Saiful Rizal bin Haji Marali, Acting Principal of Wasan Vocational School, Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam, is the new Country Representative of Brunei Darussalam effective 1 December 2012. He succeeded Mr. Denis Ho

Mun Tai, Acting Assistant Director, Department of Technical Education, Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam.

Dr. Agus Subekti, Director, Research and Community Services of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), Indonesia was appointed as Country Representative of Indonesia effective 2 December 2012. He succeeded Prof.

Dr. Ir. Suryo Hapsoro Tri Utomo as Director of Research and Community Services of Higher Education, MEC.

The GB is SEARCA's highest policymaking body. It is composed of representatives from each of the 11 member countries of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) who are nominated by their respective Ministers of Education and appointed by the SEAMEO Council President. (LLDDomingo)



## Cardenas appointed SEARCA Deputy Director

SEARCA welcomes Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, a distinguished educator and administrator at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), as its new Deputy Director for Administration effective 15 November 2012.

Dr. Cardenas has the distinction of being the first female Deputy Director of SEARCA.

She is a Professor at the Institute of Governance and Rural Development of the College of Public Affairs (CPAf), UPLB.

Dr. Cardenas brings with her an extensive experience in administration. She was the Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs in UPLB (2006-2011) and was appointed twice as the Director of the Institute of Community Education in CPAf (1998-2001 and 2005-2006). She currently serves as the Regional Coordinator of the Asia Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (APIRAS) and a member of the steering committee of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS).

Dr. Cardenas had conducted numerous researches that promote community participation towards agricultural and rural development, and

natural resource management. She also authored and co-authored a number of articles in various reputable local and international journals as well as books, monographs, and technical publications. Moreover, she has written and assisted in crafting policy papers, including the National Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Agenda: 2010-2016 and the Republic Act 3011 (Strengthening the Philippine Extension Service) which is pending in the Senate but has gone a final reading in 2009.

Not new in SEARCA, Dr. Cardenas has worked in several projects of the Center where she served as consultant and project leader. She was the Institution/Community Development Specialist in the recently concluded European Union-funded project on Focused Food Production Assistance to Vulnerable Sectors (FPAVAS) implemented by SEARCA. She was also the Country Coordinator for the implementation of the Data Management for On-farm Trials Project jointly implemented by SEARCA, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada.

She also received a number of awards which all attest to her exemplary work in teaching, research, and administration. Foremost among these are the Most Outstanding Educator Award (*Gurong Patunubay Award*), the highest award given by the Philippine Association of



VIRGINIA R. CARDENAS

Agricultural Educators, Inc. (PASSAGE); UPLB Outstanding Alumna Award for her service as a multitasking educator and administrator; and the Technology Dissemination and Utilization Award given by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD).

Dr. Cardenas holds a Doctorate degree in Extension Education from UPLB, where she also earned her Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Applied Nutrition and Home Technology, respectively. Her fields of specialization include local governance and rural development, health and applied nutrition, education, institution building and capacity development, gender and development, agricultural knowledge management, and information systems assessment. (EGPandanan)

## Children's book on rice launched

The Asia Rice Foundation (ARF) and SEARCA led the launch of *Ang mga Sugilanon ug ang Panimpalad ni Gabo Ghas*, the Visayan version of the picture book titled *The Adventures of Gabby Ghas*, with Philippine Education Secretary Armin A. Luistro as guest speaker.

The Visayan edition is co-published by ARF, SEARCA, Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), and Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), Philippines.

Originally published in English in 2009, the richly illustrated book creatively describes how rice is produced and processed before it reaches its consumers.



Hon. Armin A. Luistro (second from left), Philippine Education Secretary, holds copies of the newly launched Visayan edition of *The Adventures of Gabby Ghas*. With him are representatives of the book's co-publishers: (from right) Dr. Benito S. Vergara, Chairman, Dr. Emil Q. Javier, former Chairman, Asia Rice Foundation; Dr. Eufemio T. Rasco, Executive Director, Philippine Rice Research Institute; Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; and Ms. Salvacion Ritual of the Philippine Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research.

"Though this may not be the usual fare in SEARCA's publications, we saw it as a way of introducing to our young, the value and culture of eating rice. And invariably, the appreciation of agriculture and the value chain from which this important commodity comes from," Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, said in his welcome remarks.

He added that "in the SEARCA scheme of things, we connect rice to our focus on promoting food security. Since rice is a staple food in all the countries we operate, access of a population growing by leaps and bounds to the needed quantity and quality of this commodity is an indicator of food security. For school children it will be especially critical for their nourishment, health, and overall well-being."

On the other hand, Sec. Luistro lauded the project and said the Department of Education (DepEd) could contribute in the translation of the book to the other Philippine languages used in the mother tongue-based education in the country.

To further expand its readership to other countries in the region, SEARCA could also contribute in the translation of the book into Bahasa Indonesia initially.

Sec. Luistro also shared some of DepEd's programs and activities in line with the Convergence Initiatives of the Philippine government. He encouraged those present at the book launch as well as the groups and networks that they represent to participate in the government's undertakings, particularly those under DepEd. (LLDDomingo)

## Agri, planning officers learn results-based monitoring, evaluation

The *Training on Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBME) for the Ridge to Reef Project* was conducted by SEARCA in coordination with WorldFish on 16-17 November 2012 at Dakak Park and Beach Resort in Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines. It was carried out as part of the capacity-building component of the Ridge to Reef Biodiversity Project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Twenty-one representatives from the agriculture and planning offices of the Provincial Government of Misamis Occidental and the seven local government units (LGUs) covered by the Ridge to Reef Project attended the training-workshop. The participating LGUs included Oroquieta City and the municipalities of Don Victoriano, Tudela, Sinacaban, Jimenez, Panaon, and Aloran.

