

The SEARCA DIARY



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MAXIMIZING FINITE FARMLANDS

Our food future largely depends on how well we use available farmlands that are continuously shrinking.

Photo by Khant Zaw

SEARCA joins DA, President Duterte in launching national agri guide maps

MANILA, Philippines—SEARCA joined the Department of Agriculture (DA) and President Rodrigo Duterte in launching the National Color-Coded Agriculture Guide (NACCAG) Maps at the Rizal Hall in Malacañan on 7 March 2017.

The set of guide maps is one of the major outputs of the *Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA)* for which SEARCA and the University of the Philippines Los Baños Foundation, Inc. (UPLBFI) were commissioned by DA to strengthen its implementation.

SEARCA and UPLBFI assisted DA in the following components of AMIA: (1) Key Agriculture and Fisheries (AF) Policy Instruments Towards Increasing Productivity, Income, and Resiliency of AF Livelihoods; (2) Integrated Climate Change Geographic Information System (ICCGIS); (3) Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Policy for Agriculture Integrating Climate Change Adaptation including Development and Utilization of Unmanned Aerial

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 3 IFAD taps SEARCA for impact assessment project
- 3 SEARCA conducts scoping sessions in Phi Cordillera region
- 4 IRRI-SEARCA study examines Phi, Vietnam climate change mitigation policy in rice
- 4 Senator commends SEARCA for contributions to crop insurance bill
- 5 Cambodia gov't and SEARCA partner to develop HEI capacities
- 5 NU, SEARCA define framework of collaboration in workshop
- 6 SEARCA shares climate resilience, green growth initiatives in Malawi forum
- 6 New climate change book published
- 7 SEARCA, KU and partners finalize new MS programs
- 7 Phi higher ed officials briefed on agri-biotech courses in SE Asia
- 8 Snapshots
- 9 "Corporate" business model to help small farmers
- 9 Japanese museum expert helps develop SE Asian AgriMuseum
- 10 Results-based M&E system strengthens action research
- 11 Forum tackles state of agri R&D, implications on ASEAN integration
- 11 PCC, SEARCA conduct project review
- 12 Alumni Notes
- 12 UPSE prof gets SEARCA travel grant
- 13 School and home gardens project scaled up through networking
- 14 Community-based waterways clearing part of ADB-funded project
- 14 SEARCA mounts short course on GE curriculum for YAU
- 15 Food innovation centers tackled in SEARCA professional chair lecture
- 15 Malaysian prof imparts land use, climate change impact on water
- 16 Celebrating agriculture and fisheries in photos



AMIA Program staff and consultants pose with President Rodrigo Duterte (front row, ninth from left), Senator Cynthia Villar (front row, eighth from left), Congressman Arthur Yap (front row, seventh from left), DA Secretary Emmanuel Piñol (front row, sixth from left), DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez (front row, tenth from left), DAR Secretary Rafael Mariano (front row, tenth from right), DBM Secretary Benjamin Diokno (front row, ninth from right), and DA Wide Climate Change Office Director Alicia Ilaga (front row, eighth from right). SEARCHA is represented by Lope B. Santos III, PDS Program Specialist and Gabrielle Lagrimas, Project Coordinator.



AMIA consultants and staff with DA Secretary Emmanuel Piñol at the AMIA Exhibit area, Malacañan, Manila.

Vehicles (UAV); (4) Landscape Planning in AF Development; (5) Technical and Managerial Capacity Building; and (6) Special Studies.

Philippine Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said “the NACCAG incorporated and digitized scientific data on soil analysis, climate impact,

geographical hazards and weather prediction from PAGASA.” The guide map may be viewed online at www.farmersguidemap.gov.ph. PAGASA stands for Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Secretary Piñol also said “the guide map can be used by farmers to identify what kind of plant is best to grow in their land.”

The color-coded agriculture guide map is a campaign commitment of President Duterte to guide farmers on what plants are best for the land they till and help them decide which could be more profitable to them.

President Duterte, in his speech, pointed out the importance of nurturing the agriculture sector, which is considered as the backbone of the country’s economy.

He said agriculture “forms the basis for food and nutrition security, and provides the raw material

for industrialization. These are important factors that allow progress to take place in society.”

“No one should be left behind in our journey to progress and self-sufficiency. Remember that we must prioritize the welfare of the disadvantaged and the marginalized. So, let us work together to empower our farmers and fisherfolk in order to achieve our goals of a bountiful Philippines so that one day, in the not so distant future, no Filipino should ever go hungry again,” President Duterte emphasized further.

SEARCHA was represented by Dr. Lope B. Santos III, Program Specialist and MS. Gabrielle Lagrimas, Project Coordinator, both of the Project Development and Technical Services (PDS), while UPLBFI was represented by Dr. Casiano S. Abrigo, Jr., Executive Director, and Ms. Dorcas Trinidad, Project Coordinator. (LBSantosIII)

THE SEARCHA DIARY

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IFAD taps SEARCA for impact assessment project

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has commissioned SEARCA to conduct the data collection of its impact assessment of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Irrigated Rice Production Enhancement Project (IRPEP).

IRPEP is a major component of the DA's Rapid Food Production Enhancement Programme (RaFPEP), which was funded by IFAD. Completed in December 2016, RaFPEP was implemented to increase food production by farmers in clustered irrigated rice production systems on a sustainable basis.

IRPEP had more than 100 community irrigation system beneficiaries in six provinces in Regions 6, 8, and 10. The provinces covered are Capiz, Aklan, and Antique in Region 6; Northern Leyte and Western Samar in Region 8, and Bukidnon in Region 10.

To estimate the project's impact on the household beneficiaries and partner irrigators' associations, the assessment will conduct a survey of more than 2,000 households, 16 focus group discussions (FGD), and 24 key informant interviews (KI).

IFAD Research and Impact Assessment (RIA) Division Director Paul Winters presented the overall perspective of the IRPEP as well as the rationale and objectives of the seven-day enumerators training conducted by SEARCA in Cagayan de Oro City.

The training covered the IFAD-approved paper- and tablet-based questionnaires as well as pilot-testing of the survey instruments to ensure they are administered properly. Mr. Daniel James Higgins of IFAD is the focal person for the finalization of the survey instruments used in the training.

Dr. Walfredo R. Rola, Project Manager, was the lead person for the training. Also on hand were field supervisors, representatives from the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and RaFPEP officers.

Immediately after the training which ended on 5 March 2017, the SEARCA project team started to collect data in the field through FGDs and KIIs with the regional and provincial program staff and irrigators' associations in Bukidnon.

They discussed the following: program implementation (i.e., activities lined up, selection and expected level of participation of beneficiaries), barriers to participation and success, suitability of program activities, possible spillovers, and potential improvements.

