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TRANSFORMING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Building the capacities of people working in Myanmar's agriculture sector is key to changing its rural landscape from being dominated by daily labor, fishing and subsistence farming to one driven by advanced agricultural practices and technologies.



Photo by: Shwe Thwe

Myanmar's sole agricultural university charts its way forward

In the face of the many recent developments in Myanmar, Yezin Agricultural University (YAU) has taken resolute steps to craft a coherent plan that outlines its strategic directions toward boosting its capacity to play a major role in the country's agricultural and rural development.

Key YAU officials thus participated in a strategic planning workshop conducted by SEARCA on 4-6 March 2013 at its headquarters. The YAU delegation was led by Dr. Myo Kywe, Vice Rector for Academic Affairs. With him were Dr. Nan Hseng Hom, Dr. Kyaw Kyaw Win, and Dr. Theingi Myint, all YAU Professors; and Mr. Chit Than, YAU Registrar.

At the opening of the workshop, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, underscored that SEARCA's extensive experience in institutional development and university consortium management, as well as its rich pool of experts would be useful in helping YAU in its institutional development efforts.

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Dr. Myo Kywe (seventh from left), Dr. Nan Hseng (seventh from right), Dr. Kyaw Kyaw Win (fourth from left), Dr. Theingi Myint (third from right), and Mr. Chit Than (third from right), all of Yezin Agricultural University (YAU) attended the Strategic Planning Workshop for YAU held on 4-6 March 2013 at SEARCA. With them in the photo are Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (eighth from right), SEARCA Director; Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas (fourth from right), SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration; Dr. Rogelio V. Cuyno (leftmost), workshop facilitator; SEARCA officers; and resource persons.

Assistance program

The workshop was conducted under the auspices of SEARCA's Institutional Development Assistance (IDA) Program, whose first three beneficiaries are YAU and two other strategic universities in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

Due to the unique structure, resources, and systems of universities in Southeast Asia, particularly those located in the different growth areas, the approaches employed by SEARCA's IDA Program vary with each university it is assisting, Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, SEARCA's Program Head for Graduate Scholarship, said.

Developing an outlook

At the outset, Dr. Rogelio V. Cuyno, institutional development expert and workshop facilitator, who also leads the YAU-IDA project, advised

the YAU team to pick out the most appropriate approach for their university from among the various models and best practices in instruction, research, and extension to be shared by the resource persons during the three-day intensive planning.

An assessment of the agriculture, natural resource, and environment sectors in Myanmar was presented by Dr. Vedini Harishchandra, Rural Development Economist of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to provide added perspective in the direction setting and planning exercise. She noted that while agriculture plays an important role in Myanmar, it is weighed down by many constraints in the food crops, water resources, and environment sectors. She also shared the priority areas pursued by ADB toward poverty reduction and urged the YAU officials to consider programs in which ADB could offer policy, program, and investment support.

The results of a SEARCA study on the challenges and opportunities in ASEAN agricultural higher education and development were presented to the YAU officials. Dr. Cecilio R. Arboleda, Executive Director of UPLB Foundation, Inc. and the study leader, stressed that despite the important role of agriculture in the region, the continued decline in agriculture graduates and post-graduates remains a challenge. He said opportunities for reforming the agricultural higher education in the region include curricular reforms (e.g., strengthening academe-industry

partnership, improving curricular review) and organizational reforms (e.g., promoting consortium and network activities).

For its part, the YAU team presented the university's history, current state, challenges, and prospects. Together with the resource persons, they pored over these information—particularly those on programs and thrusts related to instruction, research, and extension—to articulate a focused direction for the university that will serve as the cornerstone of their university's strategic plan.

Framing the strategies

The analysis and plan formulation was undertaken in a five-part workshop facilitated by Dr. Cuyno and other resource persons.

The tenets of strategic planning for higher education institutions discussed by Dr. Cuyno served as a useful guide in examining YAU's vision, mission, goals, and core values. Insights on how

to craft a relevant curriculum for YAU were shared by Dr. Rita P. Laude, former Vice Chancellor for Instruction, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). On the other hand, Dr. Fernando A. Bernardo, former Deputy Director-General of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), emphasized the importance of research in the university and suggested ways to motivate YAU faculty members to undertake quality research activities. A wider perspective on agricultural extension was provided by the tandem of Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, UPLB professor of extension education and SEARCA's Deputy Director for Administration, and Dr. Enrico P. Supangco, Director of the UPLB Center for Technology Transfer and Entrepreneurship, thus rounding out the three-pronged function of a university.

They also considered the most effective and efficient organizational setup and human resource development strategy.

On the other hand, physical resources were taken into account following a presentation on the principles in creating a master development plan for a university campus by Architect Mary Ann A. Espina, Dean of the UP Diliman College of Architecture. She advocated the use of sustainable water systems, solar energy, and natural landscape; wildlife protection; maintenance of open areas; and promotion of urban agriculture for a green university. (LLDDomingo/JSLaranas)

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Web: www.searca.org
E-mail: post@agri.searca.org
Mail: SEARCA, College, Los Baños, Laguna 4031 Philippines
Tel: +63 49 536 2365 to 67 loc. 419
Fax: +63 49 536 7097

Production Team

Editor: Leah Lyn D. Domingo
Editorial Advisers: Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr.
Adoracion T. Robles
Graphic Designer: Edwin Robert A. Cortes

Agreenium, SEARCA sign landmark accord

Agreenium, the French National Consortium for Agricultural Research and Education, and SEARCA signed a milestone Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Institutional Cooperation with on 25 February 2013 in Paris, France. Signatories to the MOU were Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, and Dr. Marion Guillou, Agreenium President.

The five-year accord is expected to bring increased French expertise to the Southeast Asian region to promote agricultural and rural development. Agreenium is envisaged to be the gateway for Southeast Asian nationals to build their capacities in France in specialized academic and research fields.

On the other hand, "SEARCA is expected to draw in its various networks particularly its partner Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to participate in or benefit from capacity building and research and development activities of the two parties," Dr. Saguiguit said.

"Agreenium will find SEARCA as a window to the region to further its research and education objectives and interests," he added.

Modalities under the agreement also include sharing of experts and resources and joint



Dr. Marion Guillou (left), Agreenium President, and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Institutional Cooperation with on 25 February 2013 at the Paris International Agricultural Fair in France. (CIRAD photo)

efforts to secure major funding from donor and development organizations.

Agreenium comprises the French Agricultural Research Center for Development (CIRAD); International Centre for Higher Education in Agricultural Sciences (Montpellier SupAgro); the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA); Paris Institute of Technology for Life, Food, and Environmental Sciences (AgroParisTech); Institute for Higher Education in Agricultural, Agrifood, Horticultural, and Landscape Sciences (Agrocampus Ouest); National Polytechnic Institute of Toulouse (INPT); National Institute for Higher Education in Agricultural Sciences, Food, and the Environment (AgroSup Dijon); and Bordeaux-Aquitaine Institute of Agricultural Sciences (Bordeaux Sciences Agro).

Dr. Saguiguit is optimistic that the connection and exchanges with Agreenium member institutions will pave the way for concrete collaborative programs and activities between the French institutions and SEARCA.