The topics covered were "Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)," which included RBME and the logical framework, and "Data Collection, Processing and Analysis," including discussions on the various sources of data and differentiating primary from secondary data.

Through exercises on logframe analysis, the participants learned how to use the tools needed in assessing their projects on a regular basis. This will



The training participants perform an exercise on logframe analysis.

enable them to address concerns and problems in a timely and effective way and to validate if the desired outcomes and impacts of the Ridge to Reef Project are being achieved.

Each LGU developed a work plan on M&E, which will serve as their guide in assessing the Ridge to Reef project even after the project has ended.

The resource persons for the training were Dr. Merlyne M. Paunlagui and Prof. Nelson Jose Vincent B. Querijero, both faculty members at the College of Public Affairs of the University of the Philippines Los Baños. (CBBinondo)

## ACIAR-SEARCA study looks into Mindanao transport system bottlenecks

An Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)-funded SEARCA research on how transport issues affect the movement of vegetables from Mindanao will be completed in January 2013.

The *Transport Policy Study Promoting Efficiency and Productivity of Flow of Goods: A Focus on the Transportation Needs of Mindanao Region* being carried out by SEARCA is part of ACIAR's economic research on enhanced profitability of selected vegetable and fruit value chains in southern Philippines and Australia.

As the project nears its completion, the findings of the micro analysis that looked at the bottlenecks in the transport system (i.e., road and port networks) for the selected fruits and vegetables

have resulted in policy directions and development approaches that would provide greater incentives for Mindanao to improve the quantity and quality of its fruits and vegetables and to further expand its trade to meet the perceived growing market demand, within and outside the island.

Two publications are currently being prepared to disseminate the results of the study and these will be available for distribution to the public early next year.

Started in August 2010, the transport policy study analyzed the marketing flow of selected agricultural products and the factors that contribute to the trade-related problems facing the key players in the supply chain, particularly the high cost of transportation and logistics, as

they are influenced by government regulations and investment programs. Vegetables and fruits (e.g., tomato, lettuce, papaya) coming from Mindanao were covered in the study to focus on the importance of improving the transport infrastructure in Mindanao.

The study was conceptualized following the 2007 SEARCA-ACIAR workshop rural development initiatives and the Philippine policy environment: What is the real score?

During the workshop, transport and shipping services were identified as among the key factors affecting the marketing and trade of fruits and vegetables in Mindanao, known as the food basket of the Philippines. (KPQuillooy)

### Climate change links/ from page 2

Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and Asian Development Bank (ADB), among others.

Aside from APAN, other sponsors of the conference were the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and Food Security Center (FSC) of the University of Hohenheim, Germany; Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research

(APN), EEPSEA, and German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)-Philippines through the Climate Change Commission (CCC) under the Office of the President of the Philippines. (EGPandanan)

## ADB taps SEARCA for green growth project in Phl river basin

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has commissioned SEARCA to conduct a project on climate resilience and green growth in the Marikina River Basin, Philippines.

The project is titled *Technical Assistance 8111 PH: Climate Resilience and Green Growth in the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL): Demonstrating the Eco-town Framework (46225-001)*. It covers a 26,126-hectare watershed area that has the Marikina River as its main waterway, flowing southwest through the Rizal province toward Laguna Lake.

The project aims to demonstrate the eco-town framework in the UMRBPL and strengthen the capacity of local government units (LGUs) to mainstream green, climate resilient growth options in development planning.

SEARCA will implement the project from 19 November 2012 to 19 November 2014, with ERGONS Project Marketing Consultants as



The project contract was signed by Mr. Anders Pettersson (seated, left), ADB Senior Procurement Specialist and Chief Negotiator for the Director, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (seated, second from right) SEARCA Director, on 25 October 2012 at the ADB headquarters in Pasig City. Also on hand were Mr. Srinivisan Ancha (seated, second from left), ADB Principal Climate Change Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, and Ms. Teresita Pascual (right), ERGONS Managing Director, who both signed the contract as witnesses, as well as (standing, from left) Ms. Imelda L. Batangatang, Program Associate, and Dr. Lope B. Santos III, Program Specialist and Officer in Charge, both of SEARCA's Project Development and Management Department; and Mr. Alexis Lapiz, Senior Research Specialist, and Ms. Maria Lovella Segayo, Development Management Officer IV, both of CCC.

associate. The Center will also coordinate closely with the Philippines Climate Change Commission (CCC), the project's implementing agency as well as with the participating LGUs of Antipolo City and the municipalities of Baras, Rodriguez, San Mateo, and Tanay, all in the province of Rizal.

Major activities of the project include full socio-economic profiling at the UMRBPL, climate modeling and risk assessment, greenhouse gas

(GHG) inventory, and production of geographic information system (GIS) maps.

The wealth of information and experience that the project will generate will be captured and shared through knowledge products on stakeholder perceptions on green growth and climate resilience, GHG inventory at the LGU level, green growth road map development, ecosystems valuation, and demonstration of the eco-town framework. (NLDeLeon)

## Phl local gov't units consulted on adaptation options to flooding

SEARCA is looking into adaptation options to flooding in Laguna, Philippines and the economics of these options in the Philippine component of the project "Building Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change in Southeast Asia".

Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada through the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA), the three-year project launched in January 2011 aims to build capacity for research, planning, and action with respect to climate change adaptation in three Southeast Asian Countries: Cambodia, Philippines, and Vietnam. The Philippine component comprises 12 towns of Laguna, including Sta. Cruz, the provincial capital.

