

# The SEARCA DIARY



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FOR GRADUATE STUDY AND RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURE

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Photo by: Ngo Dinh Hoa

## FROM FARM TO FORK

People are becoming more and more interested in how their food is produced. Agritourism gives them the chance to meet farmers and processors and learn about food production; it also helps diversify livelihoods of rural communities and develop local economies.

## First Philippine Agritourism Research Conference held

Over 60 participants from government, the academe, nongovernment organizations, and the private sector attended the *First National Agritourism Research Conference in the Philippines* held on 27-29 June 2012 at SEARCA, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines.

Jointly organized by SEARCA and the Tourism Foundation, Inc. of the University of the Philippines-Asian Institute of Tourism (UP-AIT), the conference had the theme "Strengthening Agriculture-Tourism Linkages through Research".

"Agriculture and all its wonderful trappings when properly and uniquely packaged can help attract tourists to the country and visitors to the countryside. The two bring value added to each other," said Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, in his welcome remarks read by Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla, SEARCA Manager for Research and Development.

"Diversification of agriculture through partnering with tourism can be one of the promising agents of change this country needs," said Dr. Segfredo R. Serrano, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, Research and Development, and

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The participants, organizers, and guests of the First National Agritourism Research Conference in the Philippines.

Regulations of the Department of Agriculture, Philippines and SEARCA graduate alumnus, in his keynote address during the opening program.

Noting that agriculture and tourism are currently “mutually exclusive,” Dr. Saguiguit urged the development of agritourism research to find out what “products, activities, services, and attributes are attractive to foreign and local visitors as well as identify gaps and policy needs” for the industry.

The conference focused on the current status of agritourism research and development (R&D) in the Philippines with 19 paper presentations in parallel sessions on Agritourism Education, Practices, and Strategies; Agritourism Business Development/Financing Strategies and Marketing; Partnerships and Collaborations in Agritourism Ventures; and Policy and Regulatory Concerns of Agritourism/Certification/Sustainability Challenges.

Presentations on agritourism development in Indonesia and Thailand were made during plenary sessions. The lectures were delivered by Dr. Budi Gunturo, Associate Professor, Department of Animal Science and Industry, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia and Dr. Weerapon Thongma,

Associate Professor and Dean of the School of Tourism Development, Maejo University, Thailand. Both speakers are SEARCA graduate alumni.

The conference also featured a visit to the Costales Nature Farm, an agritourism destination in Majayjay, Laguna. The orientation and guided tour enabled the participants to gain appreciation of such an agritourism venture—from its establishment to its current full-blown commercial operations—as a family-owned, organic-only farm that not only produces certified organic plant and animal products, but also conducts seminars and farm tours. (LLDDomingo)



Dr. Segredo R. Serrano, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, Research and Development, and Regulations, Department of Agriculture, Philippines, delivers the keynote address during the opening program.



A tour guide at Costales Nature Farm in Majayjay, Laguna, Philippines explains to conference participants how earthworms are cared for in vermiculture during their agritour on 28 June 2012.

## THE SEARCA DIARY

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Conference participants observe native boar bred in captivity at the Costales Nature Farm during their agritour on 28 June 2012.

## SEARCA awards graduate scholarships to 20 Southeast Asians

In its continuous pursuit to produce high quality human resources in agriculture in Southeast Asia, SEARCA awarded 20 scholarship grants to Southeast Asian nationals from eight countries, namely: Cambodia (3), Indonesia (2), Lao PDR (5), Myanmar (3), the Philippines (2), Thailand (2), Timor-Leste (1), and Vietnam (2).

Fourteen of these scholars are enrolled in master's programs while six are pursuing PhD programs.

Of the 20 new scholars, 15 are studying at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); two at Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand (2); and two at Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) and one at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), both in Indonesia.

Three of the new scholars are funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the rest by SEARCA. The new scholars, their institutional affiliation, study post, and degree program are:

### CAMBODIA

- Mr. Chim Chay, Royal University of Agriculture (UPLB/PhD, food science)

- Ms. Ong Socheath, Royal University of Agriculture (UPLB/MS, plant pathology)
- Mr. Sambo Pheap, Royal University of Agriculture (UPLB/MS, soil science)

### INDONESIA

- Ms. Fatimah, Pt Greenfields Indonesia (IPB/PhD, animal nutrition and feed sciences)
- Ms. Tika Tresnawati, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Tropical Biology (IPB/MS, communication of rural and agricultural development)

### LAO PDR

- Mr. Nouansisavad Sombounsack, Savannakhet University (UPLB/MS, animal science)
- Mr. Bounxou Xayxana, Northern Agriculture and Forestry College (UPLB/MS, community development)
- Mr. Kolakanh Chanthavongsa, Department of Agriculture and Forestry (UPLB/MS, community development)
- Mr. Phansamay Inphomma, Agriculture and Forestry Office of Khamkeut District (UPLB/MS, community development)
- Mr. Somphong Chanthavong, Savannakhet University (UPLB/PhD, environmental science)

### MYANMAR

- Ms. Than Htwe, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (UPLB/MS, agronomy)
- Mr. Kyaw Min Htut, Myanma Agriculture Service (UPLB/PhD, entomology)

- Mr. Myo Win Maung, Myanma Agriculture Service (UPLB/MS, environmental science)

### PHILIPPINES

- Ms. Ma. Theresa R. Sawit, Philippine Rice Research Institute (UPLB/MS, community development)
- Mr. Ulderico B. Alviola, Visayas State University (UPLB/MS, development communication)

### THAILAND

- Ms. Pimnapa Khunpilueg, Chiang Mai Field Crops Research Center (KU/PhD, agronomy)
- Ms. Chanlinee Somthawin, Department of Agricultural Extension (UPLB/MS, extension education)

### TIMOR-LESTE

- Mr. Antonio Joao Da Costa, Universidade Nacional Timor Lorasa'e (UGM/PhD, agricultural science)

### VIETNAM

- Ms. Tran Hoai Thao Trang, Hanoi University of Agriculture (KU/MS, agricultural and resources economics)
- Mr. Hoang Ha Anh, Nong Lam University (UPLB/MS, environmental science)

Of these new scholars, 18 began their graduate programs in the first semester of school year 2012/2013, while the rest will begin in the second semester of the same school year. (JSLaranas)

## SEARCA leads initiative to upgrade Yezin Agricultural University

SEARCA will prepare and propose an Institutional Development Plan to strengthen the Yezin Agricultural University (YAU), Myanmar's only agricultural university, to improve its capacity to play a major role in the country's agricultural and rural development.

The Plan would include a review and recommendations to improve YAU's curriculum and course offerings to attune it to the needs of Myanmar agriculture, including the public and private sectors. Necessarily, it would also include efforts aimed at faculty/staff and program development. SEARCA's inputs will be concentrated on capacity building through human resource development, a field the Center is known for throughout the region. Other development agencies and organizations are expected to respond to the need for equipment, facilities/infrastructure, and campus improvement. SEARCA's Plan will be the "umbrella" and a useful guide in rationalizing and synchronizing such contributions and inputs.

A reconnaissance team led by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, visited YAU on 22-24 May 2012 to obtain a situationer and assess the current development needs of the university. The other team members were Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco, Professor and former Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and SEARCA Institutional Development Consultant; Dr. Rogelio V. Cuyno, Professor and former Chancellor of UP Mindanao; Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, SEARCA Manager for Graduate Scholarship; and Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, SEARCA Manager for Project Development and Management.



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit (inset), SEARCA Director, explains the purpose of the reconnaissance visit during a meeting with officials of Yezin Agricultural University (YAU) led by Dr. Tin Htut (leftmost, front row), YAU Rector.