He added that "SEARCA and Agreenium will start identifying points of collaboration to breathe life into the MOU. This marks another major step for SEARCA in its internationalization efforts and to further its reputation as the Center for agriculture of the 11 SEAMEO countries."

The Ambassadors of Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam in France were present during the MOU signing at the Paris International Agricultural Fair. (EGPandanan)

SEARCA Director conferred Honorary Doctorate in Applied Economics



Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Chulabhorn Valailakh of Thailand confers on Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. the Honorary Doctorate Degree in Applied Economics from Maejo University, Thailand.

Thailand's Maejo University (MJU) awarded Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Applied Economics for his noteworthy contributions to agricultural education and human resource development in Thailand and in Southeast Asia.

The honorary doctorate degree was conferred on 19 February 2013 on the occasion of MJU's Royal Commencement Exercises presided by Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Chulabhorn Valailakh as royal representative of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

The award adds to Dr. Saguiguit's numerous distinctions received from national and international institutions for his exemplary development work in the agricultural sector. These include the *Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite Agricole* (Knight of the Order of Agricultural Merit) given by the French government through the Minister of Agriculture for his efforts to strengthen cooperation between France and the Philippines and Southeast Asia in the areas of agricultural research, education, and culture. He also received Vietnam's Medal for the Cause of Education in recognition of his efforts to improve the country's education system.

Dr. Saguiguit holds an MS in Agricultural Economics from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and a Doctorate Degree in Rural Economics from Université Montpellier in France.

Under Dr. Saguiguit's leadership, SEARCA continues to keep its programs relevant and attuned to the contemporary development concerns in Southeast Asia. Among others, he has been cited for the Institutional Development Assistance (IDA) Program he initiated to build the capacities of young and strategic agricultural universities in Southeast Asia. (EGPandanan)

Experts review SE Asian institutional and policy regimes, plan new edition of agricultural primer series

SEARCA convened experts on agricultural development and policy in a regional workshop held at Jasmine Executive Suites Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand to take stock of the current situation of the agriculture sector in Southeast Asia, particularly the factors that hindered policy reforms and institutional innovations in agriculture in the region. The aim was to distill lessons on agricultural policy and institutional reforms vis-à-vis agricultural development that will serve as inputs to the second edition of the Southeast Asian Agriculture and Development Primer (SAADP) series published by SEARCA.

The SAADP series is an 11-volume series covering Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines,



Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas (right), SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration, delivers the welcome message on behalf of Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, while Dr. I. Handoko, SEAMEO Secretariat Deputy Director for Program and Development looks on.

Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. It is a concise yet comprehensive reference on Southeast Asian agriculture that aims to promote awareness on the state of agriculture across countries in the region.

The workshop brought together ministry officials, academics, researchers, consultants, and experts on agricultural development and agricultural policy from nine of the 11 SEAMEO member-countries, many of whom will serve

as authors of the primer series. Representatives from Brunei Darussalam and Vietnam were unable to attend.

Since the publication of the first edition of the SAADP series, significant changes in the political economy of Southeast Asia have directly and indirectly affected agriculture in each country. Demands shifted and markets changed. New and emerging issues surfaced, including fair trade in agriculture, food traceability and food safety concerns, and the concept of sustainable-organic-ecological agriculture. The contribution of agriculture to climate change also gained wide recognition, thus shifting the focus from agricultural productivity and competitiveness alone to integrating environmental sustainability measures in the production process. There was also a renewed call for regional trade integration and the development of common Asian regional standards and equivalence for food and agricultural products. SEARCA saw the need to update the SAADP Series in light of these developments.

By identifying new and emerging cross-country and regional issues on food and agriculture, the workshop produced a new outlook on Southeast Asian agriculture, including an assessment of the current institutional and policy regimes in the region. The results can be used to craft new strategies that address pressing issues which can be scaled up for the entire region and other Asian countries. These can also be used in formulating policies on regional trade integration, regional standards, and equivalence.

At the end of the workshop, the participants agreed on a common framework, plan, and strategies for the second edition of the SAADP series.

Dr. Geronimo M. Collado, SEARCA Senior Fellow and Agribusiness Strategy and Development Policy Consultant, and Dr. Donato B. Antiporta, Policy and Institutions Expert, served as the facilitators and resource persons for the workshop.

The workshop was spearheaded by SEARCA's Research and Development Department, which also coordinates the publication of the primer series. (HMCustodio)



Participants and organizers of the workshop on the 2nd Edition of the Southeast Asian Agriculture and Development Primer (SAADP) Series held on 13-14 February 2013 at Jasmine Executive Suites Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand.

SEARCA marches with ASEAN FEET

Forests are the lungs of the planet and help feed people in rural communities. Not only are forests indispensable to sustainable land and water resources conservation, they are also the world's best hope in the fight against climate change. In Southeast Asia alone, up to 300 million people are dependent on forests for various economic, socio-cultural, or environmental needs. But this important resource is diminishing. It has been projected that by 2020 the region's current forest cover of 213 million hectares would have shrunk by 16 million hectares.

The grim forecast calls for bold steps to save vast swaths of forests in Southeast Asia.

"It has become increasingly clear that a regional perspective is essential in negotiating a better position for forestry and the values with which it is associated," stated a report discussed in the Special ASEAN Ministerial Forestry Meeting last year.

Thus was born the idea to establish the ASEAN Forestry Extension, Education and Training (FEET) Network.

"ASEAN FEET would support Member States in their attempt to create capable human resources and infrastructure in forestry sector to achieve sustainable management of ASEAN's forests," stated a report to the Special ASEAN Ministerial Forestry Meeting last year.

As such, the ASEAN FEET Network would provide an important avenue for coordinating fragmented efforts to protect forests across ASEAN countries and instituting region-wide programs.

SEARCA was drawn into the ASEAN FEET initiative when it joined a regional workshop convened by Indonesia's Ministry of Forestry and the ASEAN Secretariat, supported by the ASEAN-German Programme on Response to Climate Change (GAP-CC) and the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN), on 28 February-1 March 2013 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, SEARCA's Program Head for Knowledge Management (KM), shared the Center's mandates, vision, experience in networking, and KM framework with some 100 workshop participants. She also talked about the role of academe in informing policy and advancing research and development with the involvement of communities.

Participants included delegates of six ASEAN Member States (i.e., Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam) and representatives from partner institutions, including the Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC) based in Thailand, ASFN Secretariat, GAP-CC, Gadjah Mada University, Forest Governance and Multistakeholders Forestry Program (MFP-DFID), ASEAN Secretariat; and provincial and district forest service officials of Yogyakarta. Aside from Dr. Cadiz, other resource persons included Dr. Yurdi Yazmi of RECOFTC and Mr. Heri Suliyanto of the ASEAN Working Group on Agricultural Training and Extension (AWGATE). They respectively shared on their organizational experiences and outlook on forming the ASEAN FEET Network.

In a semi-closed meeting that included SEARCA and other partners, delegates led by Dr. Tachrir Fathoni, Director General of the Forestry Extension and Human Resource Development Agency, Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, refined and approved the proposed Terms of Reference, Rules of Procedure, and Strategic Plan of Action for the ASEAN FEET Network.