The DA provided assistance to the team in arranging the FGDs and KIIs and endorsing the team to concerned agencies. (Report from MMFelismino)

2 ERASMUS+ projects mull joint dev't of modules for MS programs



BRUSSELS, Belgium—SEARCA participated in the kick-off meeting of the newly selected ERASMUS+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) projects held here on 25-26 January 2017. Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (center), SEARCA Director, and Dr. Maria Cristeta N. Cuaresma (second from left), SEARCA Program Head for Graduate Education and Institutional Development Department (GEIDD), attended the meeting with Dr. Poonpipope Kasemsap (leftmost) of Kasetsart University (KU), Thailand, project leader of the ERASMUS+ CBHE project *MS in Food Security and Climate Change in the*

Southeast Asian Region co-implemented by SEARCA and KU. At the meeting, they met Dr. Vasileios Makrakis (second from right) of the University of Crete, Greece and Dr. Omar Ramzy (rightmost) of the Heliopolis University for Sustainable Development, Egypt, who are both involved in the development of a master's program in Climate Change, Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in the Southern Mediterranean region. The two parties discussed the possibility of collaborating on some of the course modules for their master's programs. (LLDDomingo)

SEARCA conducts scoping sessions in Phi Cordillera region

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines—SEARCA conducted scoping sessions with partners in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) on 22-24 February 2017 for the project titled *Supporting Smallholder Farmers in Asia and Pacific Islands Region through Strengthened Agricultural Advisory Services (SAAS)* funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The aim was to grasp the prevailing issues and identify opportunities to strengthen agricultural advisory services (AAS) in CAR ahead of the project launch in the region. CAR was selected as a pilot area to test proven strategies and approaches in knowledge management from other countries and strengthen the capacities of AAS actors.

SEARCA, along with the Asia Pacific Island Network for Rural Advisory Services (APIRAS), sought to gain perspective of the AAS system in CAR through dialogues with key representatives from the regional Agricultural Training Institute (ATI-CAR) and the Cordillera Highland Agriculture Resource Management (CHARM) Project.

[SEARCA conducts/ to page 9](#)

IRRI-SEARCA study examines Phl, Vietnam climate change mitigation policy in rice

Despite some differences between the Philippines and Vietnam, climate change policies in the two countries can generally be characterized to have a robust and diverse policy framework, strong institutional mandates, but, lack clear policy guidelines for climate change actions and policy incentives to stimulate or motivate the active participation and involvement of stakeholders.

These were some of the findings of the project titled “National Action Plans for Mitigation in Rice: Comparative Assessment of Institutional Setting and Possible Entry Points for Intervention in the Philippines and Vietnam” presented by Dr. Lucrecio L. Rebugio, Principal Researcher, at SEARCA on 1 March 2017.

A collaboration between SEARCA and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the project aimed to increase understanding of the institutional settings of climate change policy in agriculture, specifically mitigation in rice.

The study conducted a comparative analysis between the Philippines and Vietnam on the following aspects: institutional setting, processes, and stakeholders in climate change policy implementation; Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC); translating national climate change policies into local action; and bottlenecks and recommendations for effective climate change policy implementation.

In terms of climate change institutional setting, the two countries have highly differentiated

climate change institutions. Both are structurally and functionally strong in some areas while some weakness can be observed in structure, human capacity, and financial capability.

The study found that policy implementation processes in the Philippines and Vietnam still require development and implementation of climate-smart modalities and strategies to pave the way for policy mainstreaming, program planning and execution, monitoring and evaluation, and institution building.

The project team recommended policy intervention actions specifically through the formulation of policy guidelines for climate-smart actions, incentives for private sector participation, and revision of concerned policies to eliminate apparent overlap and inconsistency between agriculture policies and climate change policies.

Structural intervention actions through organizational re-engineering or restructuring towards structural-functional efficiency, effective policy-research-extension interface; creation of policy and program coordinating structure at the national and local levels, and a more participatory climate change program decision-making process. Research and development interventions were also among the recommendations. Underscored was the importance of R&D support to provide scientific basis for policy formulation and revision, organizational restructuring, and capacity building and scientific tools and



Dr. Lucrecio L. Rebugio, Project Leader, presents the findings of the study.

methods. The latter are for assessments and development of a database for innovating and transforming climate change program modalities and extension strategies. The project team also identified responsible institutions that can be involved in these interventions.

Dr. Rebugio, together with associate researcher Dr. Susan Sandra L. Ila, presented the results of the study to Dr. Reiner Wassmann and Dr. Ole Sander, IRRI representatives, as well as Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, Ms. Carmen Nyhria G. Rogel, and Ms. Maria Katrina R. Punto, all of SEARCA's Research and Development Department. (Report from MKRPunto)

Senator commends SEARCA for contributions to crop insurance bill



Philippine Senator Cynthia A. Villar (right), Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food, discusses with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit Jr., SEARCA Director, how SEARCA has contributed to the bill on crop insurance that she filed in the Senate.

The lady lawmaker also informed Dr. Saguiguit of another bill she is drafting to institutionalize school gardens and urban agriculture across the country. She stressed that such legislation will increase not only the income from agriculture, but

also to the consciousness about the importance of agriculture.

Senator Villar also underscored the need to make the agriculture curriculum more practical, focusing on what farmers really need to know, which may not necessarily be very complex technical courses.

Before the dialogue with SEARCA officials, Senator Villar gave the keynote address at the “1st International Small & Family Farmers: New & Beginning Farmers Conference” organized by MoCA Family Farm held on 20-21 March 2017 at SEARCA. (LLDDomingo)

Cambodia gov't and SEARCA partner to develop HEI capacities

SIEM REAP, Cambodia—H.E. Touch Visalsok, Undersecretary of State of Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS), cited his ministry's partnership with SEARCA and the Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) as a good model on capacity building for Cambodian academics.

He said this as he opened the five-day *Workshop on Developing Fundable Research Project Proposals in Agricultural and Rural Development* on 28 February 2017 in Siem Reap, for which 50 officials, faculty, and staff from 11 higher education institutions (HEI) in Cambodia signed up.

Dr. Nith Bunlay, Deputy Director General for Higher Education and Coordinator of the Higher Education Quality and Capacity Improvement Project (HEQCIP) at MOEYS, thanked RUA, which is a recipient of SEARCA's Institutional Development Assistance (IDA), for serving as a bridge between MOEYS and SEARCA. MOEYS took care of the logistical and administrative arrangements, while SEARCA provided technical inputs.

RUA was well-represented in the workshop with 18 of the total 50 participants comprising officials, faculty members, and staff.

Dr. Ngo Bunthan, RUA Rector and Cambodia's Representative to the SEARCA Governing Board,



Dr. Ngo Bunthan (leftmost), RUA Rector and Cambodia's Representative to the SEARCA Governing Board, assists one group in a simulation exercise.

said that related to this workshop, SEARCA has supported RUA to develop the second of two strategic plans it has implemented since 2000. The first strategic plan (2000-2010) focused on transforming traditional study and curriculum development at RUA, while the second (2010-2025) focuses on capacity building. He said RUA hopes to be a research university by the end of 2025.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, was represented by Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, Program Head for Knowledge Management. He said he appreciated the initiative of RUA and MOEYS to request for and organize the workshop. He opined that the workshop is highly relevant,

so much so that SEARCA hopes to offer it too to neighboring transition economies with the same partnership modality.