In December 2012, the project team—composed of University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Professors Emilinda Mendoza, Jaimie Kim Bayani, and Vicente Ballaran—along with Dr. Herminia Francisco, EEPSEA Director, and Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, SEARCA's Acting Program Head for Research and Development, met with officials of the Laguna Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator's Office (PPDO) and the Sta. Cruz Mayor's Office to discuss the alternatives and cost-benefit analysis. One of the options discussed was relocation of residents of severely flooded areas.

Mr. Valentine Guidote, Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator, said that multi-purpose buildings and public schools were used as evacuation centers when there are floods. He stressed, however, that

construction of permanent structures and the continuous use of public schools as evacuation centers were not the ideal courses of action.

Mr. Guidote added the provincial government is considering a road-dike system around Laguna Lake that will alleviate, if not solve, the problems of flooding, potable water availability, and traffic congestion. Though the road dike project is deemed to be of huge potential, it will cost billions of pesos to build. It has also never been subjected to a cost-benefit analysis.

In the meeting with Sta. Cruz Mayor Domingo Panganiban and the Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator Rosaly Gutierrez, the project team learned that the local government is considering the purchase of land on which to build a multi-purpose evacuation center. The mayor's office has been working with the barangay chairpersons on these plans and fund generation.

The meetings were capped by visits to two barangays severely affected by flooding in Sta. Cruz and a relocation site occupied by 67 families displaced by floods caused by typhoons Santi and Ondoy in 2009.

One of the submerged barangays visited had developed floating toilets to cope with the long-standing flood.

Residents of the other barangay cited the conversion of their basketball court into an evacuation center as their "band-aid" solution in case of another flooding event. On the other hand, the barangay chairman said they are considering a barangay ordinance on the preferred housing materials and construction design of new houses to reduce damages caused by floods. (BMBurgos)



## Snapshots



Mr. Christian Merer (top row, second from left), Counsellor, introduced to SEARCA Ms. Helene Delille (top row, second from right), Scientific Attaché; and Ms. Camille Dulor (top row, right most), Attaché for Higher Education and Academic Exchange, both new officials of the French Embassy in Manila, during a visit on 1 October 2012. They were received by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (leftmost), SEARCA Director; Dr. Editha C. Cedicol (bottom row, rightmost), Program Head for Graduate Scholarship; Dr. Bessie M. Burgos (bottom row, second from left), Acting Program Head for Research and Development; and Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz (not in photo), Program Head for Knowledge Management. They also discussed the sandwich program for two Filipino graduate students who are conducting a portion of their thesis research at the French Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD) in Montpellier, France from October to December 2012 as well as other possible collaborations with French institutions.



Dr. Gilles Saint-Martin (rightmost), Regional Director for South-East Insular Asia Agreenium of the French Agricultural Research Center for International Development, visited SEARCA on 28 November 2012 to discuss prospects for collaborations, including a possible memorandum of understanding for institutional cooperation between SEARCA and Agreenium, the French national consortium for agricultural research and education. He was received by (from left) Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz Program Head for Knowledge Management; Ms. Nancy L. de Leon, Program Specialist, Project Development and Management; Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Acting Program Head for Research and Development; and Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Program Head for Graduate Scholarship.



Dr. William G. Padolina (standing), SEARCA Senior Fellow and External Reviewer, presented the results of the Mid-term Program Review of SEARCA's Ninth Five-Year Plan to the SEARCA Director, Program Heads, Unit Heads, and three key senior staff on 1 October 2012.





SEARCA scholars pose with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (seventh from right) during the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Loyalty Day Parade held on 10 October 2012 on the UPLB campus. With them in the SEARCA contingent are SEARCA officers and staff members.



Dr. Hendra Yusran Siri (right), recipient of the 2012 SEARCA-Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) Training Scholarship in Environmental Leadership for Southeast Asia, with fellow Beahrs ELP alumni (from left) Dr. Saguiguit (ELP 2001), and Ms. Carmen Nyhria G. Rogel (ELP 2002), Program Specialist, Research and Development, during his visit to SEARCA on 7 December 2012. While at SEARCA, he gave a seminar on "The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF): An Initiative for a Sustainable Future." Dr. Hendra is the Vice Coordinator of the CTI-CFF Interim Regional Secretariat of the CTI-CFF based in Jakarta, Indonesia.



Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas (leftmost), SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration, met with the new SEARCA scholars during an orientation meeting for new SEARCA Scholars on 5 December 2012 at SEARCA. The orientation was given by Dr. Editha C. Cedicol (bottom row, rightmost), SEARCA Program Head for Graduate Scholarship.



Dr. Saguiguit (left), presents some SEARCA publications to Dr. Yutsai Huang, Director, Food and Fertilizer Technology Center (FFTC) for the Asian and Pacific Region, who visited SEARCA on 23 November 2012. With him was Mr. Ronald G. Mangubat, FFTC Information Officer. They were given a briefing on SEARCA's programs and activities. Possible areas of collaboration were also explored during the meeting.



The SEARCA delegation, composed of Dr. Saguiguit (fifth from right), and Dr. Cardenas (fourth from right), and Ms. Adoracion T. Robles (rightmost), Executive Coordinator, join with fellow Filipino delegates to the 35th SEAMEO High Officials Meeting (HOM) held on 27-30 November at the Grand Millennium Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand for a photo with the Filipino recipients (7th and 8th from right) of the SEAMEO-Japan Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Award 2012. Others in the photo are Dr. Jesus C. Fernandez (third from left), Deputy Director for Programme and Marketing, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Tropical Biology; Dr. Ramon C. Bacani (fourth from left), Director, SEAMEO Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology (INNOTECH); Hon. Jesus Lorenzo R. Mateo (fifth from left), Assistant Secretary for Planning, and Hon. Alberto T. Muyot (sixth from left), Undersecretary for Legal Affairs, both of the Philippine Department of Education.