That the Network engages partners like SEARCA and others working in agriculture is a boon in view of the exigent need for the forestry sector to link with the agriculture sector as the sustainable and sound condition of the former will most certainly impact food security.

SEARCA's involvement in the ASEAN FEET Network adds to its increasing collaboration with ASEAN on initiatives of mutual interest, particularly along its priority thrust on natural resource management. SEARCA recently partnered with the ASEAN Social Forestry Network and ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in organizing regional learning events on watershed governance, integration of ecosystems services in development planning, and strengthening project development and management in biodiversity and climate change. SEARCA is also currently implementing an ASEAN REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) project that aims to enhance ASEAN's ability to coordinate efforts for REDD+ to address climate change impact on ASEAN countries.

"As the two organizations serve the same constituents, SEARCA continues to look for opportunities to work with ASEAN in building institutions and human capital needed to drive agricultural and rural development for the improvement of food security and the reduction of poverty in the region," averred Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director. (LLDDomingo/MCHCadiz)



Delegates of six ASEAN Member States and partners, including the ASEAN Secretariat, ASFN, GAP-CC, AWGATE, RECOFTC, and SEARCA represented by Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz (back row, third from right), SEARCA Program Head for Knowledge Management.

IDRC-funded climate change adaptation project kicks off third year

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC)-funded project titled *Building Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change in Southeast Asia* kicked off its third year with a series of activities, starting with a project management meeting in January 2013 and a back-to-back workshop and training in February 2013, all held in Vietnam.

IDRC supports the three-year project through its Climate Change and Water (CCW) Program and the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA).

The project, which aims to build local capacity to adapt to climate change through participatory action research, covers three provinces in Southeast Asia. It is focused on the dominant climatic hazards affecting agriculture in the study sites: drought and flooding in Kampong Speu province in Cambodia, typhoon and flooding in Laguna province in the Philippines, and typhoon and flooding in Thua Thien Hue province in Vietnam.

The Philippine component is implemented by SEARCA through a team of experts from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), while the Vietnam and Cambodia components are implemented by Hue College of Economics and Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), respectively.

Project management meeting

The country leaders and overall coordinator of the project convened in Hanoi on 24-25 January for a project management meeting with Dr. Carrie Mitchell, Senior Program Officer, CCW Program, IDRC.

Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, SEARCA's Acting Program Head for Research and Development, and Asst. Prof. Maria Emilinda Mendoza, Country Project Leader for the Philippine component, participated in the project management meeting on behalf of the Philippine team.

The country project leaders reported the progress in their respective study sites and shared their experiences in vulnerability mapping and social vulnerability analysis, economics of adaptation options, and preparations for proposal development on the adaptation options.

Using common research methodology and tools characterized by a participatory approach to vulnerability assessment and adaptation options analysis and consultations with stakeholders including representatives from the local government and academe as well as technical



Present at the project management meeting convened on 24-25 January 2013 in Hanoi, Vietnam were (from left) Dr. Bui Duc Tinh of Hue College of Economics, Dr. Heng Naret and Mr. Cheb Hoern of RUPP, Dr. Bessie M. Burgos of SEARCA, Dr. Bui Dung Thue of Hue College of Economics and the overall project coordinator, and Dr. Carrie Mitchell of IDRC.

experts, the project teams were able to determine adaptation options which will be subjected to economic analysis. These options include water reservoir rehabilitation to counter drought in Cambodia, automated early warning system and agro-forestry system to address flooding in the Philippines, and upgrading a critical section of the entire An Xuan Tributary dike in Vietnam.

Together with Dr. Mitchell, the team discussed the work plan for the third and last year of the project.

Workshop cum international training

The project conducted a *Workshop on Economic Analysis of Adaptation Options* on 24 February and a *Training on Project Proposal Development for Climate Change Adaptation* on 25-27 February, both held in Hue.

Participants included a team from SEARCA, UPLB, and LGUs of Laguna for the Philippine component which is focused on the province

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Workshop delegates from the Philippine component of the project on *Building Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change in Southeast Asia*, including Ms. Carmen Nyhria G. Rogel (front row, second from left), SEARCA Program Specialist, Research and Development. The Philippine project team members are Asst. Prof. Maria Emilinda Mendoza (front row, leftmost), Country Head and Component Leader on Gender; Asst. Prof. Jaimie Kim Bayani Arias (front row, rightmost), Component Leader on Economic Analysis; Dr. Maria Victoria O. Espaldon (front row, second from right), International Expert of Climate Change; and Engr. Vicente Ballaran, Jr. (back row, rightmost), Component Leader on GIS and Mapping. The others are representatives of Laguna local government units involved in the project.

Advisory body outlines directions of IDRC-SEARCA fellowships project

The Advisory Committee of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)-funded *Southeast Asian Upland Agriculture Fellowships* met on 15 March 2013 at SEARCA to discuss the project's annual fellowship conference, scholars' research projects/theses, the venue of these projects, updates on the studies of the first batch of scholars, and recruitment and selection of the second batch of scholars.

The IDRC-SEARCA Southeast Asian Upland Agriculture Fellowships is a three-year project that aims to enable qualified nationals of Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam to pursue science-based master's degrees in fields related to agriculture and food security in the uplands. Scholars under this fellowships project may study at any of four universities, namely: University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in the Philippines or Chiang Mai University (CMU), Kasetsart University (KU), and Khon Kaen University (KKU), all in Thailand. The project provides support for 33 master's degree scholarships.

Members of the Advisory Committee present at the meeting were Dr. Vo Tong-Xuan, Rector of Tan Tao University (TTU), Vietnam; Dr. Mom



The IDRC-SEARCA Southeast Asian Upland Agriculture Fellowships Advisory Committee members, namely (from left): Dr. Oscar B. Zamora of UPLB; Dr. Editha C. Cedicol of SEARCA; Dr. Silinthone Sacklokham of NUOL; Dr. Mom Seng of RUA; Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; Dr. Vo Tong-Xuan, TTU Rector; and Dr. Prasit Wangpakapattanawong of CMU, attended the fellowship dinner with the IDRC-SEARCA scholars on 15 March 2013.

Seng, Vice Rector for International Affairs, Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), Cambodia; Dr. Oscar B. Zamora, Vice Chancellor for Instruction, UPLB; Dr. Prasit Wangpakapattanawong, Assistant Professor, Forest Restoration Research Unit, Faculty of Science, CMU; Dr. Silinthone Sacklokham, Vice Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, National University of Laos (NUOL), Lao PDR; Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, SEARCA's Program Head for Graduate Scholarship and Project Leader; and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director and Chair of the meeting.

Dr. Cedicol gave an overview of the project and reported on its accomplishments. She also presented the "IDRC International Fellowships Program Experience" on behalf of Dr. Rita Bowry, IDRC's Senior Program Specialist for Fellowships and Awards, as the IDRC-SEARCA fellowships are under the auspices of said program.

The fellowship dinner that capped the one-day meeting gave the Advisory Committee members the opportunity to interact with the IDRC-SEARCA scholars enrolled at UPLB. (JSLaranas)

New SEARCA Professorial Chair grants awarded

A Thai and two Filipino academicians received SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair grants for 2013.