A highly experience- and practice-based workshop, the learning event was led by Prof. Wilfredo B. Carada of the University of the Philippines Los Baños-College of Public Affairs and Development (UPLB-CPAf). The participants identified and analyzed ARD problems; deliberated on the objectives and interventions, and prioritized these; packaged fundable project proposals; and deliberated on actions for their future projects and university research and extension programs. (Report from MCHCadiz)

NU, SEARCA define framework of collaboration in workshop

Nagoya University (NU) and SEARCA conducted a workshop to formulate the strategic action plan of collaboration in research and development on 16 March 2017 at SEARCA.

The meeting was attended by NU professors led by Dr. Akira Yamauchi, Director, International Cooperation Center for Agricultural Education (ICCAE) and Professor, Graduate School of Bioagricultural Sciences. SEARCA was represented by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., Director, along with program heads and the Senior Fellow for Food Safety Dr. Maria Concepcion Lizada; Dr. Jose L. Bacusmo University Professor and Director for Research, Visayas State University; and selected staff.

The workshop tackled the proposed framework of collaboration with emphasis on the objectives,

desired development outcomes, and parameters and principles of collaboration, as well as its programmatic focus, thematic areas and integrated components.

NU and SEARCA agreed to focus the collaboration on *Strengthening Food and Nutrition Security under Conditions of Climate Change and Changing Food Demand in Southeast Asia*. They tentatively identified the following as the priority thematic areas: sustainable production systems, climate-smart agriculture, food safety and quality assurance, agrobiodiversity, and models for community development by linking extension and education.

SEARCA suggested projects on risk-based food safety systems; research and capacity building towards the development of jackfruit industry in

Inopacan, Leyte; mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture; and academic exchange for graduate education in agriculture and natural resources.

On the other hand, NU presented concept notes on different researchable areas, including joint research on plant protection and abiotic stress tolerance of crop plants; strengthening food security and nutritional improvement through interdisciplinary approach; developing model of feeding management for the improvement of dairy farming systems; forming new academic platform to develop tropical dairy science as research field in Southeast Asia; rice production improvement in problem soils under climate change; and efficient nitrogen and carbon

NU, SEARCA define/ to page 6

SEARCA shares climate resilience, green growth initiatives in Malawi forum

LILONGWE, Malawi—The successful participation of the Philippine delegation in the *Targeted Topics Forum (TTF): Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in the NAP Process* held here on 7-9 February 2017 earned the Philippines an invitation from the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) to join the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Global Network's Project Steering Committee. The Philippines was invited through the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

The NAP Global Network is funded by the United States Department of State and Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through the IISD which serves as the NAP Global Network Secretariat.

The Philippine delegation was composed of Mr. Alexis Lapiz; Dr. Lope B. Santos III, Program Specialist, Project Development and Technical Services (PDTs) of SEARCA; and Ms. Carlyn Diaz from the Department of Finance. Fifteen countries were represented in the TTF, namely: Albania, Brazil, Grenada, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Peru, the Philippines, Togo, Japan, USA, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, and Switzerland.

The TTF covered three aspects of M&E, namely: foundational issues (purpose, use and policy environment), methodological issues related to M&E of NAPs (challenges, opportunities, and ways forward), and operational issues for the design and implementation of and M&E system.

Mr. Lapiz reported that since last year the Philippines, with assistance from development



Dr. Lope Santos III shares the priorities and way forward for the Philippines M&E in the NAP Process.

partners, has conducted a series of orientations and workshops on the NAP process.

He said CCC is closely working with the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) in the preparation of Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAP), which is crucial in advancing the NAP process and the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) at the local levels.

SEARCA has assisted the Philippine delegation in the preparation and presentation of the country paper on M&E NAP Process during the TTF. The Philippine delegation shared project experiences related to M&E from the two Asian Development Bank (ADB) Technical Assistance to CCC in Demonstrating Ecotown and Climate Resilience and Green Growth (CRGG) in Upper Marikina (ADB TA-8111-PH), and Lower Marikina, Camarines Sur and Davao Oriental (ADB TA-

8493- PH), as well as from CCC's ecotown and CRGG demonstration in Palawan, Surigao Del Sur, and Oriental Mindoro.

In both ADB projects, SEARCA provided professional services covering Baseline Data Analysis, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, Cost-Benefit Analysis of Priority Adaptation Measures, Natural Resources Assessment (NRA), Environment and Natural Resources Accounting (ENRA), CRGG Roadmap, and Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP).

SEARCA has assisted 11 LGUs in the preparation of their respective LCCAP: Baras, Cainta and Rodriguez in Rizal province; Milaor, Naga City and San Fernando in Camarines Sur; Banganga, Boston, and Cateel in Davao Oriental; and Quezon City and Marikina City in Metro Manila. (LBSantosIII)

New climate change book published

SEARCA published a pioneering work titled "Learning and Coping with Change: Case Stories of Climate Change Adaptation in Southeast Asia," which features selected case stories on climate change adaptation initiatives that are being implemented in the region.

The book is the outcome of the *First Regional Knowledge Sharing Writeshop on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) in Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD)*, which SEARCA hosted on 15-17 April 2015 and co-organized with the Oscar M. Lopez Center for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Foundation Inc. (OML Center). The writeshop brought together leading scientists and researchers from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and five international agencies and

academic institutions working on agriculture and climate change.

The book is intended to enrich knowledge and enhance awareness among various stakeholders as well as policy- and decision-makers that adaptation efforts address the challenges brought by climate change and that such CCA initiatives also help achieve goals that benefit society. Such goals include sustainable agricultural and rural development, disaster risk reduction, and improvements in quality of life.

Although there is no "one-size-fits-all" adaptation, there are similarities in approaches, methodologies, and processes in identifying and implementing CCA goals and strategies as narrated in the 13 case stories featured in the book. (ZMEstareja)

NU, SEARCA define/ from page 5

recycling using locally available resources in rice-based culture.

NU and SEARCA will further develop the framework of collaboration and tap researchers who will work on the various projects along the thematic areas.

Dr. Yamauchi acknowledged SEARCA's efforts in organizing the workshop. He expressed hope that through the Center's assistance and network in Southeast Asia, NU will be able to expand research and capacity building activities in the region.

For his part, Dr. Saguit conveyed SEARCA's gratitude to the NU delegation for coming to Los Baños for the workshop and emphasized the importance of communication towards successful project formulation and implementation. (MKRPunto)

SEARCA, KU and partners finalize new MS programs

BANGKOK, Thailand—Thirty-three representatives from 16 partners converged at Kasetsart University (KU) here on 14-16 February 2017 for a workshop to finalize the training tracks and develop a quality plan for the Master of Science in Food Security and Climate Change (MS FSCC).

The MS FSCC project is partially funded by the ERASMUS+ Capacity Building in Higher Education program of the European Commission (EC).

The project is an initiative of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) and is being led by KU and SEARCA. Dr. Poonpipove Kasemsap of KU serves as the MS FSCC project leader.

