



**REPORT OF**  
**THE 6<sup>TH</sup> PROJECT PARTNER MEETING OF**  
**THE ASEAN SUSTAINABLE AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS (ASEAN SAS)**

**19 November 2015, Vientiane Plaza Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Sixth Project Partner Meeting of the ASEAN Sustainable Agrifood Systems (ASEAN SAS) was held on 19 November 2015 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.
2. The Meeting was attended by Project Focal Points of the ASEAN SAS, the ASEAN BCA Experts Groups on Regulation and Application and the ASEAN Experts Group on Soil and Nutrient Management from nine ASEAN Member States (AMS) with an exception of Myanmar, together with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR. A representative from the ASEAN Secretariat, representatives from private sector, and GIZ also participated in the Meeting. The list of participants appears as **ANNEX 1**.

## **OPENING SESSION**

3. Dr. Matthias Bickel, Project Director of the ASEAN SAS extended his warmest welcome to all participants of the Meeting. On behalf of GIZ, he expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR for co-organising and hosting this Meeting. He highlighted that ASEAN SAS is part of the ASEAN-German Programme on Response to Climate Change in Agriculture and Forestry (GAP-CC), a regional cooperation programme implemented by GIZ. He informed the Meeting that ASEAN SAS since the inception of the second phase in 2014 has implemented activities under three intervention areas, namely policy framework, production technologies, and market linkages in order to promote regional cooperation in achieving sustainable agricultural production at the national level as well as enhancing synergies and boosting greater impact in respective countries. Furthermore, he emphasised that ASEAN recognised World Economic Forum (WEF) and supported Grow Asia in which the collaboration and partnership with private sector will support the achievement of sustainable and inclusive agricultural development in all AMS. Finally, he wished all participants a very fruitful and productive meeting and having a pleasant stay in Lao PDR.
4. Mr. Xaypladeth Choulamany, SOM-AMAF Leader for Lao PDR and Director General of the Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR welcomed participants to the Sixth Project Partner Meeting of the ASEAN SAS. He informed the Meeting that the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) reiterated the importance of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and its

Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (SPA-FS), which incorporated a new component on nutrition. He highlighted the endorsement of the ASEAN Guidelines on the Regulation, Use, and Trade of Biological Control Agents (BCA) by AMAF in 2014 and encouraged AMS to continue working together to implement the BCA Guidelines and formulating new regional guidelines on integrated soil and nutrient management. He further highlighted that under the ASEAN SAS, innovative financing mechanism of the public-private partnership (PPP) is being explored to promote sustainable agrifood systems, which contribute to food security in the ASEAN region. He congratulated and appreciated ASEAN SAS for being implemented by AMS and GIZ for the mid-term of its second implementation phase. He extended his thanks to ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN SAS, and ASEAN Member States for cooperation to organise the Meeting successfully. He wished the Meeting a fruitful and productive to provide inputs for project implementation.

### **Agenda 1: Introduction and Arrangement of the Meeting**

5. Ms. Pouchamarn Wongsanga, Senior Regional Coordinator of the ASEAN Sustainable Agrifood Systems made an introduction on the objectives, expected outputs as well as agenda and arrangement of the 6<sup>th</sup> Project Partner Meeting. The Meeting agenda and program appears as **ANNEX 2**.

### **Agenda 2: ASEAN Policy and Direction on Food Security and the New Vision and Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture, and Forestry (FAF) 2016 - 2025**