Dr. Saguiguit (left) presents a token to Director General Hla Kyaw of the Department of Agricultural Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, who is also the newly appointed Country Representative of Myanmar to the SEARCA Governing Board, during the courtesy call paid by the SEARCA reconnaissance team on 24 May 2012 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

## SEARCA implements IDRC upland agriculture fellowships project

The International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada has tapped SEARCA to implement a project entitled “Southeast Asian Uplands Agriculture Fellowships” from 2012 to 2016.

The capacity-building project aims “to strengthen knowledge and skills of professionals in agriculture and food security in the uplands of Southeast Asia who can be catalysts for developing sustainable programs in the uplands and who could assist in smallholder management in upland communities that are generally vulnerable to food insecurity.”

Aside from administering and managing 33 master’s scholarships to be awarded to nationals of Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam, SEARCA will also organize annual conferences and workshops to deepen the understanding and facilitate innovative thinking on current issues and concerns of food security in the uplands of the three countries. Publication of theses/research outputs is also part of the project.

Dr. Annie Wesley, IDRC Senior Program Specialist, discussed the project with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, and other Center officers during her visit to SEARCA on 27 April 2012. She was also given an orientation on SEARCA’s various programs, projects, and activities.



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (second from left), SEARCA Director, gives Dr. Annie Wesley (rightmost) an overview of SEARCA, including the programs and activities under its Ninth Five-Year Plan (2009-2014), while Dr. Editha C. Cedicol (leftmost), Manager for Graduate Scholarship, and Dr. Bessie M. Burgos (foreground), Manager for Project Development and Management, look on.

SEARCA officers present at the meeting were Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba, Deputy Director for Administration; Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager for Graduate Scholarship and concurrently Project Leader, Southeast Asian Uplands Agriculture Fellowships; Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla, Manager for Research and Development; Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Manager for Project Development; and Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay, Head of the Knowledge Resources Unit.

## Regional executive forum tackles science-to-policy convergence for water and food security

Eight Asian countries were represented by 23 government executives and planners, scientists, experts, and practitioners in SEARCA’s *Sixth Executive Forum on Natural Resource Management (NRM): Water and Food in a Changing Environment* held at the Center’s headquarters on 11-13 April 2012.

The forum was organized by SEARCA together with the University of Hohenheim Food Security Center, Germany and the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), Japan.

“It was so designed to create a venue to discuss some of today’s key concerns, such as: How do we climate proof agriculture? What strategies should we prioritize to meet food security needs in the face of a changing climate? How do we prioritize water use to ensure both food security needs and the continued resilience of natural resources to the changing environment,” Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, said in his remarks during the opening program.

The forum’s emphases were on science and advocacy, knowledge transfer and mainstreaming, and science-to-policy convergence for environment, efficient water, and food production. As such, the resource persons focused their presentations on three sub-themes, namely: “Current Knowledge on Global Environment Change (GEC) Issues and Its Implications on



The participants and organizers of SEARCA’s Sixth Executive Forum on Natural Resource Management: *Water and Food in a Changing Environment*.

Water Management for Food Production,” “Climate Risk Management Strategies towards Water-efficient Food Production,” and “Water-efficient Food Production in Climate-based Local Planning and Management.”

It intended to create a greater awareness on current experiences and application of knowledge, with emphasis on the roles of science and scientific communities, in developing strategies to reduce climate-related risks on food availability in a changing environment.

National and local executives from Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the

Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam were sensitized on global environmental change (GEC) issues and challenges. This was intended to enable them to facilitate the mainstreaming of proactive policies that support green growth and adopt science-based program and development strategies.

The forum also engaged the participants—all of whom are actively involved in sustainable agriculture and rural development, NRM, and climate risk management—in reflection, dialogue, and exchange of knowledge and experiences on the impacts of change environment on water, food, and ecology as input to science-based

## ASEAN taps SEARCA to implement REDD+ project

Mitigation efforts under a new international agreement on climate change are expected to include the REDD Plus mechanism (“Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation”, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries).

In helping advance the REDD+ initiative in the Southeast Asian region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has commissioned SEARCA to implement the ASEAN-Australian Development Cooperation Program Phase II (AADCP II)-funded project entitled “Strengthening ASEAN Mechanisms for Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD Plus)”.

The project aims to enhance ASEAN’s ability to coordinate efforts for REDD+ at the regional and international levels to address the issue of climate change and its impacts in ASEAN Member States (AMS).

SEARCA is expected to support the achievement of this objective by providing technical leadership in designing a feasible, scalable and cost-effective guidelines for measuring, reporting, and verification (MRV) and establishing reference emission levels and/or reference levels (REL/RL) as key entry requirements for REDD+ programs in the AMS.

To achieve the project’s goals, SEARCA is tasked to deliver a paper identifying methodological approaches and future technical assistance needs for effective REDD+ implementation in the region, and the guidelines for MRV system development and REL establishment; a paper outlining incentive schemes and support available for REDD+ implementation for AMS; a report on collaborative research and future activities to promote REDD+ in the region; and a Policy Brief on REDD+ in the ASEAN region.



Dr. Guillermo A. Mendoza (rightmost), REDD+ Expert, presents the principles, approaches, and proposed methodologies to be used in the REDD+ project at the project inception meeting held at the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) in Jakarta, Indonesia on 20 April 2012. Others in the photo are (clockwise from bottom left) Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, SEARCA Manager for Project Development and Management; Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; Dr. Nur Masripatin, Director, Centre for Standardization and Environment, Ministry of Forestry, Indonesia; Ms. Pouchamarn Wongsanga and Ms. Amalia Agustina Mimbar, both of ASEC; and Ms. Catherine Frances J. Corpuz and Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt, both of the Australian Development Cooperation Program Phase II.

The SEARCA team led by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director and Project Director; Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Manager for Project Development and Management; Dr. Guillermo A. Mendoza, REDD+ Specialist and Project Consultant; and Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay, Head of Knowledge Resources Unit and Project Coordinator, attended the inception meeting at the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) in Jakarta on 20 April 2012 to present and discuss the principles, approaches, and proposed methodologies for the implementation of the project.

Also present at the inception meeting were Dr. Nur Masripatin, Director, Centre for Standardization and Environment, Ministry of Forestry, Indonesia; Ms. Pouchamarn Wongsanga, Senior Officer, and Ms. Amalia Agustina Mimbar, both of the Agriculture Industries and Natural Resources Division, ASEC; and Ms. Catherine Frances J. Corpuz, Senior Program Officer, and Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt, Senior Economist, both of AADCP II. (MVTicsay)

### Regional executive/ from page 4

policy formulation for climate-proof, safe, and water-efficient food production.

The roster of esteemed resource speakers includes Dr. Ryohei Kada, Professor, RIHN and Yokohama National University, Japan; Dr. Damasa B. Magcale-Macandog, Professor and Director, Institute of Biological Sciences, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Dr. Rodel D. Lasco, Philippine Program Coordinator, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF); Dr. Ashutosh Sarker, Research Fellow, Monash University Sunway Campus, Malaysia; Engr. Samuel M. Contreras, Division Head and Agricultural Engineer, Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Philippines; Dr. Bam H.N. Razafindrabe, Associate Professor, Faculty of Agriculture, Ryukyu University, Japan; Dr. Flaviana D. Hilario, Acting Deputy Administrator for R&D, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA); Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, Professor and Chancellor, UPLB; Dr. Juan M. Pulhin, Professor and Dean, UPLB College of Forestry and Natural Resources; Mr.



Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, SEARCA Manager for Knowledge Management, introduces the participants during the opening program.

To Quang Toan, Deputy Head of Training and International Coordination Department, Southern Institute of Water Resources Research, Vietnam; Hon. Ronaldo B. Golez, Municipal Mayor of Dumangas, Iloilo, Philippines; and Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Manager for Project Development and Management, SEARCA.

Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, Manager for Knowledge Management, and Ms. Julienne V.



Dr. Rogelio N. Concepcion, Adjunct Professor, UPLB School of Environmental Science and Management and Technical Coordinator of the forum, gives an overview of the three-day forum.

Bariuan, Training Specialist, both of SEARCA, worked closely with Dr. Rogelio N. Concepcion, Adjunct Professor, UPLB School of Environmental Science and Management, and Dr. Gina P. Nilo, Chief of the Laboratory Services Division, Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Philippines, in organizing the executive forum. (LLDDomingo)

## 26 Asians attend training on impact assessment and poverty alleviation

SEARCA conducted the *Training on Impact Assessment and Poverty Alleviation: Focus on Technology and Capacity Development* on 15-17 May 2012.

Fourth in a series of courses on impact assessment and poverty alleviation, the training was held at SEARCA and attended by 26 researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. They were from universities (14), ministries of agriculture (8) and agricultural research centers (4).

Dr. Lisa Grace S. Bersales, Vice President for Planning and Finance and Professor of Statistics, University of the Philippines Diliman, served as the training's technical coordinator and resource person. Dr. Dennis S. Mapa, Associate Professor and Director of Research, UP School of Statistics, also served as resource person.

### Need for impact assessment

It has long been a concern that for research and development to be deemed successful, it should bring about meaningful and visible change in the lives of the marginalized. Conducting sound impact assessment will help researchers measure and evaluate change in the well-being of individuals after the implementation of a development program.

"So much money is being spent in the name of poverty alleviation and development. We need to guarantee that such activities (development programs) are making the right impact," said Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, in his remarks read by Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, SEARCA's Manager for Knowledge Management, during the training's opening program.

### Course design

The ultimate aim of the training course was to help make an impact on the governance of development projects leading towards poverty reduction and food security. As an appreciation course, it was designed to equip participants with knowledge on how to design impact assessment studies for R&D programs that focused on poverty alleviation.

Dr. Bersales' lectures focused on the overview and methods used in impact assessment. She gave an overview of what an impact assessment is; how important it is in conducting development programs, researches, and activities; and how different it is from project evaluation and monitoring.

Asian researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners join training on impact assessment and poverty alleviation organized by SEARCA.



She said an impact assessment is a more comprehensive appraisal of a development project to determine if it achieved its intended goals. She added that it can estimate the magnitude of effects and assign causality.

Quantitative and qualitative methods used in impact assessments were presented, including selecting assessment indicators for measuring poverty. Experimental designs and methods of data collection were also tackled.

On the other hand, Dr. Mapa presented illustrations of statistical models commonly used in impact assessments, with emphasis on the use of propensity score matching and econometric models.

### Training outcome

Prior to the course, the participants were required to choose a development program or project— which may be ongoing, completed, or yet to begin— on which they would apply the knowledge gained from the lectures and discussions to craft their own impact assessment designs. Owing to time constraints, only selected participants were able to present their outputs, most of which dealt with uplifting the lives of the poor through agricultural programs.

One of the participants, Mr. Garyzalde L. Durna, Agricultural Technologist, Department of Agriculture, Philippines, said the information they acquired from the training would be of great help in his line of work. He explained, however, that the conduct of impact assessments will depend on the funding they will acquire for their development projects. He said usually, if the project is locally funded, an impact assessment is not viable. Nevertheless, Mr. Durna said he sees the importance of conducting such assessments, particularly in the agricultural sector.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Saguiguit shared that there is a plan to convene a conference or forum for knowledge sharing on impact assessment practices.

There is also a plan to break up the course into two parts wherein the appreciation course will be done online, while more detailed discussions of tools used in impact assessment will be done face-to-face.

The impact assessment training course was offered in 2004, 2005, and 2008 and each tackled impact assessment in the context of good governance and policymaking for poverty alleviation. (DAMDomingo)

## Learning events for Philippine DA executives, technical staff conducted

From May to June 2012, SEARCA conducted several training courses on various topics for executives and technical staff of the Philippine Department of Agriculture.

### Economic analysis for policymaking

Thirty-two senior and middle-level DA managers and technical staff participated in a "Training on Economic Analysis for Policy Formulation" held on 1-3 June at SEARCA. Jointly conducted by SEARCA and the UPecon Foundation, Inc., the training was the first of a series of Learning Modules in Economics for Agricultural Development to be conducted under the "DA Umbrella Capacity Development Program on Strategic Management and Policy for Agriculture Professionals and Executives" implemented



Dr. Alexander G. Flor, Professor of Information and Communication Studies at the UP Open University and SEARCA KM Consultant, jumpstarted the training workshop by leveling-off KM concepts, tools, and applications.



The first module was presented by high-caliber resource persons including the newly-appointed Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and Director-General of the National Economic Development Authority Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan (standing), who is a SEARCA graduate alumnus and former SEARCA Director.

by SEARCA. Each module consists of lectures, hands-on exercises, group work, and ample opportunities for interaction among resource persons and participants.

held at the Waterfront Insular Hotel in Davao City, Philippines on 21-25 May. The training was jointly organized by SEARCA and the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR).

For the DA Umbrella Capacity Development Program, SEARCA collaborates with the Ateneo School of Government, University of Asia and the Pacific School of Management, and UPecon Foundation, all based in the Philippines.

In his welcome remarks delivered by Mr. Lope B. Santos III, SEARCA Project Development Specialist, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, emphasized the significance of enhancing the skills in project proposal writing and packaging as a management tool for both project planners and managers. He also encouraged the participants to take advantage of the opportunity given to them and learn as much

### Project design

Project development for agriculture was taken a notch higher for the 24 participants of the *Training on Project Design Cycle and Proposal Writing*

[Learning events/ to page 15](#)

## Phil local gov't units participate in climate change adaptation training and forum

SEARCA conducted a *Training Course on Economic Analysis of Adaptation Options for Local Government Units (LGUs)* on 16-18 April 2012 back-to-back with an *Information Dissemination Forum for Selected Municipalities in the Province of Laguna, Philippines* held on 18 April 2012 in Bayview Park Hotel, Manila, Philippines.

The two events were held under the auspices of the Philippine component of a three-year project entitled "Building Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change for Selected Southeast Asia Countries," which is implemented by SEARCA. The project is funded by the Economy Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA) of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada.

### Analyzing climate change adaptation options

The two-and-a-half-day training course was attended by 23 representatives from the Laguna Provincial Planning and Development Office, Department of Environment and Natural Resources offices, and LGUs in seven of the 12 municipalities of Laguna that are involved in the project. Their participation was fully funded by the project.

The participants were given lectures on the following topics: process of screening adaptation options for economic analysis, introduction to

economic valuation methods, cost-effectiveness analysis, benefit-cost analysis, and multi-criteria analysis. They also participated in focus group discussions, case studies, and hands-on exercises.

The resource persons are from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). They are Dr. Asa Jose U. Sajise, Associate Professor, and Prof. Jaimie Kim B. Arias, Assistant Professor, both of the Department of Economics, College of Economics and Management; Prof. Maria Emilinda T. Mendoza, Assistant Professor, College of Human Ecology; and Ms. Rowena A. Dorado, University Researcher, National Institute of Microbiology and Biotechnology.