Aside from the five UC member universities, six other universities in Southeast Asia, and three universities from Europe are partners in the project. SEARCA, the French institute IAVFF-AGREENIUM, and AGRINATURA—a consortium of European universities—are also project partners. Dr. Didier Pillot of Montpellier SupAgro and Vice President of AGRINATURA is instrumental in the project's development and its implementation.

Speakers at the opening ceremony were Dr. Chongrak Wachrinrat, Acting President of KU; Dr. Fernando C. Sanchez, Jr., Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Dr. Pillot; and Dr. Maria Cristeta Cuaresma, SEARCA Program Head for Graduate Education and Institutional Development.

The workshop also tackled the rules of the Educational, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of EC in relation to the grant and its implementation. Target dates for the other activities were also discussed, including the final training tracks and the conduct of the summer course at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The summer course set in July 2017 will be co-organized by UGM and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU) in Austria.

MS FSCC students will get two degrees from two universities. They will be spending at least a month in the second university, and take a summer course, possibly in a third university. (CJVENalbes)

PhI higher ed officials briefed on agri-biotech courses in SE Asia

MANILA, Philippines—Top officials of private higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines were briefed on the current agricultural biotechnology landscape and course offerings on the subject in the country and Southeast Asia.

The briefing was conducted during the by Dr. Maria Cristeta N. Cuaresma, Program Head for Graduate Education and Institutional Development (GEIDD), and Dr. Maria Monina Cecilia A. Villena, Special Projects Coordinator and Network Administrator of SEARCA's Biotechnology Information Center (BIC), at the *Top Management Program for Private Higher Education Institution (HEI) Presidents and Chancellors: Crafting New Strategies for the*

K-to-12 Transition Years (2016-2021) organized and hosted by the Asian Institute of Management through the Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of Development Management (AIM-ZSDM) on 12 January 2016.

The training program sought to develop the participants as transformational leaders in three areas: Institution Building, Academic Management, and Resource Mobilization.

Dr. Cuaresma introduced the mandate and activities of SEARCA and the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC), including

the UC program offerings on biotechnology. SEARCA serves as the consortium's secretariat.

A presentation on the global and local status of biotech crop adoption as well as its potential and documented benefits was given by Dr. Villena. Moreover, she briefed the participants on activities of BIC which aims to address the needs of the region for a highly credible, sound and factual source of biotechnology information accessible to various stakeholders. She also introduced the BS Agricultural Biotechnology Program of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). (Report from SMMercado)



Dr. Maria Cristeta N. Cuaresma (center) and Dr. Maria Monina Cecilia A. Villena (second from right), both of SEARCA, with Dr. Federico M. Macaranas (second from left), AIM Program Director; Dr. Edilberto de Jesus (rightmost), AIM Professor Emeritus; and participants of the AIM-organized training program funded by the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Snapshots



BRIEFING THE NEW UP PRESIDENT. Newly installed University of the Philippines (UP) President Danilo L. Concepcion (right), who assumed office in February 2017, visited the SEARCA on 10 March 2017. He was received by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (center), SEARCA Director, who gave him a briefing on the Center's current strategic thrusts, programs, and activities while UP Los Baños Chancellor Fernando C. Sanchez, Jr. looks on.



WELCOMING THE DUTCH AMBASSADOR. Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (right), SEARCA Director, welcomes H.E. Marion Derckx (left), Ambassador of the Netherlands to the Philippines, when she came to SEARCA on 10 March 2017 to speak at a seminar titled "Innovation for sustainability: What can the Philippine-Netherlands partnership contribute?" organized by the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and hosted by SEARCA.



NEPALESE GOV'T OFFICERS BRIEFED. SEARCA briefed 25 officers and staff (in photo) of Nepal's Ministry of Livestock Development-Department of Livestock Services, Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries-Agro Enterprise Center, and the High Mountain Agribusiness and Livelihood Improvement (HIMALI) Project who visited the Center on 7 February 2017. The guests were interested to learn about SEARCA's programs and activities, particularly those related to agricultural supply/value chain and agricultural technologies. Also in the photo are SEARCA Program Heads who received the visitors.



JAPANESE BIO-BUSINESS STUDENTS' VISIT. SEARCA welcomed the 26th batch of bio-business practice students from Tokyo University of Agriculture (Tokyo NODAI), Japan on 16 February 2017. Two Tokyo NODAI assistant professors accompanied the 18 students who came to the Center as part of their farm practice, which is intended to provide exposure to tropical agriculture and Philippine bio-business. In the photo with the Japanese guests are Ms. Maria Teresa B. Ferino (standing, rightmost) of the SEARCA Office of the Director, and Prof. Loida E. Mojica of the University of the Philippines Los Baños.



KM BENCHMARKING. Mr. Benito E. Benozo (center), Manager; Ms. Geri Mae A. Tolentino and Ms. Reyna M. Parman (second from left), both Project Associate, Information Management Unit; Mr. Jelico Angelo V. Arriesgado (third from right), Senior Officer, Information Management Unit; and Mr. Jesse M. Tuason (rightmost), Senior Officer, Education Media Unit, all of the SEAMEO INNOTECH Knowledge Management and Networking Office (KMNO), visited SEARCA on 28 March 2017 as part of their KM benchmarking, which is an initial step in to scale up its current KM system. The upgrade is in line with its transition to ISO 9011: 2015 version and the implementation of its Ninth Five-year Development Plan. Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz (fourth from right), SEARCA Program Head for KM, led the briefing of the INNOTECH staff. With her were Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay (second from right), Unit Head for Knowledge Resources; Dr. Maria Monina Cecilia A. Villena (fourth from left), Network Administrator and Special Coordinator, SEARCA Biotechnology Information Center (BIC); and Ms. Mina G. Talatala, Library and Archives Administrator. They briefed the visitors on SEARCA's programs, operations, knowledge products, and knowledge portals dedicated to specific topics (i.e., agricultural biotechnology, climate change, food and nutrition security).

“Corporate” business model to help small farmers

No less than the president of Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) presented a business model called “corporate”—which marries the concept of corporate farming and the features of cooperatives—to help smallholder farmers organize themselves into a major player in the agricultural food markets.

Mr. Alex V. Buenaventura, LBP President, gave his presentation at the *Symposium on Corporate: A Business Model for Modernizing Philippine Agriculture* convened by SEARCA, through its Biotechnology Information Center (BIC), and its partners on 21 February 2017 at its headquarters.



Mr. Alex Buenaventura, LBP President, presents the “corporate” business model.

SEARCA’s partners in organizing the event were the Coalition for Agricultural Modernization in the Philippines, Inc. (CAMP), Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), Land Bank of the Philippines, University of the Philippines Los Baños-Institute of Plant Breeding (UPLB-IPB), and the Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) Philippines.

According to Mr. Buenaventura, a Joint Venture Corporate (JVC) is a stock-for-profit corporation, 49% of which will be owned by hundreds of small farmers and fisherfolks, and 51% of which will be owned by a big agri-processing corporation.