The new SEARCA Professorial Chair grants recipients are Dr. Nakorn Tippayawong of Chiang Mai University (CMU) in Thailand, Dr. Felino P. Lansigan of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), and Dr. Annabella B. Tulin of the Visayas State University (VSU) in the Philippines. They were recognized by SEARCA for their academic and research excellence in agriculture and rural development in Southeast Asia. Each of them will deliver at least one public lecture on their research and write a technical paper for publication.

Dr. Nakorn is an Associate Professor in Mechanical Engineering at CMU and has a strong research background in biomass energy utilization, energy efficiency improvement, and particulate emission control. His public lecture is titled "Bioenergy Utilization Technology for Local Agricultural Industry and Rural Development."

Dr. Lansigan is a Professor of Statistics at UPLB and President of the Philippine Academy of Young Scientists. He specializes in statistical hydrology and water resources, environmental statistics, and climate change variability, among others, and has collaborated with various local and regional organizations. He will deliver a public lecture titled "Addressing the Statistical Challenges of Weather Index-based Insurance for Managing Risks in Agricultural Production."

Dr. Tulin is a Professor of Soil Science at VSU. As senior scientist, she has had extensive involvement in plant nutrition research and extension projects, particularly in vegetables and root crops, with local and regional partners. Her public lecture is titled "Micronutrient Biofortification of Soils from Marginal Uplands for Increased Yield and Improved Nutritional Quality of Vegetables and Root Crops." (JSLaranas)

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of Laguna; RUPP for the Cambodia component; and Hue College of Economics for the Vietnam component. SEARCA was represented by Ms. Carmen Nyhria G. Rogel, Program Specialist, Research and Development.

Findings of the economic analyses of adaptation options specific to the study sites in Cambodia, Philippines, and Vietnam were presented and discussed at the workshop. The training, on the other hand, focused on developing winning proposals on adaptation options and strategies for effective communication and marketing to funding agencies.

Team members from SEARCA and UPLB also attended some sessions of a parallel meeting and writeshop on cross-country projects on climate change convened by EEPSEA on 25-28 February also in Hue. The team presented a list and the outlines of papers and other dissemination materials that it will develop based on the study's findings for publication under EEPSEA. (BMBurgos/CNGRogel)

Snapshots



▶ Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (second from right), SEARCA Director, received officials from Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Seoul National University (SNU) led by Dr. Seong In Cho (center), Director General, Institute of Green-Bio Science and Technology (GBST), SNU. With him were Dr. Seong Woo Lee (second from left), GBST Deputy Director General; Dr. Ki Hee Ryu (rightmost), Unit Head, Project Administration of the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division, Southeast Asia Department, ADB; and Dr. Dong Kyun Park (leftmost), ADB Consultant. The Korean delegation introduced the GBST to SEARCA and explored prospects for collaborations for research that is linked to education, possibly through a scholarship program.



▶ Twenty-one bio-business students of Tokyo University of Agriculture (TUA) visited SEARCA on 21 February 2013. They were briefed on the Center's programs and activities by Ms. Leah Lyn D. Domingo and Ms. Maria Teresa B. Ferino, both of the Office of the Director, and Mr. Henry M. Custodio of the Research and Development Department. Accompanied by Prof. Katsumori Hatanaka and Assoc. Prof. Hiroki Inaizumi, they were the 23rd batch of TUA bio-business students to visit SEARCA under a study tour program co-organized with the University of the Philippines Los Baños-College of Economics and Management.



SEARCA Summer Outing 2013

For this year's summer outing, SEARCA officers and staff visited Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines on 7-9 March 2013. Clockwise from the top: SEARCAns pose in front of Microtel Inn and Suites Palawan, their beachfront accommodation during their two-night stay on the island. One of five groups of SEARCAns who took separate boats through the Puerto Princesa Underground River (PPUR) on 8 March. A big group of SEARCAns, including Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas (seated, fifth from left), Deputy Director for Administration, visited the Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center enroute to the PPUR. Another group of SEARCAns, including Dr. Saguiguit (leftmost), on Pandan Island during their tour of islands in Honda Bay on 8 March.



Education ministers call for greater focus on MDGs, post-2015 education agenda

Education ministers from member-countries of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) who attended the 47th SEAMEO Council Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam on 19-21 March 2013 called for increased focus and support on the education-related millennium development goals (MDGs) and the post-2015 education agenda, particularly in implementing the SEAMEO College, a flagship project launched at the Conference.

The ministers also directed the SEAMEO regional centers to initiate activities that are supportive of these education goals and program, and introduce a forum for future leaders through the SEAMEO College in support of ASEAN community. The SEAMEO College introduces a platform for high-level discussions on forward-looking issues and concerns that will help prepare Southeast Asia for the challenges of the future.

Hosted by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, through its Ministry of Education and Training and with support of the SEAMEO Secretariat, the Conference had over 200 participants from 18 countries comprising education ministers, high-level government education officials, and representatives from international organizations from the SEAMEO member-countries, associate members, affiliate members, regional centers, and development partners.

The SEARCA delegation to the Conference comprised Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, Deputy Director for Administration; Ms. Susan V. Fernandez, Unit

Head, Management Services; Ms. Adoracion T. Robles, Executive Coordinator, Office of the Director; and Mr. Delfin T. Paz, Electrical and Equipment Technician, who received the 2012/2013 SEAMEO Service Award in an awards ceremony during the Conference (see related story below).

At the opening of the Conference, H.E. Mr. Truong Tan Sang, President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, underscored the geographical and political importance of Southeast Asia and its growing role in the world's development. He noted that education and training are a viable focus of cooperation strategy among Southeast Asian countries. He also acknowledged the contribution of SEAMEO to human resources development in the region.

UK joins SEAMEO

The Conference also marked the accession of United Kingdom (UK) to SEAMEO as Associate Member. The UK is the eighth SEAMEO associate member-country, joining Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Spain.

SEAMEO associate member-countries have contributed financial support and technical expertise in the development of education, science, and culture in Southeast Asia through SEAMEO's regional centers.

New SEAMEO center

The legal documents establishing the SEAMEO Centre on Lifelong Learning (SEAMEO CELL),

a new SEAMEO center based in Ho Chi Minh City, were signed during the Conference.

Related to this, Vietnam conducted a policy forum on the theme "Lifelong Learning: Vision and Policy," which showcased experiences and perspectives on implementing lifelong learning initiatives in Southeast Asia and other regions.

Other important resolutions

The education ministers also endorsed the following: (1) *Study on Efficiency of Investment in Education and Skills in SEAMEO Member Countries* to be conducted by SEAMEO and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), (2) support for the Princess Maha Chakri Award to be launched by Thailand in 2015, and (3) strengthening of partnerships with other organizations and agencies in support of the 10-year SEAMEO Strategic Plan and the overall goals of SEAMEO.

Passing the torch

During the Conference, H.E. Prof. Dr. Pham Vu Luan, Vietnam's Minister of Education and Training, was elected as SEAMEO Council President, while H.E. Phongthep Thepkanjana, Thailand's Minister of Education, was elected as Vice President. H.E. Prof. Dr. Luan succeeds H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong as SEAMEO Council President.