## UPM-SEARCA graduate scholarship project launched

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and SEARCA formally signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on a three-year joint graduate scholarship project that will benefit nationals of Southeast Asia starting school year 2012-2013.

The signing ceremony was held on 19 November 2012 at the UPM School of Graduate Studies in Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia in conjunction with the 25th University Consortium Executive Board Meeting on 19-20 November 2012, which was hosted by UPM.

Signatories to the MOA are Prof. Dato' Ir. Dr. Mohd Saleh Jaafar, UPM Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director.

The project will provide one matching UPM-SEARCA scholarship for every one full scholarship from SEARCA for qualified nationals from the 11 member countries of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) who will pursue their master's or PhD programs at UPM. The 11 SEAMEO member countries are Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam.

Prof. Jaafar expressed UPM's appreciation for a new mode of cooperation that will increase the number of beneficiaries among agricultural human resources in Southeast Asia while strengthening the link between UPM and SEARCA.



Prof. Dato' Ir. Dr. Mohd Saleh Jaafar (second from left) UPM Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (second from right), SEARCA Director, shake hands after signing the Memorandum of Agreement on the UPM-SEARCA graduate scholarship project while Dr. Bujang Kim Huat (right), Dean of UPM School of Graduate Studies, and Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, SEARCA Program Head for Graduate Scholarship, look on.

According to Dr. Saguiguit, SEARCA views this new collaboration as an important building block to strengthen institutional ties with UPM, which has been one of the study posts of SEARCA scholars since the early 1980s and is highly regarded as one of the leading academic institutions for the agricultural sciences in Southeast Asia.

Moreover, Dr. Saguiguit said he hopes that the continuing ties will evolve into a higher plane including joint research and development activities, scientific forums, and conferences on emerging development issues in agriculture; knowledge management; and academic exchange programs not only with SEARCA but also with the members of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources. (JSLaranas)

## Sandwich program supports 2 UPLB students' research in France

Through SEARCA's Sandwich Program, two Filipino graduate students of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) obtained additional support to conduct their graduate research at the *Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement* (CIRAD) in Montpellier, France from October to December 2012.

The students are Mr. Bryan Rey R. Oliveros (MS in microbiology), Instructor at UPLB's Food Science Cluster, and Ms. Ana Liza C. Lopez (PhD in plant pathology), Assistant Professor at the Jose Rizal Memorial State College in Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines.

Both received funding support from the French Embassy in the Philippines through the Filipino-French Scientific Cooperation Programme



BRYAN REY R. OLIVEROS



ANA LIZA C. LOPEZ

(FFSC), a newly launched program that aims to foster cooperation activities between Filipino and French universities and institutions.

Mr. Oliveros will conduct his research "Use of aqueous ozone as wash-water additive for sanitizing organic produce," at CIRAD's Integrated Food Quality System Department (UMR Qualisud) under the guidance of Ms. Marie Noelle Ducamp-Collin.

On the other hand, Ms. Lopez, will be stationed at CIRAD's Biology and Genetics of Plant-Pathogen Interactions for Integrated Protection Department (UMR BGPI). She will be trained on the molecular techniques needed to study the genetic structure of the fungi *Magnaporthe oryzae*. Dr. Didier Tharreau, UMR BGPI Senior Scientist, will supervise her training and corresponding research.

Under SEARCA's sandwich program, qualified scholars can spend a portion of their graduate research outside their home university under the supervision of a counterpart adviser. As a relatively new program, SEARCA's sandwich program has supported four graduate students to date. (JSLaranas)



## University Consortium to implement more projects in 2013

The executive board of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) conducted its 25<sup>th</sup> meeting on 19-20 November 2012. With the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) as host, the gathering was held at the School of Graduate Studies headed by Prof. Dr. Bujang Kim Huat, Dean and concurrently UPM's coordinator for the UC.



Participants of the 25<sup>th</sup> University Consortium Executive Board Meeting held on 19-20 November 2012 at Universiti Putra Malaysia in Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia.

Prof. Dató Ir. Dr. Mohd. Saleh Jaafar, UPM Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, welcomed the participants representing Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) and Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), both in Indonesia; Kasetsart University (KU), Thailand; University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Tokyo University of Agriculture (TUA), Japan; UPM; and SEARCA.

A high point of the opening ceremony was the signing of a memorandum of agreement between SEARCA and UPM for a three-year joint graduate scholarship project to begin in school year 2012-2013.

In his speech, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, underscored that such alliance “can bolster the collective effort to promote agricultural and rural development in our part of the world.”

In view of the new joint project, Dr. Saguiguit said he hopes that “continuing ties will evolve into a higher plane including joint research and development undertakings, scientific fora and conferences on emerging development issues in agriculture, knowledge management, and student and staff exchange programs not only with our Center but also with the member universities of the University Consortium.”

Highlights of the meeting include the agreement among UC members to develop double degree programs, the possibility of an annual conference

back-to-back with the UC annual executive board meeting, and the development of an umbrella research framework on food security by the UC. The UC Executive Board also discussed ways of revitalizing the UC. It also reviewed the guidelines for accepting new members, including the new category of affiliate members.

The next executive board meeting is tentatively set on 19-21 November 2013 to be hosted by KU.

Participants of the meeting were Dr. Somsakdi Tabtimthong and Dr. Poonpipope Kasemsap, both of KU; Dr. Yoichi Sakata and Dr. Hironobu Shiwachi, both of TUA; Dr. Nastiti Kusumorini and Dr. Alinda Fitriani M. Zain, both of IPB; Dr. Masyhuri of UGM; Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, Dr. Oscar B. Zamora, and Dr. Jose V. Camacho, Jr., all of UPLB; Dr. Bujang Kim Huat of UPM; and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. and Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, both of SEARCA.