He said among the “unique pro-farmer features” of JVC is its “being totally managed by a large land consolidation of small farms,” ownership of which will remain with the small farmers who will enter an individual farm management agreement with JVC; as well as provision of regular employment and housing loans to participating farmers.

The symposium also featured a panel discussion wherein Ms. Evelyn G. Laviña, Undersecretary for Agribusiness and High Value Crops, Department of Agriculture (DA); Mr. Dante S. Delima, Chief Operating Officer of Agri-tech Integrated Services Corporation; and Mr. Reynaldo Antonio D. Laguda, Executive Director of Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), who gave their perspectives on “corporate” and agricultural modernization from the public, private, and nongovernmental sectors.

In his message, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, said with its initiatives geared towards agribusiness and entrepreneurship, and value chain development for agricultural commodities, SEARCA hopes to help smallholder farmers so that they can competitively participate and benefit from the growing agricultural food markets. (SMMercado)

Japanese museum expert helps develop SE Asian AgriMuseum

SEARCA looked to Dr. Eiji Mizushima of the University of Tsukuba, a renowned museum expert, to provide technical advice in its efforts to establish a Southeast Asian AgriMuseum at its headquarters.



Dr. Eiji Mizushima

Dr. Mizushima visited SEARCA on March 6-10 with support from the Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) under its Expert Dispatch Program to the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) centers.

The President of the Japan Museum Management Academy (JMMA) and the Museum and Culture Advanced Research Centre in Asia

Pacific (MARC-ASPAC) brought his wealth of knowledge and experience when he gave a public lecture titled “Museums in an Information Society: From Collection to Digital Archives” at SEARCA’s Agriculture and Development Seminar Series (ADSS) on 6 March 2017. He tackled museology, cultural resources management, and digital archives and collection management. (LLDDomingo)

SEARCA conducts/ from page 3

Several successful agricultural extension approaches or programs that could be scaled up and replicated in other areas were identified. These include the Farmers Field School, Farm Business School, School-on-the-Air, and Learning Sites for Practical Agriculture (LSPA).

Dr. Cameron Odsey, CHARM Project Manager, pushed for increased attention on the role of traditional organizations among indigenous peoples in helping promote agricultural innovations.

The CAR partners also identified key policy issues that constrain the development of upland agricultural extension, such as limited funding, banner programs, and low prioritization. (LBSantos III)

Results-based M&E system strengthens action research

A re-echoing workshop on Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBME) was conducted on 31 January - 2 February 2017 for stakeholders of the SEARCA action research project titled *Piloting and Upscaling Effective Models of Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD)* in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines.

The full title of the piloting project is *Revitalizing the Calamansi Industry in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro through Strengthening Linkages among Farmers, LGU, NGAs, SUC, CSOs and the Private Sector*. LGU stands for local government unit; NGAs for national government agencies; SUC for state universities and colleges; and CSOs for civil society organizations.

RBME workshop

The activity was an offshoot of the *Training-Workshop on RBME for ISARD* conducted by SEARCA in August 2016, which served as a forum for SEARCA partners to learn and act collaboratively in understanding, developing, and using an RBME system within the context of ISARD and anchored on building and empowering human and institutional capacities.

Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology (MinSCAT), SEARCA's partner in the ISARD project in Victoria, led the workshop, which was attended by farmer-leaders who are members of the SEARCA-organized Victoria Kalamansi Farmers Federation (VKFF) as well as agricultural technologists and technicians of the Victoria LGU.

Other participants were ISARD project team members and faculty members, researchers and staff of MinSCAT who were keen to improve their research skills and learn specific methodologies in conducting transdisciplinary action research.

The RBME re-echoing workshop in Victoria provided a general overview of the role of measurement in determining project performance and success. RBME can be applied not only to the ISARD project, but also to other relevant RD&E projects of MinSCAT, agriculture-related programs of Victoria LGU, and in conducting basic farm-level M&E of the VKFF members.

Basic M&E concepts and principles; situation, scenario, and stakeholder analysis and organization and management; the basic RBME framework; and sustainability planning of the piloting project using the RBME system, were covered.

At the close of the workshop, an RBME plan for the ISARD calamansi project was completed

with inputs directly provided by the primary stakeholders and direct beneficiaries. A monitoring team was organized to operationalize and facilitate the implementation of the RBME plan.

Operationalizing their learnings from SEARCA's RBME training-workshop in August 2016, Dr. Ma. Concepcion L. Mores, ISARD On-site Coordinator; Dr. Lourdes V. Icalla, MinSCAT Director for Extension; Ms. Katherine P. Escalona, MinSCAT Director for Research; Ms. Caroline G. Manuel, Victoria Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator; Mr. Henry M. Custodio, SEARCA Program Specialist for Research; and Ms. Angelic M. Reglos, SEARCA Project Assistant, served as resource persons and experts for the RBME workshop.

Baseline survey

Simultaneous to the RBME training-workshop, SEARCA conducted the initial phase of the farm

and household baseline survey of the VKFF members.

The VKFF is composed of farmer leaders from different calamansi farmer organizations in Victoria, which were organized specifically for the ISARD piloting project. The data collected will serve as inputs in the RBME system and a socioeconomic impact evaluation that will be conducted upon completion of the ISARD piloting project in 2018.

A team for the ISARD piloting project from SEARCA's Research and Development Department developed the survey instrument that aimed to generate farm information on financing, production, and marketing as well as collect household data on consumption patterns, income and expenditure, and household profiling. SEARCA also conducted the training of enumerators and actual initial interview of selected farmer leaders. (HMCustodio/AMReglos)



Ms. Angelic M. Reglos (standing) facilitates a small group during the training of enumerators for the farm and household survey.



Using the Problem Tree and Objective Tree Analysis, calamansi farmer-leaders identified problems in the industry and came up with possible solutions.

Forum tackles state of agri R&D, implications on ASEAN integration

SEARCA organized and hosted a *Regional Forum on State-of-the-Art of Agricultural Research and Development and its Implications to ASEAN Integration* held on 27-28 February 2017. The aim was to bring together agricultural researchers and practitioners in the Philippines as they present their best research works in the fields of social, natural, and physical sciences.

It was held under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR)-funded project titled *Strengthening Agricultural Research and Development (ARD) Towards ASEAN Integration* implemented by SEARCA.

The forum gathered 46 R&D practitioners from academe, DA Regional Field Offices, and research institutions in the Philippines as well as six delegates from Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In his message, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, emphasized the need to build up investments in R&D and to develop linkages among institutions in the region to promote more competitive agricultural and rural development in the country in view of the ASEAN integration.

Dr. Nicomedes P. Eleazar, DA-BAR Executive Director, said the forum immensely complemented the other project activities to strengthen the researchers' capabilities in keeping with the regional integration.

He also commended SEARCA for its dedication in serving the Philippine agricultural sector with its wealth of expertise and linkages as the country gears toward change brought by the ASEAN integration.

The keynote speech of Dr. Agustin B. Molina, Jr., Bioversity International Honorary Research

Fellow and Regional Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific Commodities System and Genetic Resources Programme, centered on research for development (R4D) towards impact. He emphasized the need for collaboration, integrated with a series of complementary activities along the process, to achieve developmental goals. He concluded that impact of R4D scientific output is measured not much on how many have read, but on how many have used.