As the summit of the education ministers and high-level education officials, the Conference aims to foster stronger cooperation on education among Southeast Asian countries and beyond. Beginning in 2013, it is convened biennially and hosted by the member-countries on rotation basis. Thailand will host the next SEAMEO Council Conference in 2015. (LLDDomingo with report from SEAMEO Secretariat)

Paz receives 2012/2013 SEAMEO Service Award

Mr. Delfin T. Paz, SEARCA Electrical and Equipment Technician, was among the recipients of the 2012/2013 SEAMEO Service Award presented in an awarding ceremony held during the 47th SEAMEO Council Conference on 19-21 March 2013 at the Hanoi Daewoo Hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The award recognizes exemplary staff members of units under the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). Each SEAMEO unit selects the recipient of the award from among its staff based on a standard set of criteria.

Mr. Paz said this recognition of his dedicated service to SEARCA for the past 25 years has been a great source of joy and pride for him and his family. He joined SEARCA in 1987 as an Electrician.

He added that having been chosen for the award affirms his belief that "to achieve your goal, work hard, be honest, and be efficient."

Mr. Paz is the ninth SEARCA staff to receive the SEAMEO Service Award. (LLDDomingo)



Vietnam Minister of Education and Training His Excellency Prof. Dr. Pham Vu Luan (left), who is also the new SEAMEO Council President, presents a plaque of appreciation to Mr. Delfin T. Paz, SEARCA Electrical and Equipment Technician, for being one of the 2012/2013 SEAMEO Service Awardees at the awarding ceremony held on 20 March 2013 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

SEARCA Exec Coordinator receives fellowship grant from Japan

Ms. Adoracion T. Robles, SEARCA Executive Coordinator, was awarded a Fellowship for the *Spring Short Course on Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy* held in Tokyo, Japan on 11-14 March 2013.

The grant was given by Japan's National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTEP) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT), which was offered to regional centers of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). Based on stringent qualifications, 12 researchers and officials from 11 SEAMEO centers received the scholarship.

The course provided an opportunity to learn the basics of science, technology, and innovation policy research. It focused mainly on *Foresight*, a framework of future-oriented thinking to develop long-term policies and action plans to cope with the rapid changes in science, technology, and society.

Ms. Robles first joined SEARCA in 2004 as a Project Management Associate at the then Consulting Services Department. She obtained her



Ms. Adoracion T. Robles (front row, fourth from right), SEARCA Executive Coordinator, with the other participants of the *Spring Short Course on Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy*.

bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) under the UPLB Agricultural and Rural Development Scholarship (ARDS). She also earned two master's degrees, one in Environmental Science from UPLB under the Engineering and Science

Education Program (ESEP) of the Philippine Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and a Master in Environment from the University of Melbourne in Australia under the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) Scholarship program. (EGPandanan)

SEARCA joins network of multipliers and advisors on mainstreaming climate change adaptation in dev't plans, investments

As part of its long-term commitment to improve the capacity of Southeast Asian institutions working towards agricultural and rural development to respond to climate change, SEARCA served with the Thailand-based Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC) as co-trainers in cooperation with ECO-Consult and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) for the training on *Regional Multipliers and Advisors: Integrating Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) into Development Plans and Investments* held on 12-17 March 2013 in Bogor, Indonesia.

SEARCA was represented by Ms. Rosario B. Bantayan, Program Specialist, Knowledge Management Department-Training Unit, as one of the participants while Dr. Daylinda B. Cabanilla, SEARCA training consultant and Professor, Department of Social Forestry and Forest Governance, College of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of the Philippines Los Baños, served as a resource person.

The learning event was organized by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-German Program on Response to Climate Change: Agriculture, Forestry and Related Sectors (GAP-CC) and Germany's Federal

Environment Ministry International Climate Initiative (BMU-ICI)-funded Inventory of Methods for Adaptation to Climate Change (IMACC).

The training aimed to promote an understanding of climate change impacts and the need to mainstream climate adaptation into policies, plans, and projects. It sought to enable participants to identify appropriate approaches for integrating climate change adaptation into development policies and investment plans at the national, sectoral, and project levels. It also enhanced their capacity to act as multipliers or advisors for further application of climate proofing in strategies and activities.

Other participants were representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Vietnam, Lao PDR, and Indonesia; GIZ programs and institutions in the region; the ASEAN Secretariat; Indonesian Climate Change Trust Fund; and the Housing and Land-Use Regulatory Board and Climate Change Commission of the Philippines.

Ms. Barbara Froede-Thierfelder of ECO-Consult and Michael Hoppe of IMACC led the training, with Mr. Toon de Bruyn of RECOFTC and Dr. Cabanilla as co-trainers. They delivered the training modules using the Harvard Case Method, which primarily involves interactive case work—with the participants acting as case work experts—followed by presentation of case results in a plenary session.

[SEARCA joins network/ to page 11](#)

Fourth Southeast Asian forum on academic leadership excellence conducted

Leading agricultural education experts and senior academic executives from all over Southeast Asia participated in a five-day international forum on "Leadership Excellence in Academe Program for Southeast Asia (LEAP SEA)" held on 21-25 January 2013 at Maejo University (MJU) in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

The executive forum was jointly organized by SEARCA and MJU as a venue for academic executives to discuss current challenges in the management and leadership of agricultural universities and come up with viable solutions. Topics of the forum included academic leadership

principles and practices as well as strategic positioning of agricultural higher education institutions, which is in line with SEARCA's human resource and institutional development efforts in Southeast Asia. The idea is to build a cadre of individuals and institutions to serve the agricultural and rural development needs of the region.

Leading agriculture education experts and senior academic executives served as resource persons in the seven-module executive program. They are Dr. Paul S. Teng, Dean of Graduate Study and Professional Learning, Nanyang Technological

University, Singapore and SEARCA Senior Fellow, Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration and Professor of Governance and Rural Development, University of the Philippines Los Baños; Dr. Cely S. Binoya, Professor, Central Bicol State University of Agriculture; Dr. Fernando A. Bernardo, Consultant and former Deputy Director General for International Programs, International Rice Research Institute; Mr. Prasit Damrongchietanon, Executive Vice-Chairman, Charoen Pokphand Produce Co., Ltd., Crop Integration Business Group, Thailand; Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, Political Science Faculty Dean and Professor of Public Administration, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand; and Dr. Kittinoot Chulikavit, Language Center Director at Maejo University.



The 14 participants official participants from seven Southeast Asian countries together with MJU observers, resource persons, and training management staff. In the front row (fourth from left to right) are Dr. Paul S. Teng, SEARCA Senior Fellow and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Program Dean and Senior Fellow (Food Security); Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration; Dr. Yongyuth Srigojun, MJU Vice President for International Affairs; and Dr. Cely S. Binoya, Technical Coordinator of the executive forum.