The UC was established in September 1989 through SEARCA's initiatives as a response to the growing demand for graduate education across agricultural disciplines and related field. UC's Executive Board is the policymaking body of the consortium. It is responsible for setting directions, developing new policies and program, and generating resources to support and promote UC activities focused on promoting education and research collaboration among the UC members. (JSLaranas)

## EXPERTS consortium reviews progress, sustainability of network initiatives

Representatives of the EXPERTS Consortium met in Bogor, Indonesia for the EXPERTS I and II Meetings and EXPERTS III Kick-off Meeting on 29 October-1 November 2012.

EXPERTS is short for “Exchange by Promoting Quality Education, Research, and Training in South and Southeast Asia,” a European Union (EU)-funded project that aims to enhance the capacity for international cooperation among its participating countries in South and Southeast Asia (SSEA) and to exchange knowledge and ideas among the Asian and European partners.

The emphasis of the EXPERTS project is on research and cooperation, establishing

collaborative framework for human resource development through training in engineering and technology, agricultural sciences, environmental studies, business management, and social sciences for junior faculty staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, and postdoctoral researchers. The intent is to provide students from SSEA regions with a broader range of opportunities for study and research in European institutions.

The participants discussed the mobility program, administrative concerns, and promotion and visibility of the EXPERTS project. Possibilities for regional cooperation with other consortia were also discussed. They also identified other avenues

for collaboration and strategies for sustainability of the network activities. IPB was designated as the Joint Coordinator of the EXPERTS project that will work closely with the Coordinator at the University of Goettingen.

As one of the seven associate partners of the EXPERTS consortium, SEARCA was represented by Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Program Head for Graduate Scholarship, in the meetings.

The series of EXPERTS meetings were organized by the University of Göttingen, Germany together with Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) as host institution. (ECCedicol)

# ALUMNI NOTES

## SOTHEA HEADS CAMBODIA'S RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



PHEAK SOTHEA

Dr. Pheak Sothea has been appointed as Director of the Department of Rural Economic Development under the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Cambodia.

The Department of Rural Economic Development is responsible for the preparation of the Ministry's short-, medium- and long-term rural economic development plans; development of banking schemes that promotes the creation village banks and rice banks; and advocacy for the creation of small and medium enterprises as well as handicraft centers in rural areas.

Prior to his appointment, Dr. Sothea served as Deputy Inspector and Member of Ministerial Office of MRD. He obtained his master's and PhD in Community Development from the University of the Philippines Los Baños in 2006 and 2010, respectively, under the SEARCA Graduate Scholarship Program. (JSLaranas)

## UPLB HONORS 3 SEARCA ALUMNI



SAMUEL T. MANCEBO

Three more SEARCA alumni joined the roster of University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) graduates who were recognized for their exceptional contribution to their respective fields of expertise and nation-building.



RUSTY A. ABANTO

Dr. Rusty A. Abanto (PhD, environmental science, 2010), Filipino, was recognized for his Institutional Service (Education Sector) by the College of Forestry and Natural Resources. He is currently Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Camarines Norte State College, Philippines.



KAMOLRAT INTARATAT

Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat (PhD, development communication, 1997), Thai, was named as the 2012 College of Development Communication Distinguished Alumnus in Development Communication and Outreach. She currently heads the Research Center for Communication and Development Knowledge Management, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University and concurrently serves as chair of the volunteer organization Asia Pacific Telecentre Network (APTNet), both based in Thailand.

Dr. Samuel T. Mancebo (PhD, agricultural education, 1979), Filipino, was awarded as Distinguished Alumnus for Agricultural Education and Management of the College of Agriculture. He is a retired professor of UPLB College of Public Affairs and Adviser of the SEARCA Fellows Association of the Philippines.

The awards were given on 9 October 2012 at the Alumni Fellowship and Awards Night, one of the highlights of UPLB's 94<sup>th</sup> foundation day.

Dr. Abanto and Dr. Kamolrat were recipients of the SEARCA-German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholarships. (JSLaranas)

## BUOT NAMED UP SCIENTIST I A NEW

Dr. Inocencio E. Buot, Jr. (MS, botany, 1987), was once again appointed UP Scientist I (2012-2014) by the University of the Philippines (UP) through its Scientific Productivity System. He is a Professor of Ecology and Botany at UP Los Baños and UP Open University (UPOU) as well as Dean of the UPOU Faculty of Management and Development Studies.



Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz (right), Chancellor, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), congratulates Dr. Inocencio E. Buot, Jr. (center) for receiving the title of UP Scientist I, which was conferred by UP President Alfredo E. Pascual (left) on 18 December 2012.

Established in 2005, the UP Scientific Productivity System recognizes the best and most deserving faculty members and researchers with doctoral degrees to encourage research and publication in international journals. UP Scientists are evaluated every three years and must remain productive within the system's standards to maintain the title or must surpass themselves to qualify for a higher title.

UP President Alfredo E. Pascual presented the award in a ceremony held on 18 December 2012 at the UP Diliman campus. The title of UP Scientist I comes with a fixed monetary award of P96,000 annually.

Dr. Buot was recognized for his noteworthy contributions in international journals that include the *American Journal of Environmental Science*, the National Taiwan University's *Taiwania*, *Journal of Environmental Science and Management (JESAM)*, *Philippine Journal of Systematic Biology*, *Kasetsart University Faculty of Fisheries Research Journal*, and *Asia Life Sciences*.

"I am so thankful to SEARCA for giving me the chance to grow professionally. Back in 1984, I was given the SEARCA scholarship to pursue Master of Science in Botany, specializing in Developmental and Systematic Plant Anatomy with cognate in Mycology. It was a big boost to my profession and career," shared Dr. Buot.