Fourteen country papers were presented during the forum, including a plenary paper on "The Philippine ARD & ASEAN Integration: Status, Challenges and Opportunities" by Dr. Eliseo Ponce.

The project team, led by Dr. Prudenciano U. Gordoncillo, provided technical and administrative support in the conduct of the forum. (AJSCarandang)

PCC, SEARCA conduct project review

The partnership of SEARCA and the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) spanning several years continues with four projects being implemented by SEARCA for PCC:

- Building Capacity and Strengthening Partnership for Carabao-Development Program
- Capacity Development under Livestock Research and Biotechnology Research and Development of the Carabao Development Program
- International Service Provider for Local and International Graduate Scholarship Program in Livestock Research and Biotechnology for the Philippine Carabao Center
- Value Chain Analysis (VCA) of Carabao and Carabao-based products in Visayas and Mindanao

The project review was held on 26 January 2017 at SEARCA Headquarters. Project objectives, completed and remaining deliverables, as well as fund utilization status of the abovementioned projects were presented.

Dr. Arnel N. del Barrio, PCC Acting Executive Director stated in his welcome remarks that the projects being implemented by SEARCA were able to help their agency deliver their targets, craft relevant policies, and fund project proposals from different regions across the country amounting to PHP 100 million.

He added that for 2017, PCC would like to focus their investments on Carabao-Based Enterprise Development (CBED) as Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte aims to make food available and affordable to all Filipinos. As such, PCC continues to align their goals with the Department of Agriculture, which targets to increase the income of the agricultural sector workforce especially the farmers.

PCC delegates were led by Dr. del Barrio; Dr. Liza G. Battad, Chief, Planning and Information Management Division; Dr. Anabelle S. Sarabia, Chief, Research and Development Division; and Dr. Caro B. Salces, Regional Director of PCC at Ubay Stock Farm, Bohol. Other PCC staff include Ms. Rowena Bumanlag, Information Officer III/ Creative Writing Specialist; Mr. Alvin David,



Dr. Arnel N. del Barrio, PCC Acting Executive Director, welcomes the meeting participants.

Planning Assistant II; and Mr. Zadieshar Sanchez, Administrative Officer V.

The consultants present during the event include Dr. Serafin Talisayon, Team Leader and KM Policy and Planning Specialist; Dr. Alexander G. Flor, KM Specialist; and Mr. Jesus Lapitan, Technical Consultant. (SGLQuiñones)



From left: Dr. Lope B. Santos III, Program Specialist and Officer-in-Charge, Project Development and Technical Services; Dr. Serafin Talisayon, Team Leader and KM Policy and Planning Specialist; and Dr. Alexander G. Flor, KM Specialist

Alumni Notes

ABANTO APPOINTED CNSC PRESIDENT



Camarines Norte State College (CNSC) welcomed Dr. Rusty S. Abanto as its new president on 16 February 2017. Dr. Abanto is a proud SEARCA graduate alumnus funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

He earned his PhD in Environmental Science from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), and his MS in the same field from University of Nueva Caceres. He is no stranger to UPLB as he also completed his BS in Forestry at the university.

Dr. Abanto has long been an active academician and researcher in the field of environmental science. He has produced several publications and has served in key positions in CNSC and other organizations.

During his term as CNSC President, Dr. Abanto aims to further harness the college's expertise in the arts and sciences towards achieving social and ecological responsiveness, and becoming a premier higher education institution.

MOJICA DELIVERS SEARCA PROF CHAIR LECTURE

Dr. Ruel M. Mojica (PhD, agricultural engineering, UPLB) delivered his first SEARCA Professorial Chair Lecture titled *Socio-Economic and Environmental Assessment of a Microcontroller-based Coffee Roasting Machine: Implications for Market Potential and Technology*



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (left), SEARCA Director, presents certificate of appreciation to Dr. Ruel M. Mojica, SEARCA alumnus and professorial chair grantee.

Commercialization on 8 March 2017 at Cavite State University (CavSU).

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, gave an inspirational message at the seminar and commended Dr. Mojica for being one of the few Southeast Asian Professorial Chair grantees. He said it reflects Dr. Mojica's proven track record and passion for research on coffee production.

To help small-scale coffee farmers, Dr. Mojica developed the locally made, efficient, and cost-effective coffee roasting machine. In his study, he assessed the level of awareness and willingness of small-scale coffee farmers to adopt roasting technology, the economic viability of the machine, and its effects on the income of farmers and processors, and the market potential of the machine. He also determined the environmental impact of the machine by comparing the fuel consumption and its corresponding carbon dioxide emission.

Dr. Ruel M. Mojica, a SEARCA graduate scholarship recipient, is now Director of CavSU's National Coffee Research, Development and Extension Center. In this capacity, he is determined to help develop more appropriate agricultural equipment for small-scale farmers in the Philippines.

The SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair Grant recognizes outstanding Southeast Asian experts in the academe who have championed Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD) in Southeast Asia. Since 2012, SEARCA has awarded 21 such grants. (ZRJalotjot)

SEARCA ALUMNA BAGS BEST PAPER



Dr. Merites M. Buot, a SEARCA graduate alumna (PhD, community development, 2016), won the Best Paper Award for her paper titled "Community Wellbeing Indices (CWBi): Implication to Policy Development," which she presented during the *13th Forests and Natural Resources Research Society of the Philippines (FORESPI) International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Climate Change* held on 10-11 November 2016 in Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines.

Her winning paper was co-authored by Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, Professor and Dean of the College of Public Affairs, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). Dr. Buot presented it under

the conference sub-theme "Linkages, Policy Development, and Green Economy."

Dr. Buot is Associate Professor of Leisure and Wellbeing Studies at the Department of Human Kinetics of the UPLB College of Arts and Sciences. She completed her PhD with support from SEARCA as one of its PhD research scholars. (Report from JNDe Guzman)

UPSE prof gets SEARCA travel grant

BANGKOK, Thailand—Dr. Majah-Leah V. Ravago, Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines School of Economics (UPSE), was awarded a SEARCA travel grant to present her paper titled "Risk Management and Coping Strategies: Climate Change and Agriculture in the Philippines" at the *9th Asian Society of Agricultural Economists (ASAE) International Conference* held here on 11-13 January 2017.

ASAE is a recognized association of agricultural economists and other professionals in Asia, and its biennial international conferences effectively promote scientific and technical interactions among agricultural economists, development practitioners, policymakers, academicians, researchers, and students from all over the world.

Dr. Ravago's paper, co-authored with Dr. James A. Roumasset and Dr. Karl Robert L. Jandoc, will be published as a chapter in a forthcoming joint publication of the Philippine National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) titled "The Future of Philippine Agriculture: Scenarios, Policies, and Investments under Climate Change" edited by Dr. Mark W. Rosegrant and Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla.