SEARCA joins network/ from page 10

As a result of this training, SEARCA, together with RECOFTC and with support from GAP-CC, will offer further rollout of the training in order to establish a climate proofing methodology at the regional level that may be piloted for national development and investment projects in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

It is envisioned that experiences from the pilot application of integrating climate change adaptation will feed into an ASEAN expert group forum and the methodology used will be fine-tuned for the ASEAN context. The tested methodology and the successful applications will then be presented to the ASEAN Senior Official Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry for endorsement of the climate proofing methodology within ASEAN. (RBBantayan)



Ms. Rosario B. Bantayan (front row, third from left), Program Specialist at SEARCA's Knowledge Management Department-Training Unit, with fellow participants of the training on *Regional Multipliers and Advisors: Integrating Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) into Development Plans and Investments* held on 12-17 March 2013 in Bogor, Indonesia.

Alumni Notes

DIZON APPOINTED UPLB CPAF DEAN



JOSEFINA T. DIZON

Dr. Josefina T. Dizon (PhD, community development, 1996) is the new Dean of the College of Public Affairs and Development (CPAf), University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), effective 24 January 2013. Prior to her new appointment, Dr. Dizon was the Director of CPAf's Community Innovations Studies Center (CISC).

As Dean of CPAf, Dr. Dizon will oversee the Institute for Governance and Rural Development (IGRD), Center for Strategic Planning and Policy Studies (CSPPS), as well as the CISC. The curricular programs of CPAf are offered through the IGRD, including undergraduate courses in agrarian studies, education, and community education. The CISC and CSPPS, on the other hand, develop and manage CPAf's research and extension programs. (JSLaranas)

BORJA HEADS POPULATION RESEARCH FOUNDATION

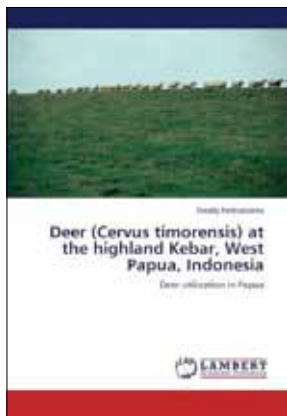


JUDITH B. BORJA

Dr. Judith B. Borja (MS, applied nutrition, 1990) was appointed as Director of the Office of Population Studies Foundation, Inc. (OPS) of University of San Carlos (USC) in Cebu City, Philippines effective 28 January 2013.

Prior to assuming her new post, Dr. Borja was the OPS Deputy Director. She has been working with OPS for 28 years. She earned her PhD in Nutrition at the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health in 1998. Her research expertise covers human health and nutrition issues in all stages of life, with special focus on mothers, infants, and children. Accolades won for her research work include the Philippine Association of Nutrition Research Fellow Award, USC Outstanding Alumni, and Semper Fidelis Award for Scientia. (JSLaranas)

PATTISELANNO PUBLISHES BOOK ON DEER CONSERVATION IN INDONESIA



The highly vulnerable Rusa deer is the subject of a book by Mr. Freddy Pattiselanno (MS, animal science, 2004) titled "Deer (*Cervus timorensis*) at the highland Kebar, West Papua, Indonesia" released by Lambert Academic Publishing in 2012.

An important source of food and livelihood for communities, the Rusa deer is considered one of the most important deer species in West Papua. Its antlers and skin are valued and marketed as art objects.

Mr. Pattiselanno is a member of the Faculty of Animal Science, Fishery and Marine Sciences of Universitas Negeri Papua and currently pursuing his PhD at James Cook University in Cairns, Australia.

He has been involved in deer conservation in Papua since 2000 and throughout his MS program at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) under SEARCA scholarship. A decade later, he received another

SEARCA grant, through its Seed Fund for Research and Training (SFRT), for his study on the impacts of wildlife hunting on biodiversity conservation in West Papua.

Mr. Pattiselanno's 92-page book is a rich source of information useful in instituting sustainable practices and policies towards the preservation of the Rusa deer. Among other things, it pushes for the establishment of a wildlife sanctuary that will form part of the upland Kebar development plan.

To improve the management of deer population in Indonesia, Pattiselanno recommends further studies on reproductive behavior of deer, particularly under farming conditions.

One such study was recently completed by another Indonesian alumnus, Dr. Daud Samsudewa (PhD, animal science, 2012) of Diponegoro University, during his PhD program at UPLB. His study was conducted at H. Yusuf Wartono Timor Deer Captive Breeding in Gondosari, Gebog, Kudus, Central Java. Among Dr. Samsudewa's research findings at the 4th International Conference on Environmental and Rural Development held on 19-20 January 2013 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

The paper Dr. Samsudewa presented was titled "Comparative reproductive behavior of α -male, β -male and subordinate male Timor deer (*Cervus timorensis* Blainville) raised under captivity." It discussed the documented behavior of male Timor deer and farm management practices that could improve deer reproduction. (LLDDomingo with reports from JSLaranas)

THAI ALUMNI HONORED BY PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN THAILAND

Four SEARCA Thai alumni were among the Thai graduates from Philippine schools honored by the Philippine Embassy in Thailand during a *Barrio Fiesta* celebration held at the Philippine Embassy grounds in Bangkok, Thailand on 15 February 2013. The celebration was hosted by H. E. Jocelyn Batoon-Garcia, Ambassador of the Philippines to Thailand.

The Thai alumni honored were Dr. Monton Jamroenpruckska (PhD, forestry, 1988), Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat (PhD, development communication, 1997), Dr. Pasuta Sunthornhao (PhD, forest resource management, 2008), and Dr. Pattarawat Jeerapattanatorn (PhD, extension education, 2009). They all completed their PhD programs under SEARCA scholarship at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). (JSLaranas)



Dr. Monton Jamroenpruckska (second from left) and (from right) Dr. Pattarawat Jeerapattanatorn, Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat and Dr. Pasuta Sunthornhao with H.E. Jocelyn Batoon-Garcia (third from left), Ambassador of the Philippines to Thailand, during the Barrio Fiesta celebration held at the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand on 15 February 2013. (Photo by Aphiphan Pookpakdi)

Thesis Abstracts

LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT OF TOMATO, EGGPLANT, CUCUMBER, AND STRING BEANS PRODUCTION SYSTEMS IN NAGCARLAN, LAGUNA PROVINCE, PHILIPPINES



Win Htein
Myanmar
MS in Environmental Science
University of the Philippines
Los Baños

Increasing population creates high demand for agricultural products which, in turn, cause adverse environmental impacts during both production and transport. Environmental burdens of smallholder production of tomato, eggplant, cucumber, and string bean in Brgy. Bukal, Nagcarlan, Laguna, Philippines were identified using the Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) approach. The study aimed to assess the environmental impacts of materials and energy flow through production systems within the system boundary from land preparation to transport to market. The impact categories, global warming potential, acidification potential, eutrophication potential, and human toxicity potential were computed based on function unit of 1 kg of vegetable and 2,000 m² production area. The inventory analysis involved collection of data on raw materials, energy consumption, and emissions.