The Philippine component of the EEPSEA-funded project is implemented by SEARCA's Research and Development Department.

### Forum on vulnerability analysis

The results of the Vulnerability Analysis of Selected Municipalities in Laguna conducted by the project were discussed in an information dissemination forum held in the afternoon of April 18 immediately after the training. The forum was attended by representatives of the 12 Laguna municipalities involved in the project.

Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla, SEARCA Manager for Research and Development, gave a brief overview of the project and results of data gathered for GIS and Mapping, Economic Analysis, and Social and Gender Analysis were

[Phil local gov't/ to page 10](#)

## Snapshots



H. E. Bill Tweddell (second from right), Ambassador of Australia to the Philippines, was warmly welcomed by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (leftmost), SEARCA Director, during his recent visit to the Center. He was accompanied by his spouse, Mrs. Chris Tweddell (rightmost), and Ms. Cecilia O. Honrado (second from left) and Ms. Mara P. Faylon (not in photo), Country Manager and Assistant Country Manager for the Philippines, respectively, of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), a long-time partner of SEARCA in many land conservation and Landcare projects in the country. Dr. Saguiguit gave the Ambassador an overview of SEARCA's programs and activities as well as collaborations in research, scholarships, and other academic programs between SEARCA and Australian institutions.



Mr. Robert Le Blanc (center), an evaluator commissioned by the European Union (EU) Mission, visited SEARCA on 16 April 2012. Dr. Saguiguit (right) and Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay (left), Head of SEARCA's Knowledge Resources Unit, welcomed him and briefed him about the Center. Mr. Le Blanc interviewed the SEARCA officers regarding the Center's collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) as part of the evaluation of ACB.



Dr. Oscar B. Zamora (leftmost), Vice Chancellor for Instruction of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and Project Leader of the Institutional Development Assistance to Savannakhet University (SKU), and Country Representative of Lao PDR to the SEARCA Governing Board (GB) and concurrent Chair of the SEARCA GB, presents the proposed institutional development framework to address the lack of qualified teaching staff and other areas of operations to (clockwise from right) Dr. Sitha Khemmarath, SKU Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Saguiguit; Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco, SEARCA Institutional Development Consultant and former UPLB Chancellor; and Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, SEARCA Manager for Graduate Scholarship. The meeting was held at SEARCA on 26 April 2012.



Twelve Bangladesh nationals visited SEARCA on 30 May 2012 for a briefing on the Center's programs and activities. Their visit was part of the International Study Tour on Technology Transfer in the Livestock Sector coordinated by Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (DMMMSU). Photo shows Mr. Lope B. Santos (leftmost, standing), Project Development Specialist at SEARCA's Project Development and Management Department, responds to questions during the open forum. The Bangladeshi guests were accompanied by four DMMMSU training staff.





Ms. Nova A. Ramos (third from right), Training Specialist, Knowledge Management Department-Training Unit, participated in the 5th APEAEN International Conference on "Enriching Agricultural Learning Process towards Sustainable Food Security" held on 21-24 May 2012 in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand under SEARCA's Staff Development Program. Photo shows the Philippine contingent to the conference, two of whom are SEARCA alumni, namely: Dr. Aladino L. Leccio (rightmost), Vice President for Administration and Finance, Capiz State University; and Dr. Josefina T. Dizon (fourth from right), Professor at the College of Public Affairs, University of the Philippines Los Baños. They were joined by a Thai SEARCA scholar, Mr. Stanan Phanapaipong (leftmost), and Dr. Wilaiwun Intarachaimas (second from left), a Thai SEARCA alumna.



Ms. Mina G. Talatala, Records and Archives Assistant, participated in the National Heritage: Preservation and Dissemination - CONSAL XV General Conference held on 28 May-1 June 2012 at the Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel, Bali, Indonesia. Her participation was also supported by SEARCA's Staff Development Program.



SEARCA donated new publications and used furniture to the Laguna State Polytechnic University (LSPU) based in Laguna, Philippines on 21 May 2012. Photo shows LSPU representatives led by Ms. Phyllis Murton (fourth from right), US Peace Corps Volunteer at LSPU, holding the donated reading materials together with SEARCA officers and staff, namely: Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay (third from right), Head, Knowledge Resources Unit; Mr. Ricardo A. Menorca (second from right), Head, General Services Unit; Ms. Mina G. Talatala (rightmost), Records and Archives Assistant; and Mr. Angelito Menguito (second from left), Property Custodian.



The SEAMEO Regional Training Centre (RETRAC) hosted the visit of Ms. Elma M. Banzuela (right), Purchasing Assistant, and Mr. Angelito R. Menguito (left), Property and Supply Assistant, both of the SEARCA General Services Unit, on 25-29 June 2012. Traveling under SEARCA's Staff Development Program, they were oriented about RETRAC's procurement, purchasing, and property/supplies inventory and management systems.



Dr. Peter Hayman (third from right), Principal Scientist, Climate Applications, South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), visited SEARCA on 29 May 2012 to meet with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (third from left), SEARCA Director; Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla (leftmost), Manager for Research and Development; and Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz (second from left), Manager for Knowledge Management, to discuss and identify issues and knowledge gaps in addressing the adverse effects of climate change on smallholder livelihoods, which is part of Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)-Philippines study on the potential for a new project on managing climate risks for smallholders in the Visayas and Mindanao regions. SARDI was commissioned by ACIAR-Philippines to conduct the study in consultation with various Philippine stakeholders. Dr. Hayman was accompanied by Ms. Cecilia O. Honrado (second from right), Country Manager, and Mr. Russell M. Manuba (rightmost), both of ACIAR-Philippines.

## SEAMEO Council President lauds SEARCA's programs



H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong, Minister of Education of Brunei Darussalam, and concurrently President of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Council, delivers his message during his visit to SEARCA on 21 June 2012.

H.E. Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Education of Brunei Darussalam and concurrently President of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Council, visited SEARCA on 21 June 2012.

In his address, he commended SEARCA for its graduate scholarship, research and development, and knowledge management programs to promote agricultural and rural development in the region.

"I am very impressed with the oldest center of SEAMEO... by the programs undertaken by SEARCA in helping rural communities, which I think is something we can emulate," said H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar.

"In the years to come, I believe SEAMEO will bring even more immense significance to the region and even beyond by being the leading organization in human resource development," he said.

He also spoke on the ways in which SEAMEO centers could be further enhanced, optimized, and continuously meet regional and international trends and standards. He said SEAMEO centers should always learn from each other.

"SEARCA, being the oldest [SEAMEO] center, could help young centers by collaborating [with them] in capacity building and other areas of expertise," H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar said.

Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, 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. Pehin Abu Bakar an overview of the Center, its current programs and activities under its Ninth Five-Year Plan, and its accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2011-2012.

"In current times, save for a few countries, agriculture is still the backbone of economies of Southeast Asian countries. In fact, in the light of escalating food prices and, at times, scarcity

brought about by host of factors, agriculture is indeed staging a comeback and SEARCA, through its programs and activities especially on capacity building, is helping catalyze agricultural and rural development so that our member countries can cope with the changing times," Dr. Saguiguit said.