Dr. Ravago is currently the Program Director of the Energy Policy and Development Program (EPDP), a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) grant at the UPecon Foundation, Inc. In 2016, she was awarded Outstanding Young Scientist (OYS) in economics by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) of the Philippines.

Now in its 10th year, the SEARCA Travel Grants Program continues to reinforce the Center's efforts and resources in the promotion of inclusive and sustainable agricultural and rural development toward food and nutrition security and poverty reduction in the Southeast Asian region. (MVRavago/HMCustodio)

School and home gardens project scaled up through networking

More than a year since the launch of the *Participatory Action Research on School and Community-Based Food and Nutrition Program (SCBFNP) for Literacy, Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development* led by SEARCA, the six pilot schools in Laguna, Philippines have made their school garden a learning site for the children and a significant component of the school feeding program.

The project focuses on three important pillars: nutrition (improved food diversity and availability), education (learning by doing food production activities), and economics (savings on food costs and added income).

The pilot schools have gained confidence in terms of said three pillars and have started to establish important linkages at the local level that will help sustain the project gains. They have become leaders in sharing technical knowledge about the school gardens, including sharing of seedlings and other planting materials with neighboring schools and households in their communities.

To formalize this linkage of the pilot schools with other schools and their respective communities, a *Training of Trainers (TOT) for Scaling-up and Sustaining the School and Home Gardens Project towards Year-round Food and Nutrition Security* was held on 27-28 February 2017 at the Pedro Guevara Memorial National High School in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Participants were district supervisors, school heads, and teachers of the six pilot schools and 18 target sister schools for scaling-up. Participants also include heads and staff of the following local government offices involved in the pilot schools: Municipal Nutrition Action Office, Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office, Municipal Agriculture Office, and Municipal Livelihood and Cooperative Development Office.

Producing more trainers

The TOT aimed to enable the participants to explain and practice basic facilitation and communication skills for participatory community organizing; form intra (within) and inter (with other) city/municipality networks to facilitate coordination of planned activities; prepare networking plans and calendar of activities to guide implementation of collaborative activities of the networks; and clarify concepts and recommended practices on food and nutrition; organic vegetable production and crop protection; and organic fertilizer production.

Dr. Bessie M. Burgos, SEARCA Program Head for Research and Development, gave an overview of the project and its accomplishments.

Dr. Evelyn Jocson, District Supervisor of Sta. Cruz and representative of DepEd-Laguna, thanked SEARCA and UPLB for the project. She emphasized the need for the sustainability of vegetable gardening not only in the schools but more so in the households. Meanwhile, Ms. Genoveva Aquino of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist reaffirmed her office's continued support to the project.

Ms. Teresita Ramos, Provincial Nutrition Action Officer of Laguna, lauded the efforts of SEARCA, UPLB, and DepEd-Laguna in integrating food production and nutrition in the curriculum of the schools. She shared her hope to increase vegetable consumption in the diets of schoolchildren whose school lessons include food production and nutrition.

Joint action planning

A total of 57 heads of schools and LGU officials took part in the joint action planning. Guided by the concept of scaling-up as presented by Dr. Blesilda M. Calub, University Researcher at UPLB who leads the project, the participants, grouped by municipality, prepared their action plans for sustaining and expanding the gains of the project.

Dr. Calub described the process of scaling-up with emphasis on intra- (within) and inter- (with other) city/municipality networking. For the intra-networks, she explained that there are vertical and horizontal scaling-up components. Vertical scaling-up involves the partnership of the pilot schools with the relevant offices in

School and home gardens/ to page 15



Clockwise from the top left: a participant shares her group's joint action plan; participants discuss their outputs; participants prepare their joint action plan.



Dr. Pio A. Javier (third from left), entomologist and UPLB Adjunct Professor, shows pest damage on a vegetable.



Dr. Blesilda M. Calub, University Researcher at UPLB and project leader, demonstrates composting using baskets.

Community-based waterways clearing part of ADB-funded project

A *Community-based Waterways Clearing Project as an Adaptive Measure to Reduce Flooding* kicked off on 10 March 2017 as part of the *Climate Resilience and Green Growth in Critical Watersheds (TA8493)* funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB) through the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) and implemented by SEARCA with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) of the Philippines.

SEARCA, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) of the Philippines, and the Municipality of Boston in Davao Oriental, Philippines conducted an orientation as a kick-off activity of the pilot project titled “Community-based Waterways Clearing Project as an Adaptive Measure to Reduce Flooding” on 10 March 2017.

An orientation was jointly organized by SEARCA, CCC, and the municipality of Boston, Davao Oriental, Philippines. The pilot project will cover dredging and clearing of 2.7 km of waterways covering Barangays Carmen and Cabasagan, as well as the Poblacion, in Boston. The project will engage 35 laborers from the community organizations to provide manual support to the mechanical dredging, which will be carried out by the municipality of Boston.

Project consultants have visited and inspected the project area and provided technical guidance to the community and LGU personnel.

On behalf of the mayor of Boston, Mr. Judith Castres, his executive assistant, thanked ADB,

CCC, and SEARCA for the assistance to his municipality. The hope among his people, he said, is that CCC will further extend its support to Boston.

On the other hand, the community representatives expressed their commitment to support the municipality. They cited how they supported the previous rehabilitation projects with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labor Organization (ILO) after Boston was ravaged by Typhoon Pablo.

In response, Mr. Alexis Lapiz, International Research Specialist and Ecotown Coordinator of CCC, said Boston can submit a proposal to access the People’s Survival Fund (PSF) for its priority climate change adaptation initiatives. He added that CCC gives premium to community-based and people-oriented projects, particularly those that deal with environmental conservation and protection, livelihood and enterprise development, and climate change adaptation.

SEARCA’s consortium said it will assist Boston in preparing the feasibility study of its project covering the sea wall, mangrove rehabilitation, and eco-tourism development. The Consortium is composed of SEARCA, CTI Engineering Japan, Woodfields Consultants, Inc., and Ergons Project Management Consultant. (LBSantos III)



Mr. Judith Castres (first row, leftmost), Executive Assistant at the Office of the Mayor of Boston; Mr. Alexis Lapiz (first row, second from left), International Research Specialist and Ecotown Coordinator of CCC; and Mr. Lope B. Santos III (first row, leftmost, seated), Program Specialist of SEARCA, pose with community representatives and LGU staff who will provide support to the waterways clearing operations.

SEARCA mounts short course on GE curriculum for YAU

NAY PYI TAW, Myanmar—Twenty-two lecturers from Yezin Agricultural University (YAU) participated in the *Short Course on General Education (GE) Program in Addressing Food Security* held here on 20-24 February 2017.

Organized by SEARCA in cooperation with YAU, the course was conducted by Dr. Daylinda Banzon-Cabanilla, retired Professor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños-College of Forestry and Natural Resources (UPLB-CFNR).

The course was partially funded by the Food Security Center (FSC) project of the University of Hohenheim, which is part of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Program “Exceed” supported by DAAD and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and

Development (BMZ). SEARCA is a strategic partner of the FSC.