The highest emission of 1.94 E-02 kg CO₂-eq of GHG was obtained from the tomato production system, while string bean production showed the least at 1.60 E-02 kg CO₂-eq kg⁻¹ of vegetable. Similarly, the highest and least acidifying compound emission from fuel combustion were also found in tomato and string bean production; values obtained were 9.99 E-04 gm SO₂-eq and 7.93 E-04 gm SO₂-eq kg⁻¹ of vegetable, respectively. The study recorded 1.05 E-02 kg PO₄-eq of eutrophication compound as the highest discharge obtained from the eggplant production system, while the lowest value was from string bean production system at 7.8E-03 kg PO₄-eq per kg of vegetable. Eggplant production had the highest human toxicity potential both in air and soil at levels of 4.61 E+ 00 g 1,4 DCB-eq and 1.7 E+03 g 1,4 DCB-eq, respectively. Tomato production showed the BCA value as more than 1 while the others showed less.

Most impacts were the direct result of farmers' production practices. The use of the LCA approach in vegetable production provides informative feedback that can help decision-makers select the product or process that results in the least impact to the environment and human society. The study provided recommendations for improvement of crop management practices

to reduce environmental impacts as well as to increase the productivity and economic viability.

IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT AND ITS IMPACTS ON FARM PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOME DISTRIBUTION IN CENTRAL DRY ZONE AREA, MYANMAR



Amy Soe
Myanmar
PhD in Agricultural Economics
University of the Philippines
Los Baños

The study aimed to analyze the impact of irrigation systems on farm productivity and income distribution in the Central Dry Zone area of Myanmar, covering the Wann Twin and Nyaung U townships in the Mandalay Division.

The study found that the area under cultivation, monsoon rice productivity, cropping intensity, and farm income were higher in irrigated areas than in rainfed areas. The cultivated area, farm productivity, and farm income were higher in the dam-irrigated area than in the pump-irrigated area. Within the dam irrigation system, productivity, cropping intensity, and farm income were lower in the head area than in the middle and tail areas. Productivity and farm income were higher in the upstream area of the pump irrigation system compared with those in the middle and downstream areas. Gross margin for monsoon rice was highest in the dam-irrigated area, but the gross margins were not significantly different across head, middle, and tail users of this system. In the pump-irrigated system, gross margin was highest in upstream area.

Irrigation and other factors (i.e., fertilizer, labor, age of the household head, credit, soil quality) had significant effect on productivity of monsoon rice. Between the dam and pump irrigation system, the former contributed more in increasing farm productivity. However, locational differences in the dam irrigation system had no significant effect on productivity. Within the pump irrigation system, the upstream area performed better in terms of productivity and farm production or output.

Income inequality was higher in the irrigated areas than in the rainfed areas. The dam-irrigated area had higher Gini ratio than the pump-irrigated area. This means that, the farther from the water source, the larger the inequality of income in both irrigation systems. The incidence of poverty was highest in the rainfed area. The Sen poverty indices of rainfed, dam-irrigated, and pump-irrigated areas were 0.64, 0.32, and 0.55, respectively. The middle area covered by the dam

irrigation system had lower poverty incidence compared with the head and tail areas within the system. The study found that in the pump irrigation system, the farther from the water source, the greater the poverty incidence.

The determinants of poverty identified are absence of irrigation, low gross value product per hectare, small farm size, and large family size. The dam irrigation system performed better than the pump irrigation system in reducing the probability of the household being poor. However, locational differences had no effect on the reduction of poverty.

Recommendations of the study included: (1) improvement in water management, operation and maintenance of existing irrigation facilities; (2) provision of small irrigation system to rainfed farms and production technology for high-value or diversified crops; (3) provision of awareness training to improve farmers' managerial skills and for family planning; and (4) improvement in research and development.

THE EFFECTS OF MILK REPLACER, FRESH GRASS AND CONCENTRATE ON GROWTH PERFORMANCE AND RUMEN DEVELOPMENT OF NEONATAL DAIRY CALVES



Natalino Babo Martins
Timorese
MS in Animal Science
University of the Philippines
Los Baños

The effects of milk replacer with or without forage and concentrate on production performance and rumen development of neonatal dairy calves was determined using 16 two-week-old calves randomly distributed to four dietary treatments in a completely randomized design. Dry matter intake of calves significantly increased with the supplementation of concentrate, followed by those fed with forage alone or forage plus concentrate, and least in those fed with milk replacer alone. Similarly, average daily weight gain was highest in calves fed with concentrate and forage. Consequently, feed conversion was significantly more efficient in calves supplemented with concentrate, followed by those fed with forage alone and forage plus concentrate. Highest return above feed cost was realized in calves fed with milk replacer plus concentrate, followed by those fed with milk replacer plus both concentrate and forage. Supplementation of solid feeds increased the size of the rumen. Anatomical evaluation of rumen development showed significantly greater papillary length and density in calves fed with concentrate.

46 DA info officers, technical staff attend nat'l conference on agri and fisheries IKM

Forty-six regional managers, information officers, and technical staff from various units of the Philippine Department of Agriculture participated in the *National Conference on Agriculture and Fisheries Information and Knowledge Management (IKM)* held on 6-8 February 2013 at the Hotel Kimberly in Tagaytay City, Cavite, Philippines.

Organized by SEARCA in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture–Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), the conference convened the agricultural and fisheries IKM community to draft the terms of reference of information and knowledge management staff, propose information and knowledge management staffing policies, identify formal/nonformal/informal IKM training requirements, and validate and finalize a capacity development program on IKM.

The conference participants are from the Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (DA-RIARCs), Regional Fisheries Research and

Development Centers (DA-RFRDCs), Fiber Industry Development Authority (FIDA), Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech), Bureau of Plant Industry (DA-BPI)-Los Baños National Crop Research and Development Center, Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA-BSWM), and DA-BAR.

In the opening program, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, welcomed the participants to the conference. He said the goal of the conference and of the whole project is “to build your capacities in managing, utilizing, and sharing knowledge resources to promote a learning culture that supports agricultural and rural development. This is more relevant in this time when knowledge has become an indispensable asset for the agriculture sector.”

Dr. Nicomedes P. Eleazar, DA-BAR Executive Director, said in his message that “this KM project

is in line with BAR’s function as a steward of funds for the national agriculture and fisheries research and development (R&D). And we are making R&D relevant to the public not only through funding support but also by processing research results into knowledge worthy of sharing among the sector’s stakeholders.”

The conference is the culminating activity of the *Capacity Development Program in Knowledge Management* funded by DA-BAR and implemented by SEARCA. Under this umbrella project, several consultative workshops were conducted in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, which led to the design and development of an IKM Strategic Plan and consequently, the National Capacity Development Program on Knowledge Management for the Philippine agriculture and fisheries sub-sectors.

Dr. Alexander G. Flor, Professor of Information and Communication Studies at the University of the Philippines-Open University, and Knowledge Management for Development (KM4D) advocate, serves as main resource person for the conference. (LLDDomingo)



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (seated, sixth from right), SEARCA Director, and Dr. Alexander G. Flor (seated, fifth from right), main resource person, with the participants of the National Conference on Agriculture and Fisheries Information and Knowledge Management (IKM).

2 SEARCA travel grants awarded

SEARCA awarded travel grants to Dr. Daud Samsudewa of Diponegoro University (UNDIP), Indonesia and Dr. Emilia S. Visco of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) to enable them to present their scientific papers in Cambodia and Australia, respectively.