H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar was accompanied by high officials of Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Education, among them, Mr. Haji Mahrub bin Haji Murni, Permanent Secretary Core Education; Mr. Mohammad Ariffin bin Matusin, Education Officer; Mrs. Pengiran Zarinah Pengiran Haji Salleh, International Officer; as well as Mr. Shahrul Anaz Ismail, Charge d' Affaires, Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in the Philippines; Mr. Denis Ho Mun Tai, Director of Polytechnic Brunei and Country Representative of Brunei Darussalam to the SEARCA Governing Board; and Dr. Witaya Jeradechakul, SEAMEO Secretariat Director. His delegation also included Mr. Pengiran Shaiffadzillah Pengiran Omarali and Mr. Sharil Teo. They were accompanied by Ms. Aileen L. Ong of the International Cooperation Office, and Mr. Myron D. Talosig, Liaison Officer, both of the Department of Education, Philippines. (LLDDomingo)



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (rightmost), SEARCA Director, shares the Center's current efforts to provide institutional development assistance to Savannakhet University in Lao PDR, Royal University of Agriculture in Cambodia, and Yezin Agricultural University in Myanmar with H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong (second from right), Mr. Denis Ho Mun Tai (leftmost), Director of Polytechnic Brunei and Country Representative of Brunei Darussalam to the SEARCA Governing Board; and Dr. Witaya Jeradechakul (second from left), SEAMEO Secretariat Director, during their visit to SEARCA on 21 June 2012.

### Phl local gov't/ from page 7

presented by the study component leaders, namely: Prof. Vicente G. Ballaran, Jr. of UPLB-CEM, Prof. Arias, and Prof. Mendoza, respectively. The data were gathered through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and household and community surveys.

The study revealed that 59 of the 197 barangays covered by the study are considered highly sensitive to hazards. On the other hand, 135 barangays are perceived to have low adaptive capacity. Indicators showed that most of the coastal and lowland barangays are vulnerable to typhoons and floods.

Results also showed that households engaged in the agriculture sector are highly vulnerable as their key source of income is affected by the constant inundation of farms, which lowers harvests, cause animal deaths, and

destroys fish pens and other infrastructures. The study also found that a high percentage of the vulnerable households do not have knowledge about climate change.

The LGU representatives were very eager to understand how the project team was able to come up with the results, from the sampling design to the software used by the mapping team. They requested for a copy of the research report to help them analyze the condition of their respective municipalities in terms of vulnerability.

At the end of the forum, Dr. Sombilla expressed gratitude to the LGU representatives and asked for their continued cooperation, participation, and assistance over the remaining two years of the project. (HSMaigaya)

## Indonesian Minister of National Dev't Planning visits SEARCA



H.E. Prof. Dr. Armida S. Alisjahbana (fourth from left), Minister of National Development Planning, Indonesia, visited SEARCA together with Mr. Wismana Adi Suryabrata (second from left), Deputy Minister for Development Funding Affairs; Mr. Dewo Broto Joko Putranto (rightmost), Director for Multilateral Foreign Financing; Ms. Renata (fourth from right) and Mr. Mada Dahana (not in photo), both staff, all of the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), Indonesia; and Dr. Zaenal Arifin (leftmost), Minister Counsellor, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia. With them in the photo are Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (third from left), SEARCA Director; Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz (second from right), Manager for Knowledge Management; and Dr. Bessie M. Burgos (third from right), Manager for Project Development and Management.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Armida S. Alisjahbana, Minister of National Development Planning and Head of the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), Indonesia, visited SEARCA on 4 May 2012. BAPPENAS is the government of Indonesia's national planning body responsible for coordinating and preparing the country's National Development Plan.

Her Excellency's entourage was received by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, and SEARCA Department Managers. Dr. Saguiguit led the briefing on SEARCA's programs and activities, particularly those conducted in Indonesia.

Minister Armida talked about the current focus on food security and elaborated on the problem of overfishing around Java, which is home to more than half of Indonesia's population. She expressed interest in a marine culture program that would ease the pressure on the natural coastal resources as a source of food.

Dr. Saguiguit informed her that SEARCA had implemented a European Union-funded project on Focused-Food Production Assistance to Vulnerable Sectors, which included a component on marine culture. He added that the WorldFish Center Regional Director for Southeast Asia

is based at SEARCA where the WorldFish Center-Philippines has its offices. He said that with the Center's experience and its proximity to the WorldFish Center, SEARCA may be able to assist BAPPENAS in developing a project proposal on marine culture for selected areas in Indonesia.

On the other hand, Mr. Dewo Broto Joko Putranto, Director for Multilateral Foreign Financing, BAPPENAS, said that his institution is now developing its knowledge management program and broached the possibility of cooperating with SEARCA for training activities to support this initiative. (LLDDomingo)

### SEARCA leads/ from page 3

Dr. Tin Htut, the YAU Rector who requested SEARCA's assistance, stressed the need for a medium- and long-term plan to support the development agenda of Myanmar's Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MOAI).

"SEARCA is trying to assist YAU to effectively service the MOAI in implementing the Minister's Nine-Point Reform Agenda for agricultural development," Dr. Saguiguit explained to Director General Hla Kyaw of the Department of Agricultural Planning, MOAI and SEARCA's new Governing

Board member representing Myanmar during a courtesy call after the visit to YAU.

SEARCA's assistance to YAU is part of the Center's efforts to focus its capacity and institution building programs on the needs of strategic and young agricultural universities in member-countries of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). Similar initiatives involving Savannakhet University in Lao PDR and Royal University of Agriculture in Cambodia are also underway. (LLDDomingo)

## 28 SEARCA scholars complete graduate programs

Twenty-eight SEARCA scholars under the Center's full graduate scholarship (20) and PhD research scholarship (8) obtained their MS (13) and PhD (15) degrees as of 15 June 2012.

The new graduates are nationals of Cambodia (1), Indonesia (2), Lao PDR (3), Myanmar (3), the Philippines (13), Thailand (3), Timor-Leste (2), and Vietnam (1).

Of the scholars under the full graduate scholarship, one scholar was able to complete his program at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Indonesia, two at Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand, one at the University of the Philippines Visayas (UPV), one at UP Diliman (UPD), and 15 at UP Los Baños. On the other hand, the PhD research scholars obtained their doctorates from UPLB (4), Central Luzon State University (CLSU) (3), and University of Hawai'i (UH) (1).

Of the 30 SEARCA scholars who graduated, seven (5 MS, 2 PhD) were supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Of the 19 scholars who graduated from UPLB, two scholars received the Academic Achievement Award, a recognition given to graduating students who garnered the highest academic average in their course. The awardees are Mr. Daud Samsudewa, PhD in animal science, and Mr. Arvin P. Vallesteros, PhD in forestry. Mr. Samsudewa also received the Leadership Award.

The new SEARCA alumni, the titles of their thesis/dissertation, their study posts and degree programs are as follows:

### CAMBODIA

- Mr. Tho Kim Eang, "Variations in Cultural, Morphological and Molecular Characteristics, and Aggressiveness of Different Isolates of *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* (Penz.) Penz. & Sacc., Causal Organism of Anthracnose on Mango (*Mangifera indica* L. cv. Carabao) in the Philippines" (UPLB/MS, plant pathology)

### INDONESIA

- Mr. Johan Setiawan, "Nature-based Tourism Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change: A Case Study in Tanjung Putting National Park" (UGM/MS, tourism planning)
- Mr. Daud Samsudewa, "Reproductive Behavior, Hematologic Picture, Testosterone, and Cortisol Profiles and Semen Quality of Male Timor Deer (*Cervus timorensis* Blainville) in Captivity" (UPLB/PhD, animal science)

### LAO PDR

- Mr. Vilaphone Kanyasone, "Genetic Characterization of Blast Disease Resistance in Rice Varieties from Laos" (KU/MS, agronomy)
- Mr. Bouakham Tia Sisongkham, "Land Cover Changes and Resource Use Patterns of Selected Communities in Phou Phanang National Protected Area, Sangthong District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR" (UPLB/MS, environmental science)
- Mr. Anongsack Chanthavong, "Household and Community Practices Level Towards Attaining Food Security in Long District, Luang Namtha Province, Lao PDR" (UPLB/MS, community development)

### MYANMAR

- Ms. Yin Yin Nwet, "Factors Affecting the Decision-making of Farmers and Traders on Rice Storage in Selected Areas of Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar" (UPLB/MS, agricultural economics)
- Ms. Amy Soe, "Irrigation and Its Impact on Farm Productivity and Income Distribution in Central Dry Zone Area, Myanmar" (UPLB/PhD, agricultural economics)



SEARCA scholars pose in front of the SEARCA building before they joined the 39th Commencement Exercises of the University of the Philippines Los Baños on 26 April 2012. They are (from left) Mr. Daud Samsudewa, Ms. Gay D. Defiesta, Ms. Le Thi Thanh Loan, Mr. Win Htein, Mr. Natalino Babo Martins, and Ms. Monica Rosario Da Costa Moreira.