In his opening speech, Dr. Tin Htut, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar, stressed the need for institutions of higher education to design and implement severe structural reforms and transformative learning systems. As such, YAU plans to revise its syllabus for agriculture students and considers the inclusion of a GE curriculum.

During the five-day short course, Dr. Cabanilla provided basic information about GE, its objectives, and curriculum structure. During workshop activities, the participants were asked to use a combination of teaching techniques that demonstrate the basic concepts and principles of the experiential learning approach to develop

critical thinking among students. At the end of the course, the participants were asked to design and demonstrate their own GE course session.

At the closing ceremonies, Dr. Myo Kywe, YAU Rector, stressed that the short course is just a small step towards major reform that will prepare YAU to take on the challenges of the future, and “there is still a long way to go.”

YAU is one of four universities under SEARCA’s Institutional Development Assistance (IDA) Program, and is Myanmar’s only institution of higher learning in agriculture. The IDA intends to empower and equip strategically located universities with the necessary resources to cater to the demands for human resources required to boost economic development in the region. (MCNCuaresma)

Food innovation centers tackled in SEARCA professional chair lecture

MANILA, Philippines—Dr. Maria Patricia V. Azanza, one of SEARCA's five Professorial Chair Grantees for academic year 2016-2017, delivered her SEARCA Professorial Chair Lecture titled "Functions of Government, Academe and Industry in Philippine Food Innovation Centers for Regional Development" 26 January 2017 at the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (PCIEERD).

The professorial chair lecture provided newer data-based strategies that can enhance the innovation activities of the food innovation centers (FICs) in the country.

It was attended by representatives from the Regional DOST FICs of the National Capital

Region, Region II, Region IV-A, and the Main FIC as well as officials from different government agencies involved in food regulation.

Dr. Azanza is currently the Director of the DOST-Industrial Technology Development Institute and Professor at the Department of Food Science and Nutrition, College of Home Economics, University of the Philippines Diliman.

Dr. Azanza also delivered her professorial chair lecture at the FIC Strategic Planning Meeting held on 31 January 2017 in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan.

Since academic year 2012-2013, SEARCA has awarded a total of 21 regional professorial chair grants to outstanding Southeast Asian experts in the academe. (Report from JNDe Guzman)



Malaysian prof imparts land use, climate change impact on water



Photo courtesy of LiveDNA

SELANGOR, Malaysia— Dr. Ahmad Zaharin Bin Aris, Dean, Department of Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and SEARCA

Professorial Chairholder, shared the results of his research in a lecture titled "Impact of Climate and Land Use Changes on Water Quality" here on 21 February 2017.

In his SEARCA Professorial Chair Lecture, Dr. Aris discussed the impact of land use and climate change on the quality of groundwater in Northern Kelantan, Malaysia. He analyzed 25 years (1989-2014) of groundwater data as well as long-term hydrogeochemical, meteorological, and land use data to understand the effect of human activities on groundwater quality, and how land use changes and climate change stress influence coastal aquifers.

Being one of the youngest SEARCA Professorial Chair grantees, Dr. Aris is also the youngest PhD graduates of Universiti Malaysia Sabah, where he completed his PhD in environmental science

(hydrochemistry) at the age of 25. He had been involved in 50 research projects and published 270 academic writings related to his field in refereed international journals.

The SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair, established in 2011, aims to recognize outstanding Southeast Asian academics who have made significant contributions in Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD) in Southeast Asia. The award carries with it a USD 5,000 reward. (CJVENalbes)

School and home gardens/ from page 13

their municipalities, the province, national government, and even in the ASEAN. On the other hand, horizontal scaling-up is the partnership of the pilot schools with other nearby schools and their respective communities.

During the joint action planning, the LGU representatives identified support services that each agency can provide to the project. The agriculture offices pledged to provide garden materials such as organic fertilizers, worms for vermicomposts, and seeds as well as additional training for the teachers. The municipal nutrition action offices and municipal social welfare offices also assured the schools of their active support, especially in involving the parents of the children in gardening programs.

Interactive lectures and demo

A series of interactive lectures and demonstrations on organic agriculture (OA) and food and nutrition had 45 participants who included teachers, SCBFNP coordinators, and representatives from LGU offices.

Dr. Blesilda M. Calub recapitulated the important points of the joint action plans. She also lectured on the importance of OA and demonstrated OA techniques such as basket composting. Ms. Corazon Compuesto, the EPP Coordinator, demonstrated seedling production and vermicomposting to the participants.

Dr. Leila S. Africa, UPLB Associate Professor and a study leader in the project, delivered a lecture on issues on food and nutrition. The preliminary

results of the socioeconomic profiling of the households of malnourished children from the pilot schools were presented by Mr. Henry M. Custodio, SEARCA Program Specialist who also serves as study leader. He also discussed the implications of the socioeconomic profile on the project results.

Participants were also introduced to the practical methods of pest management, such as the use of friendly predators, parasitoids, and botanicals through the lecture of Dr. Pio A. Javier, UPLB Adjunct Professor.

The TOT gave the participants the opportunity to tour the Pedro Guevara Memorial National High School vegetable gardens. (Reports from EINEGalang)

Celebrating agriculture and fisheries in photos

A fisherman raises a hefty, early morning fish catch from tranquil Pulilan River.

This was the image adjudged to have best captured the celebration of Southeast Asian agriculture and fisheries in the 10th SEARCA Photo Contest.

This year's photo contest aimed to capture the joy and passion that Southeast Asian farmers and fishers, processors, traders, and consumers share as they harvest, process, sell, and partake of the fruits of the land and sea.

Photo entries depicted the vibrant countryside along with the Southeast Asians who plant, fish, and harvest food and products. This theme reflects SEARCA's celebration of its 50th founding anniversary in 2016 as an international organization that has influenced agricultural development in the region, by promoting cooperation in education, science, and culture in Southeast Asia.

A total of 1,263 entries from 284 photo enthusiasts, including 101 professional photographers from 10 Southeast Asian countries were received by SEARCA for the 2016 edition of its annual photo contest.

The contest ran from October 2016 until 21 February 2017. Of the total entries, about 300 photos qualified for the initial shortlisting, from which 50 top photos were subsequently selected.

Judges for the shortlisting were development professionals, including SEARCA scholars from various Southeast Asian countries. Professional photographers and experts from various fields selected the top 15 photos, including the three winning entries. The top 50 photos were posted in Facebook for the public to choose from for a fourth winner whose photo gets the 'People's Choice' award.

Jose Melencio Brillo, Filipino, bagged first prize with his photo of the young fisherman in Pulilan River, Philippines. Raniel Jose Castañeda, Filipino, won second prize, and Kyaw Kyaw Win, Myanmar, third prize. The people's choice award went to the photo by Herwin Barcelona, Filipino, who garnered almost 2,000 online likes.

These winning photos and the rest of the shortlisted entries will be featured in SEARCA's publications and other materials that promote agricultural and rural development and cooperation in the region. The gallery of winning photos and other finalists may be viewed online at the SEARCA website and Facebook page. (Report from MBCadiz)