He obtained his PhD in Ecology from Chiba University, Japan in 1998. He returned to Japan in 2003-2004 to conduct his postdoctoral research on landscape ecology at the Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute in Fushimi, Kyoto.

Dr. Buot's contribution to local biodiversity and conservation was recognized when a plant species was named after him by Dr. Dale Kloppenburg, a world renowned American botanist. The *Hoya buotii* was discovered in the Philippine Sierra Madre mountain range. (JSLaranas)

## 11 SEARCA ALUMNI JOIN GLOBAL CONFAB ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Eleven SEARCA graduate alumni were among some 150 researchers, academics, policymakers and planners, development workers, and other professionals from as far as Fiji Islands, Germany, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Japan and Southeast Asia who attended the *International Conference on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Food and Environmental Security* at SEARCA on 21-22 November 2012.

SEARCA alumni who delivered paper presentations and the title of their papers were:



OUTHAI SOUKHY

- Dr. Outhai Soukhy (PhD, community development, 2010), Deputy Director, Northern Agriculture and Forestry College, Lao PDR; "The Implications of Climate Change on the Livelihood of Small-scale Farmers in Lao PDR"



- Dr. Gay D. Defiesta (PhD, agricultural economics, 2012), Assistant Professor, University of the Philippines (UP) Visayas; “Adaptive Capacity and Adaptation to Climate Change and Variability of Farming Households of Dumangas, Iloilo, Philippines”



GAY D. DEFIESTA

- Mr. Agostinho da Costa Ximenes (MS, agronomy, 2010), National Consultant for Food Security, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Timor-Leste; “Measuring the Impact of La Niña on Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste”



AGUSTINHO DA COSTA XIMENES

Meanwhile, two SEARCA alumni were among the 12 poster paper presenters. The alumni and their poster papers are:

- Ms. Sasanti Widiarsih (MS, plant breeding, 2009), Researcher, Center for Application of Isotopes and Radiation Technology, National Nuclear Energy Agency, Indonesia; “Climate Change Impacts on the Annual Production Pattern of Indonesian *Jatropha* Lines in a Five-year Term”
- Dr. Nathaniel R. Alibuyog (PhD, agricultural engineering, 2007), Director for Research, Mariano Marcos State University, Philippines; “Predicting the Hydrologic Response of the Laoag River Basin to Climate Change Using SWAT Model”

Other SEARCA alumni who attended the conference were: Mr. Charlie B. Batin (MS, forestry, 2010), Dr. Judith B. Borja (MS, applied nutrition, 1991), Dr. Floro V. Dalapag (MS, agronomy, 1984), Mr. Mario Morais (MS animal science, 2012), and Dr. Emma M. Sabado (PhD, entomology, 1996). (See page 1 for related story) (JSLaranas)

## MYANMAR COOPERATIVES OPTIMISTIC ON GROWTH

The open-market economic system in Myanmar has provided a lot of opportunities for its cooperatives, making this sector a key in the country’s socioeconomic development.

Myanmar’s cooperatives are also moving towards fostering the welfare of society with the guidance of the Ministry of Cooperatives and the Central Cooperative Society Limited (CCS), among others.



MAY YEE KAY KHINE SEINE

These were revealed by May Yee Kay Khine Seine, Deputy Planning Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and a SEARCA PhD scholar, at the *International Conference on “Cooperative Enterprises: Key to Sustainable Economic and Social Progress* held at SEARCA on 9 November 2012. The international conference was organized by the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and co-sponsored by SEARCA.

Currently pursuing her PhD in agricultural economics at UPLB, Seine gave the conference participants a brief history of Myanmar’s cooperative societies, which can be traced back to the earliest movements founded in 1904.

Historical milestones she talked about included the Cooperative Societies Act of 1970, which gave the government power to control and monitor cooperatives in the country following socialist principles. As the country moved to a more liberal system, the cooperative law was revised accordingly. The Cooperative Society Law of 1992 gave birth to CCS, which is now considered the apex organization of Myanmar’s cooperative movement.

Siene explained that CCS, a nongovernment organization, is now considered a strong partner of cooperatives in promoting and strengthening their social and economic enterprises, including the development of international collaborations.

At present, the Myanmar government supports different types of cooperatives, with the credit cooperatives playing the most significant role in micro-financing for social development. This has encouraged more and more entrepreneurs and traders to join the movement which now has approximately 400,000 members. (JSLaranas)

## FARMER COOPERATIVES BOOST VIETNAM’S LYCHEE INDUSTRY

The establishment of farmer cooperatives in Bac Giang pushed lychee farmers to adopt the Vietnamese Good Agricultural Practice (VietGAP) as a strategy to maintain an upward trend in the country’s lychee export production.



LE THI THANH LOAN

This was disclosed by Le Thi Thanh Loan, a faculty member of Hanoi Agricultural University, at the *International Conference on*

*Cooperative Enterprises: Key to Sustainable Economic and Social Progress* held at SEARCA on 9 November 2012.

Her paper presentation at the conference was based on her thesis research on the competitiveness of Vietnam’s lychee industry and good agricultural practice (GAP) in Bac Giang province, which she conducted as part of her MS program at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) under scholarship from SEARCA.

“Bac Giang is the largest lychee-producing province in the country, having exported about 69,565 tons of lychee to China, Taiwan, Russia, and other countries in 2011 with a total export value of 890 billion VND (US\$42 M),” Ms. Loan said.

She added that Vietnam is now considered as one of the world’s top five lychee producing countries after China, India, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Contributing significantly to lychee’s export industry in the country are two Bac Giang farmer cooperatives: Trai Moi in Giap Son commune and Kim Thach in Thanh Hai commune, both in Luc Ngan district.