- Mr. Win Htein, "Life Cycle Assessment of Tomato, Eggplant, Cucumber, and String Beans Production Systems in Nagcarlan, Laguna Province, Philippines" (UPLB/MS, environmental science)

### PHILIPPINES

- Ms. Mary Ann U. Baradi, "Aroma Loss in Rice as Affected by Different Conditions during Postproduction Operations" (UPLB/PhD, agricultural engineering)
  - Ms. Gay D. Defiesta, "Social Vulnerability and Willingness to Pay for Adaptation to Climate Change of Farmers in Dumangas, Iloilo" (UPLB/PhD, agricultural economics)
  - Mr. Rogelio L. Padit, "Asset-based Analysis of e-Extension Adoption among Rice Farmers in Selected Cyber Communities in the Philippines" (UPLB/PhD, extension education)
  - Mr. Robert A. Rodolfo, "Assessment of Indigenous Forest Management in Tulgao, Tinglayan, Kalinga, Philippines" (UPLB/PhD, forestry)
  - Ms. Hyde D. Nadela, "Physiologic Responses of Heat-Stressed Broiler Chickens (*Gallus gallus domesticus* L.) Subjected to Early Thermal Conditioning and Feed Restriction" (UPLB/PhD, animal science)
  - Ms. Sonnie A. Vedra, "Analysis of the Anthropogenic-Based Disturbances among the Indigenous Goby Population in Mandulog River System, Northern Mindanao, Philippines" (UPLB/PhD, environmental science)
  - Mr. Thomas L. Cardiente, "A Management System for Watershed Dominated by Spiked Pepper in Southern Mindanao, Philippines" (UPLB/PhD, forestry)
  - Mr. Arvin P. Vallesteros, "Integrating Information Technology and Local Knowledge to Detect and Measure Forest Degradation" (UPLB/PhD, forestry)
  - Mr. Eduardo F. Roquiño, "An Economic Valuation of Multifunctional Paddy Rice Farms in Leyte" (UPLB/MS, agricultural economics)
  - Ms. Alma C. Lisay, "Sea Cucumbers as Bioremediation Agent Against Waste Production in Milkfish Floating Cages" (UPV/MS, fisheries)
  - Mr. Rey B. Lara, "Vulnerability and Adaptation of the Agricultural Production Systems and Climate Change Impacts: Planning Implications for Food Security Formulation in Buhi, Camarines Sur" (UPD/MS, urban and regional planning)
  - Mr. Virgilio D. Viernes, Jr., "Gross Morphology and Histology of the Uterine Tubes of Matured Philippine Water Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis* Linn.)" (CLSU/PhD, animal science)
  - Ms. Majah Leah V. Ravago, "Sustainability Science for Public Policy: Lake Sedimentation, Forest Emissions, and the Generalized Resource Curse" (UH/PhD, environmental and resource economics)
- ### THAILAND
- Ms. Thiwaporn Phadung, "Relationship between carbohydrate, nitrogen content and flowering of 'Thong Dee' and 'Khao Nam Pheung' Pummelo" (KU/PhD, horticulture)

## Alumni Notes

### BALISACAN APPOINTED PHL SOCIOECONOMIC PLANNING SECRETARY



BALISACAN

SEARCA alumnus and former SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan (MS Agricultural Economics, UPLB 1982) was appointed as acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). Along with this appointment, Dr. Balisacan also chairs the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), and Philippine Center for Economic Development (PCED). He will serve as Vice-Chair of the NEDA Board, the Philippines' highest development planning and policy coordinating body chaired by the President.

A leading agricultural and development economist in the Southeast Asian region, Dr. Balisacan's expertise focused on poverty, inequality, agricultural and regional development, sustainable development, and political economy of policy reforms. He had served as SEARCA's Director for six years, from 2003 to 2009. Upon completing his SEARCA directorship, Dr. Balisacan returned to the academe as dean of the University of the Philippines School of Economics (UPSE) in Diliman, a position he held until his appointment to said cabinet post in May this year. (JSLaranas)

### KASIM APPOINTED INDONESIA DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE



KASIM

Prof. Dr. Musliar Kasim (PhD Agronomy UPLB 1991) was appointed by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as one of the Deputy Ministers of Education and Culture in October 2011. As part of the Second United Indonesian Cabinet, Dr. Kasim is in charge of the education component of the Ministry.

Prior to his appointment as Deputy Minister, Prof. Kasim served as Rector of Andalas University in West Sumatra Indonesia for more than six years. (JSLaranas)

### 3 FILIPINO ALUMNI AWARDED 2012 OUTSTANDING AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERS

Three SEARCA graduate alumni were among 2012 Outstanding Agricultural Engineers awarded by the Philippine Society of Agricultural Engineers (PSAE) at its 62<sup>nd</sup> annual convention held on 23-27 April 2012 in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines. The convention's theme this year was "Providing Broad-Based Agricultural Engineering Solutions to Attain Food Self-Sufficiency."

The alumni cited are:

- Dr. Leyma L. Cero (PhD Agricultural Engineering, UPLB 2000) as Outstanding Agricultural Engineer in Agricultural Engineering Education. She is the Management Information Systems Officer of the College of Engineering and Information Technology in Cavite State University (CvSU);
- Dr. Ruel M. Mojica (PhD Agricultural Engineering, UPLB 2009) as Outstanding Agricultural Engineer in Postharvest Technology and Food Engineering. He is also a faculty member of CvSU and the Officer-in-Charge of the National Coffee Research, Development and Extension Center in CvSU; and
- Engr. Andres M. Tuates Jr., (MS Agricultural Engineering, UPLB 2011) as Outstanding Agricultural Engineer in Agricultural Instrumentation and Control. He is Science Research Specialist at the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization, Department of Agriculture.