Dr. Samsudewa, a SEARCA alumnus and Lecturer at the UNDIP Faculty of Animal Science, presented a paper on improving biodiversity conservation through productivity analysis of deer farming in Indonesia at the

4th International Conference on Environmental and Rural Development held on 19-20 January 2013 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

On the other hand, Dr. Visco is Assistant Professor and Chairman at the Department of Social Development Services, UPLB College of Human Ecology. She traveled to Canberra, Australia on 5-8 February 2013 to present two papers: “Coping Strategies of Resettled Communities in Laguna, Philippines” presented at the *XIX International*



Dr. Emilia S. Visco presents her paper titled “Coping Strategies of Resettled Communities in Laguna, Philippines” at the *XIX International Conference for the Society of Human Ecology* held in Australia.

SEARCA and partners conduct biotech outreach in Philippine Congress

Philippine policymakers, including House of Representatives Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. and Chair of the House Committee on Science and Technology Congressman Julio Ledesma IV, recognized the potentials of biotechnology in improving the country's food security during the four-day biotech exhibit and seminars co-organized by SEARCA in Congress on 21-24 January 2013.

Speaker Belmonte, in his address during the opening of the biotech exhibits, said that despite the emergence of challenges in agriculture and the environment, "parallel advances in science are being made which carry the hope of possible solutions." He acknowledged the need for more biotech education on the safety of biotech crops adoption as well as the review of agricultural policies on land use, and emphasized the development of low-cost and appropriate technologies for farmers.

Congressman Ledesma, in his message during the opening, said that he has seen the potentials of biotech crops as early as the 1980s after seeing a biotech field trial in the United States as part of an agri-business program he enrolled in.

The outreach activity involved biotech seminars for media practitioners and policymakers, with Dr. Evelyn Mae Mendoza of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Dr. Reynaldo

Ebora of the University of the Philippines Los Baños-National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (UPLB-BIOTECH), Dr. Nina Gloriani of the UP Manila-College of Public Health, and Ms. Rosalie Ellasus, a successful biotech corn farmer from Pangasinan, among the resource persons. The seminars served as an opportunity for the policymakers, media, and other Congress constituents to clarify issues and concerns on biotechnology, particularly genetically modified crops.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, in his speech during the biotech seminar for policymakers, said that the activity is part of the Center's effort in widening its reach to non-traditional sectors who should be equally concerned about the advent of biotech.

In the seminars, the scientists explained the importance of continuing public biotech researches such as the research and field trials on the insect resistant Bt eggplant. Dr. Ebora expressed that these were government-funded projects, hence, the technology's benefit should go back to the Filipino people. The upcoming biotech crops and technologies were also shown by studies to hold great potential in bringing socioeconomic benefits to its adopters.

Dr. Saguiguit also pointed out biotechnology's link to food security, saying that "it allows us to

increase production so that it could be a solution to food security." He added that, "being rational individuals, we should go for scientific evidence rather than anecdotal basis for choosing between the pros and cons of biotech."

Hon. George Arnaiz of Negros Oriental; Hon. Sandra Sema of Maguindanao and Cotabato City; policymakers' chiefs of staff; and legislative staff from the Committees on Science and Technology, Agriculture and Food, and the Special Committee on Food Security of the House of Representatives participated in the seminar. Both legislators have expressed that they were enlightened and are now open to the technology, recognizing the science-based benefits and potentials that biotechnology could bring to local agriculture.

The activity was co-organized by SEARCA; the Offices of Congressman Angelo B. Palmones of AGHAM Party-list and Congressman Agapito H. Guanlao of Butil Party-list; the House Committees on Science and Technology and Agriculture and Food and the Special Committee on Food Security; UPLB-BIOTECH; UPLB-Crop Science Cluster-Institute of Plant Breeding (UPLB-CSC-IPB); NAST; International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA); Philippine Science Journalists Association, Inc. (PSciJourn); Program for Biosafety Systems Philippines (PBS Philippines); and Department of Agriculture (DA). (SMMercado/JAPANopio)



(From left) Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director; Dr. Reynaldo Ebora, UPLB-BIOTECH Director; Negros Oriental Rep. George P. Arnaiz; AGHAM Party-list Rep. Angelo B. Palmones; Ms. Violeta T. Veloso, House of Representatives Committee Affairs Executive Director; Ms. Rosalie M. Ellasus, San Jacinto, Pangasinan councilor and biotech corn farmer-leader; Dr. Lourdes J. Cruz, National Scientist; and Dr. Randy A. Hautea, ISAAA Global Coordinator and Southeast Asia Center Director.



Resource persons and policymakers discuss the prospects of biotech products and research in the country during the open forum of the seminar.

Myanmar photographers sweep SEARCA Photo Contest 2012

Four Myanmar photographers won the top prizes in the SEARCA Photo Contest 2012, which focused on the theme “Water is Life: Too Much or Too Little, Every Drop Counts.”

The winners are Mr. Kyaw Zaw Lay of Mandalay, first prize; Mr. Tun Aung of Yangon, second prize; Mr. Kyaw Kyaw Winn of Yangon, third prize; and Mr. Than Htike Soe of Mandalay, People’s Choice Award.

Mr. Kyaw Zaw Lay’s winning photo shows two fishermen casting large nets in a river in Maketilar, Mandalay.

Mr. Tun Aung’s photo is of a woman holding an earthen jar on her head, a man carrying dried grass lashed to the ends of a pole on his shoulder, and a small child, all walking barefoot on dry, cracked earth.

Mr. Kyaw Kyaw Winn romped off with the third prize with his photo of a farmer using a basket to fish in a rice field.

Mr. Than Htike Soe’s photo of fishermen in the Ayeyarwady River bagged the People’s Choice Award, which is given to the photo that garnered the most votes among 15 finalists in a week-long Facebook poll.

The winning photos were among 954 entries submitted by 245 photographers from seven countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. They best captured the usefulness of water, the challenges that it faces, and the opportunities and threats it brings.

The top three winners received cash prizes of USD 500, 300, and 200, respectively, while the People’s Choice Award recipient received USD 100.

A photo gallery on the SEARCA website at <http://photocontest.searca.org> shows the winning photos and finalists. (ADGMadrid)



1st prize, Kyaw Zaw Lay



2nd prize, Tun Aung



People’s Choice, Than Htike Soe



3rd prize, Kyaw Kyaw Winn

2 SEARCA travel grants/ from page 14

Conference for the Society of Human Ecology and “Perceived Effects of Lead Recycling to Selected Communities in Bulacan, Philippines” presented at the *IV International Conference on Sustainability Science in Asia*.

Started in 2006, the SEARCA Travel Grants Program is one way to build the capacity of academic and research institutions in the region, particularly those in agricultural and rural development, and support the sharing of

knowledge from research activities. The competitive grant is awarded every quarter.

Eight travel grants have so far been awarded for fiscal year 2012/2013. The grantees for the period July to December 2012 were Dr. Zeily Nurachman, Indonesian; Mr. Laurence Anthony Go and Dr. Maria Ana T. Quimbo, both Filipinos; and Dr. Nguyen Kim Loi, Mr. Pham Tien Dat, and Ms. Le Thi Than Loan, all Vietnamese. (HMCustodio)