Loan said since these cooperatives were established in 2011, they have been empowering the lychee farmers in the province to achieve production targets through efficient and environmentally sustainable practices. Their activities include organizing seminars and group discussions for farmers to ensure that they adopt sustainable practices of growing and harvesting lychee. These initiatives helped farmer-members obtain the VietGAP certificate, which enables them to sell their produce in domestic supermarkets and even in the export market.

VietGAP consists of 12 practices covering four components, including food safety; environmental management; workers’ health, safety, and welfare; and production quality. It was introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and was applied in the lychee industry with Bac Giang as the pilot area.

After participating in the international conference on cooperatives, Loan also presented the status and prospects of Vietnam’s lychee industry at the 2012 International Society for Southeast Asian Agricultural Sciences (ISSAAS) Symposium and Congress held on 15 November 2012 at Bicol University in Legaspi City, Albay, Philippines. Her participation in both conferences was made possible through a travel grant from SEARCA. (JSLaranas)

## Benchmarking visits organized to build KM capacity of Phil gov't agri research department

Three communications specialists of the Philippine Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) traveled to Europe to attend an international conference in Spain and undertake benchmarking visits to two international development institutions based in Italy.

Ms. Julia Lapitan, Officer in Charge, Applied Communications Division (ACD), along with Ms. Rita dela Cruz and Mr. Patrick Raymund Lesaca, both also of ACD, embarked on the institutional

visits. SEARCA organized the institutional visits as part of its *Capacity Building Program on Knowledge Management (KM)* project, which aims to strengthen national capacities of agricultural and fisheries information stakeholders on KM with emphasis on knowledge capture, sharing and reuse, and knowledge products design and development.

They attended the *4th International Conference on Knowledge Management and Information Sharing (KMIS)* on 4-5 October in Barcelona, Spain.

They then proceeded to Rome, Italy to meet with the communications group and KM experts at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on 9-10 October to learn the best KM practices and success stories.

Lessons learned from the institutional visits will be essential inputs and bases in designing a capacity development program that is specific and suited to the KM Capacity Development Program for the Philippine agriculture and fishery research and development (R&D) sector. (LLDDomingo with reports from RTCruz and PRAlesaca of DA-BAR)

## USAID Ridge to Reef project conducts goat production training for stakeholders

Sixty-five members of various people's organizations in Misamis Occidental, Philippines benefitted from two runs of a *Training on Goat Production and Management* jointly conducted by SEARCA and Worldfish under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Ridge to Reef Biodiversity Project.



Mr. Gregorio Saljay III, goat-raiser and owner of Saljay Integrated Farm, shows the training participants how to administer an anthelmintic drug to eliminate parasites in goats.

The training activities were conducted on 27 September 2012 in Sinacaban and on 28 September 2012 in Oroquieta City.

Participants were selected members of people's organizations that include the Lakatan Growers' Association in Don Victoriano; Gumbil Women's Association

in Tudela; Barangay Sinonoc Environmental Program Association, Inc. in Sinacaban; Sibaroc Women's Association in Jimenez; Dolipos Bajo Farmer's Association in Oroquieta City; Aloran Farmers and Fishermen Association in Aloran; and Panaon Grower's Association in Panaon.



Mr. Cayetano Pomares (rightmost), animal science expert, talks about the key identifying features of the different breeds of goat.



Participants learn how to mix feed rations for goats.

The five-module training course introduced the participants to different concepts and techniques in goat production and management. Topics discussed were farm structures and construction, animal feeding and nutrition, reproductive management and breeding, prevention and cure of common livestock diseases, and general husbandry practices. Hands-on activities in a goat farm complemented the lectures.

Dr. Cayetano Pomares, Professor of Animal Science, University of Southern Mindanao (USM) in Kabacan, North Cotabato, served as the resource person. He was assisted by Mr. Joel Sumangue, laboratory aide, and Mr. Gregorio Saljay III, a goat farmer and owner of the Saljay Integrated Farm in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato.

The training was part of the livelihood enhancement component of the Ridge to Reef Project, which aims to provide alternative or supplemental livelihoods to low-income fishers and farmers in the project sites in Misamis Occidental. Options identified by the project include resource-based livelihoods (e. g., mariculture, aquaculture, poultry/livestock production) and food processing enterprises. (CBBinondo)



## Agricultural HRD challenges tackled in Tokyo int'l symposium

Challenges to agricultural human resource development were tackled during the *International Symposium on Human Resource Development in Agricultural Science: Towards Fostering Japanese Researchers to Play an Active Role in International Agricultural Research* held on 9 November 2012 in Tokyo, Japan.

Organized by the International Cooperation Center for Agricultural Education (ICCAE) based in Nagoya University, Japan, the symposium was attended by professors and key officials from Japanese agricultural universities, as well as representatives from the Ministries of Education and Agriculture, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS), Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Japan Intellectual Support Network for Agricultural Science (JISNAS), and the private sector. The symposium was part of project on the same theme by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

Dr. Akira Yamauchi, ICCAE Director and Professor at Nagoya University Graduate School of Bio-Agricultural Sciences, expressed the need for Japanese universities to beef up efforts in internationalizing education and enhancing capacities of Japanese graduates and young scientists/

researchers so they can compete for technical jobs and research management at the international level. It was the general observation that most Japanese graduates of agriculture are technical specialists and are very good at doing research.

Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, SEARCA Program Head for Graduate Scholarship, spoke on "Enhancing Human Resource Capacities in International Agricultural Research: Lessons and Options for Young Japanese Researchers."

The other speakers and panelists were from JIRCAS, JICA, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Kyushu University, Katagi Foods Co. Ltd., and ICCAE.