The Outstanding Agricultural Engineer award is given by PSAE annually to give due recognition to exceptional professionals who have significantly contributed to the advancement of the theory and practice of the Agricultural Engineering profession in the country. (JSLaranas)

### DOMINGO NAMED OUTSTANDING FACULTY AND VETERINARIAN

Dr. Clarissa Yvonne J. Domingo (Doctor of Public Health, UP Manila 2010),



DOMINGO

Associate Professor, College of Veterinary Science and Medicine, Central Luzon State University (CLSU), Philippines, garnered two awards this year. Having taught at CLSU for almost 29 years, she was recognized as 2012 Outstanding Faculty (Level II) in April 2012. Two months earlier, she was also awarded 2012 PVMA Outstanding Veterinarian in Education at the 79th Philippine Veterinary Medical Association (PVMA) Scientific Conference

and Annual Convention held at the L'Fisher Hotel, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, Philippines. This is the third year in a row that Dr. Domingo has received awards for her various achievements in veterinary research and education. (JSLaranas)

### KHEMMARATH GRACES UPLB RECOGNITION RITES

The proof of the pudding is in the eating – and what better way to affirm



KHEMMARATH

a successful career than to have your alma mater take notice of it. Dr. Sitha C. Khemmarath (MS Agricultural Engineering, UPLB 1995), Vice President for Academic Affairs, Savannakhet University, Lao PDR, was the guest speaker at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Graduate School Hooding Ceremonies in April 2012. He also gave an inspirational message to the graduates of the UPLB College of Agricultural Engineering

and Agro-industrial Technology (CEAT) at the CEAT Recognition Rites. Both events were held before the university's 39th Commencement Exercises. (JSLaranas)

## UC announces 2012 faculty, student grants

The SEARCA-initiated Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources, or the University Consortium (UC) has announced its faculty and student grants for 2012. These grants aim to expand the academic and research opportunities available to UC faculty members and graduate students.

The 2012 UC Faculty Grants offered are categorized into three: travel grant for research, travel grant for conference/seminar, and visiting professor program for teaching purposes.

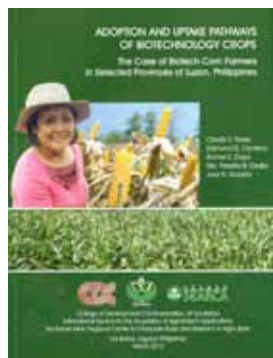
Similarly, the 2012 UC Student Grants available are of three categories: thesis grant, travel grant for research, and travel grant for credit program.

Application requirements and details on said grants and about the UC may be found online at [www.uc.searca.org](http://www.uc.searca.org).

The UC was launched in 1989 by SEARCA together with five founding members in Southeast Asia as a sustainable strategy to pursuing regional agricultural human resource development by linking top agricultural universities in the region to facilitate free exchange of information, facilities, and expertise. Today, the UC also includes reputable agricultural universities from Canada, Australia, Germany, and Japan. (JSLaranas)

# Off the Press: Book on adoption and uptake pathways of biotech crops

A study that looks into the influences, knowledge seeking, and knowledge sharing dynamics of Filipino farmers in adopting biotech crops was co-published by SEARCA, the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), and the University of the Philippines Los Baños-College of Development Communication (UPLB-CDC).



*Adoption and Uptake Pathways of Biotechnology Crops: The Case of Biotech Corn Farmers in Selected Provinces of Luzon, Philippines* is authored by Cleofe S. Torres, Edmund G. Centeno, Romel A. Daya, Ma. Teresita B. Osalla, and Juvy N. Gopela. It focuses on how farmers came to adopt biotech corn, the process they go through when they acquire and apply the knowledge and practices in cultivating biotech corn, and the dynamics in their experience sharing.

The study on which the book is based was conducted in Pangasinan, Isabela, and Cagayan, which are major corn producing provinces in the northern Philippines.

“Adoption” is defined as “how the farmers acquire and eventually apply the knowledge and practices pertaining to the planting of biotech crops.” On the other hand, “uptake pathway” is the “process that captures how the information and knowledge on biotech crops are introduced to or accessed, adopted, disseminated, and shared by the farmers to others.”

Economic consideration was a major factor found to influence farmers in adopting biotech corn. In particular, the farmers’ reasons for adoption included the following: having fool-proof assurance of high yield and better income; influence of fellow farmers and relatives who are already adopting the technology; and their desire to prevent corn borer infestation in their farms when the adjacent plantations become pest-resistant biotech corn farms.

The study explained that there were some “late adopters” because of lack of capital and, for some farmers, hesitation. However, upon seeing the high yield and income of early adopters, these farmers switched to biotech corn and eventually shared the experience to other farmers and relatives.

Higher income was found to be the major benefit that came from the adoption of biotech corn. It consequently helped the farmers send their children to school, make farming activities easier and simpler, and pay their loans and debts. The farmers also noted that they had acquired “peace of mind” (assurance of harvests due to insect pest resistance) from biotech corn adoption.

Meanwhile, through an exercise called the “innovation tree”, a method that helps visualize and analyze the spread of an innovation or technology over time among community members, the uptake pathways were constructed

from two to four communities in each of the three provinces. It was found that multiple actors were involved in the circulation of knowledge and information on biotech corn.

Key players in the uptake pathways included the farmers, who were also the early adopters of biotech corn. Among them were renowned biotech corn farmer and advocate Rosalie Ellasus in San Jacinto, Pangasinan, successful biotech corn farmer Lydia Lapastora in Benito Soliven, Isabela, and farmers Tony Lucina and Mary Abella in Solana, Cagayan.

The initiators of the uptake pathways were the technicians of seed companies who introduced the technology to the farmers through demonstration farms and seminars. The traders were also major players as they endorsed the technology to the farmers and assured them that they would provide the capital needed for planting. There were also “local ambassadors” who offered technical assistance, visited the farms, and testified to the benefits of biotech corn.

Since traders and seed suppliers were identified as key partners in biotech extension, the study noted the importance of including the private sector in extension services and education, as well as field demonstrators and knowledgeable extension workers.

The study also noted that with their positive experience in biotech corn adoption, the farmers had resolved to continue adopting the technology, as well as other biotech crops such as the fruit and shoot borer-resistant Bt eggplant, once these are commercialized. These farmers were found to be keen on learning more about biotech crops, hence the need for more effective biotech education efforts.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; Dr. Randy A. Hautea, ISAAA Global Coordinator; and Dr. Cleofe S. Torres, UPLB-CDC Dean and Project Leader, wrote in the study’s foreword that after more than 15 years of global commercial use, biotech crops have demonstrated the immense benefits they can contribute in terms of economic productivity, environmental protection, and uplifting the welfare of poor farmers in many parts of the world.

With appropriate biosafety regulations in place, the Philippines started planting biotech crops in 2003. The insect-resistant Bt corn, the herbicide-tolerant corn, and stacked corn were reported in published studies and articles to significantly increase the yields and income of Filipino farmers, thus helping boost the country’s corn industry. Over a decade of propagating biotech crops, hundreds of thousands of Filipino farmers have used the technology in almost two million cumulative hectares of farms and this provided solid and clear evidence that the approved biotech crops benefit the farmers.

The book may be downloaded from [www.isaaa.org/resources/publications/adaptation\\_and\\_uptake\\_pathways\\_of\\_biotech\\_crops/download/](http://www.isaaa.org/resources/publications/adaptation_and_uptake_pathways_of_biotech_crops/download/). Complementary copies of the monograph may also be requested from SEARCA or ISAAA. (JAPanopio/SMMercado)

## 28 SEARCA/ from page 12

- Ms. Nawarat Pourpan, “Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Process Implementation and Outcomes: The Case of Naso, Yasothon Province, Thailand” (CLSU/PhD, rural development)
- Mr. Kritsada Phonkaranyaphat, “Factors Influencing Enrollment of Students in Agriculture Courses: Implications to Agriculture Education Program in Maejo University, Thailand” (CLSU/PhD, development education)

### TIMOR-LESTE

- Ms. Monica Rosario Da Costa Moreira, “The Self-development Strategy

for Local Economic Development: The Case of Tais Production in Dili District, Timor-Leste” (UPLB/Master of Public Affairs, local governance and development)

- Mr. Natalino Babo Martins, “The Effects of Milk Replacement, Fresh Grass, and Concentrate on Growth Performance and Rumen Development on Neonatal Dairy Calves” (UPLB/MS, animal science)

### VIETNAM

- Ms. Le Thi Thanh Loan, “Analysis of the Lychee Industry Competitiveness and Good Agricultural Practice (VietGAP) in Bac Giang Province, Vietnam” (UPLB/MS, agricultural economics) (JSLaranas)

# RRMEx: Training researchers as managers



Dr. Rogelio V. Cuyno (standing), former Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Mindanao, engaged the participants in discussion.