Challenges to agricultural HRD that were highlighted during the symposium include aging agriculture research/scientific and academic staff; high staff turnover; wide age and qualifications gap in the succession hierarchy; low budget for research and training activities; outdated curricula not addressing agricultural HRD needs of the times; outmoded research and academic facilities; agriculture as a profession is not attractive to students; and agriculture graduates are not well-equipped with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to compete globally.

The review of curriculum, training and conferences, study tours, academic mobility, mobilization of alumni, and short-term attachments in projects such as SEARCA's institutional development assistance projects with Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Myanmar were some options presented by Dr. Cedicol at the symposium.

On the other hand, the Japanese representatives noted the need to forge alliances with other networks and strategic partners as well as to put more funds in collaborative research projects. (ECCedicol)



Dr. Editha C. Cedicol (rightmost), SEARCA Program Head for Graduate Scholarship, was among the speakers and panelists at the international symposium.

## SEARCA joins meeting of Asian national productivity organizations

SEARCA was represented in the *53rd Workshop Meeting of Heads of National Productivity Organizations (NPOs)* by Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Acting Program Head for Research and Development. The high-level meeting was convened by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) on 23-25 October 2012 in Bali, Indonesia.

Dr. Burgos was one of three observers at the meeting attended by 37 NPO and agriculture delegates and 19 advisers representing APO member economies who discussed specific activities to advance the productivity movement in the region. The other two observers were from Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC).

In his opening address, Mr. Abdul Wahab Bangkona, APO Director for Indonesia and Director General of Training and Productivity Development, noted that the event had "observers coming from several countries and

organizations outside the APO. It will create a better atmosphere to expand our cooperation not only among APO members but also with other countries and organizations outside the APO."

Dr. Burgos remarked that it was of "utmost importance to SEARCA and the APO to understand each other's priorities and work programs for the purpose of identifying specific areas for collaboration intended to benefit the countries and region we commonly serve."

Mr. Baeti Molake, BNPC Executive Director, said he hoped to learn from NPOs methods and approaches that would enable the BNPC to move in the direction of becoming an independent body that will serve and facilitate the productivity movement of his country.

The meeting's main agenda were to reconfirm the APO Program Plan for 2013-2014, prioritize the policy statements from APO Directors at the 2012 Governing Body Meeting, review the current center of excellence and proposals for a new one, and review the proposed new public-sector productivity framework. (LLDDomingo with reports from *APO News*, Nov-Dec 2012)

## Experts, key players attend forum on inclusive agribusiness dev't in Asia

Eighteen representatives of key service providers in agribusiness development, including policy and strategy think-tanks, Ministries of Agriculture, and key private sector partners in Asia as well as United Nations (UN) agencies and bilateral donors convened at the *FAO Outreach Event on Institutional Support for Inclusive Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development in Asia* held on 6-7 November 2012 in Dusit Thani Manila, Philippines.

The outreach event is a supplementary activity of FAO's cross-regional appraisals and country case studies on the following topics: (1) worldwide appraisal of organizational arrangements used by Ministries of Agriculture, including cross-ministerial and programmatic mechanisms to support agribusiness and agro-industries development; (2) investigation into the use of public-private partnerships for agribusiness development; and (3) support for the development of small and medium agro-enterprises.

Jointly organized by SEARCA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN - Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division (FAO-AGS), the event provided the participants with an overview of the global and regional findings from the said appraisals. It facilitated a learning exchange wherein participating organizations were able to share their views and experiences on various agribusiness-related topics during panel and plenary sessions.

At the opening of the forum, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director said SEARCA welcomes this opportunity to partner with FAO in bringing together key stakeholders from the region involved in agribusiness and agro-industry development.



Panelists for the discussion on opportunities and priorities for partnering were (from left) Dr. Tran Cong Thang of Vietnam's Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development; Dr. Rolandy T. Dy of the Philippine Center for Food and Agribusiness, University of Asia and the Pacific; and Ms. Emmalyn V. Orpiano of the Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Terminal, Inc.



Dr. Ronnie S. Natwidjaja (standing, left), Director, Center for Agrifood Policy and Agribusiness Studies (CAPAS), Padjadjaran University, Indonesia, presents the key findings of the country case study of Indonesia.

"We have been looking forward to this event especially since we were the implementing agency of an FAO-funded study, titled *Appraisal of Institutional Mandates for Agribusiness Support in Asia*. This study, together with two other cross-regional appraisals of FAO-AGS on Public-Private Partnerships and on Small and Medium Agro-enterprise Development, provides the backdrop for our workshop," he said.

Dr. Saguiguit expressed optimism that the event "will serve as building blocks for an enabling environment that will favor our individual countries to actively participate and compete in the regional market, hence, promoting economic development in the region."

Ms. Eva Gálvez Nogales, Agribusiness Economist, and Dr. Marlo Rankin, Agribusiness Consultant, both of the FAO-AGS, served as facilitators. They also presented the FAO global and regional findings of the FAO appraisals.

The presenters and panelists included representatives from the FAO-AGS and various institutions from five Southeast Asian countries. Indonesian Center for Agriculture Socioeconomic and Policy Studies (ICASEPS) and Center for Agrifood Policy and Agribusiness Studies (CAPAS), Padjadjaran University, Indonesia; Institute of Agricultural and Food Policy Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia; Philippines Center for Food and Agribusiness, University of Asia and the Pacific, Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Terminal, Incorporated (NVAT), and Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development, Inc. Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI), all in the Philippines; Thailand Development Research Institute; and Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD), Vietnam. (KJSVillagrancia)



Participants and organizers of the *FAO Outreach Event on Institutional Support for Inclusive Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development in Asia* held on 6-7 November 2012 in Manila, Philippines.



EVA GÁLVEZ NOGALES



MARLO RANKIN