The dynamic research environment demands that research executives perform operational undertakings that are often beyond the scope of their training as researchers, technical specialists, and academicians. To address this gap, SEARCA conducted a *Regional Course for Research Management for Executives (RRMEx)* on 25-27 April 2012.

Nineteen researchers and executives from Indonesia, Laos PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam participated in the four-module course that focused on research management system, organizational policy and strategic research management, managerial leadership, and resource generation.

The training was coordinated and facilitated by Dr. Rogelio V. Cuyno, former Chancellor, University of the Philippines (UP) Mindanao and

former Director, Research Management Center, UP Los Baños.

## Research management and learning organizations

The training kicked off with a discussion on the trends in organizational management and the challenges that research organizations face led by Dr. Danilo R. Reyes, Professor, National College of Public Administration and Governance, UP Diliman.

Dr. William G. Padolina, former Deputy Director General for Operations, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), emphasized that research is a risk activity that requires strategic planning. He explained that solving organizational problems entails strategic planning which compels organizations to revisit their goals, fine-tune their approaches to get back on track.

## Tools for research managers

Prof. Wilfredo B. Carada, Director, Institute of Governance and Rural Development, UPLB-College of Public Affairs, discussed the necessary tools for effective research management and specified the roles and functions of a research manager. He said a good research manager must be technically skilled and able to minimize risks and maximize predictability of programs, set goals, adhere to plans, and generate resources. Dr. Melinda D. Lumanta of the UP Open University added that research managers should be able to develop leadership skills to effectively motivate staff to work towards a common organizational goal.

Moreover, the resource persons stressed that research managers should also be involved in generating resources and funds for their programs. Mr. Duncan Macintosh, IRRI Development Director, emphasized that resources fuel an organization. He cited IRRI's humble beginnings when it was persuading its stakeholders to invest in the organization's programs. He also noted that presenting a clear and relevant statement of an organization's missions and vision is one of the best means to solicit external funds.

This was further supported by Dr. Manuel Jose C. Regalado, Deputy Executive Director, Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), in his discussion on networking and linkages as strategy to generate resources.

To substantiate every discussion, case analyses of different research and development institutions were also presented. This provided participants more concrete examples of how research management works for different organizations. (JBADizon/EGPandanan)

## Learning events/ from page 7

as they could to produce excellent outputs.

Participants were agriculture and fishery officers, research and extension staff, and instructors from Regions IX, X, XI, XII, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), and CARAGA.

## Knowledge management

The *2nd Training Workshop on Knowledge Management (KM) Capacity Building* was conducted for 18 information officers and technical staff of DA-BAR, DA Regional Field Units, and Regional Fisheries Research and Development Centers in Regions IX, X, XI, XII, CARAGA, and ARMM on 31 May-1 June also at

the Waterfront Insular Hotel in Davao City. The training aimed to strengthen the capabilities of the Philippine agricultural research sub-sector in terms of knowledge capture, knowledge products design, and knowledge sharing.

Ms. Antonieta J. Arceo, Knowledge Products Management Division Chief of the DA-Agricultural Training Institute (ATI); Ms. Cheryl N. Caballero, CEO of Optiserve Technologies; and Ms. Angela Mae Miñas, Knowledge Management Assistant for SEARCA's Knowledge Center on Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management in Southeast Asia (KC3), discussed different KM platforms that are being used in their respective institutions.

In particular, the KC3 Community will serve as a medium of information exchange among the participants in sharing their insights and submitting their inputs leading to the development of a Strategic KM Framework and Plan, which will later be used in the design of a Capacity Development Program for the Philippine agriculture and fisheries KM sub-sector. The program will be finalized and launched through a national conference in October 2012. The program is anchored on the R&D agenda of DA-BAR, which was discussed by Ms. Julia A. Lapitan, Head of Applied Communications Division. (RGBailey/KJSVillagrancia/LLDDomingo)

## Timor-Leste MAF, SEARCA to cooperate on capacity-building projects



H.E. Mariano Assanami Sabino (second from left), Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), Timor-Leste, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (second from right), SEARCA Director, exchange copies of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Institutional Cooperation they signed on 2 May 2012 in Manila, Philippines. Looking on are MAF Director General Lourenco Borges Fontes (leftmost) and Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba, SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration, who signed the MOU as witnesses.

Even before Timor-Leste joined the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) in 2006, SEARCA has been assisting the young nation in building the capacities of their agriculture professionals through graduate scholarships.

Today, SEARCA continues to provide graduate and academic bridging scholarships to select Timorese professionals, many of whom are officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF). The Center has also started working with MAF on the publication of a primer on the state of agriculture in the country.

This collaboration between SEARCA and MAF was formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Institutional Cooperation signed by H.E. Mariano Assanami Sabino, Minister of MAF, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, in Diamond Hotel, Manila on 2 May 2012.

The MOU signing was witnessed by Ms. Maria Lydia Soares, Officer-in-Charge of the Embassy of Timor-Leste to the Philippines and First Secretary/Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy; MAF Director General Lourenco Borges Fontes; Mr. Alexio, Special Program and Finance Officer of ADB in Timor-Leste; Mrs. Ervina Soares Pinto, MAF Chief of Finance; and Mr. Jordoa Henrique,

Media Officer of the Minister as well as SEARCA officers, namely: Dr. Francisco F. Peñalba, Deputy Director for Administration; Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Manager for Project Development and Management; Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager for Graduate Scholarship; Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla, Manager for Research and Development; and Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, Manager for Knowledge Management.

“We believe that one of the keys to your country’s development is human resource development and institutional capacity building,” Dr. Saguiguit said during the signing ceremony.

He said that as one of SEAMEO’s centers of excellence, SEARCA is duty-bound to serve the agriculture and rural development needs of Timor-Leste. An MOU between SEARCA and MAF constitutes an umbrella agreement between the two institutions to work together on areas of common interest for the benefit of Timor-Leste, such as in research, graduate studies, short-term training, and technical assistance in scientific research and other related activities.

“As you know, we have given priority to Timor-Leste in our graduate scholarship program, which started in 2003, mainly funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

We would also like to start research activities in your country as well as knowledge management initiatives” Dr. Saguiguit stressed.

Minister Sabino expressed his government’s gratitude to SEARCA for its “great support to Timor-Leste, especially in capacity building which is very important to a new country in the process of nation-building.”

The five-year institutional cooperation includes collaborative programs, projects, and other related activities as well as exchange scientific materials, publications, and information.

To date, 32 full SEARCA graduate scholarships (31 MS, 1 PhD) have been awarded to Timor-Leste nationals, 22 of whom have completed their master’s programs.

The SEARCA graduate alumni working at MAF who hold high positions are Mr. Luis Godinho, Interim National Director of Forestry, and Mr. Raimundo Mau, Chief of Agriculture and Land Use Geographic Information System Unit. Other alumni in high-level positions are affiliated with the Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa’e: Dean Jose Nelson Salsinha and Vice Dean Carlito de Araujo Mali Code, both of the Faculty of Agriculture. (LLDDomingo)