6. Mr. Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer of the Agriculture Industries and Natural Resources Division (AINRD) of the ASEAN Secretariat informed the Meeting on his acknowledgement of the continuous support of GIZ under GAP-CC programme on the development of new Vision and Strategic Plan for the ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (2016 – 2025) which was endorsed during the 37<sup>th</sup> AMAF Meeting on 10 September 2015 in Makati, the Philippines. He highlighted the six Strategic Thrusts relevant to food security and food safety. He informed the Meeting on 1) the Statement of AMAF on Food Security and Nutrition and way forward on the cooperation among respective sectoral bodies; 2) implementation of agreed guidelines and standards; 3) facilitation of trade among AMS and partnerships with the private sector such as cooperation under Grow Asia initiative; and 4) alignment of more effective and efficient national instruments to the regional instruments. He suggested the importance of having close coordination between ASEAN SAS and FOR-CC to support the implementation of activities that contributes to Strategic Thrust 4: Increase resilience to climate change, natural disasters and other shocks of the new FAF Vision. Furthermore, he informed the Meeting on the endorsement of ASEAN Regional Guidelines for Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Practices at the 37<sup>th</sup> AMAF Meeting and urged that modules under GAP-CC complement each other. The presentation by ASEAN Secretariat appears as **ANNEX 3**.

7. In response to the clarification sought from the Meeting on how the monitoring of the implementation of FAF Vision and Strategic Plan will look like in the future with regard to

development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the ASEAN Secretariat clarified that two processes were undertaken for policy measures, namely scorecard and KPIs. SOM-AMAF is mandated to develop and use KPIs in measuring the implementation of the Vision and Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in FAF (2016 – 2025). The KPIs would be linked to scorecard for the measurement of achievements under sectoral level. ASEAN Secretariat would update the finalisation of KPIs to development partners.

### **Agenda 3: Overview and Updates of the ASEAN SAS Project**

8. Dr. Matthias Bickel presented the project overview and updates of the project implementation at regional and national levels. He referred to the structure of GAP-CC programme and its two modules, ASEAN SAS and FOR-CC. He highlighted the project achievements and structure of ASEAN SAS in the second implementation phase in relation to 1) project indicators, 2) priority topics as biocontrol, soil and nutrient management, and farm economics, and 3) priority crops as rice, vegetables, and fruits. ASEAN SAS teamed up with private partners to implement activities within the existing business mechanism. Better Rice Initiative Asia (BRIA) is one of the examples of the collaboration and partnership with the private sector. He added that accessing the partnership with Grow Asia would be potentially promising in the future. The presentation in details appears as **ANNEX 4**.

9. Regarding inquiry from Malaysia on setting up ASEAN SAS representative offices, the Meeting was informed that the project focused on narrowing the development gap among AMS and prioritised the implementation of activities in CLMV countries. Implementation of project activities in the more developed countries would require justification for cooperation on contribution towards sustainable food production and poverty alleviation as mandated by the German Government. ASEAN SAS suggested the cooperation proposal should come from the government and the private sector. The government may support the Letter of Requesting Cooperation to German Government, while the private sector may provide a business framework to implement activities under their existing business models. Malaysia might consider joining with BRIA.

10. Vietnam raised concerns on possibility of ASEAN SAS to support on Human Capacity Development of production technologies, and exchange learning among AMS. The Meeting was informed that capacity development and knowledge exchange such as study tour to another Member State was possible and encouraged. The Meeting was requested to arrange a proposal expressing common interest from 2 – 3 countries.

11. In response to inquiry from Vietnam regarding food nutrition issue, the Meeting was informed that food security has been receiving political momentum after the food crisis in 2008. Nutrition was not integrated in the first phase of the AIFS Framework, however, nutrition is included in the second phase of the AIFS Framework. AMS were encouraged to discuss the topics of quality of food and other nutritional aspects while discussing food security.

#### **Agenda 4: Progress and Achievements of Project Implementation at National Level**

12. Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn, Senior Regional Advisor of the ASEAN SAS moderated the session on progress and achievements of project implementation at the national level. The Meeting noted on the key messages of ASEAN SAS as follows:

- ASEAN SAS responded to the implementation of food security in the ASEAN region under the AIFS Framework by supporting the development of the Vision and Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in FAF and translating the regional instruments into the implementation at the country level; and
- The ASEAN Secretariat emphasised that the new FAF Vision and Strategic Plan addressed the issues of food security, poverty eradication, and more competitive, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable FAF sectors integrated with participation of PPPs. It was also noted there are six areas of Strategic Thrusts where ASEAN SAS could contribute to promote ASEAN cooperation in FAF.

13. Representatives from all ASEAN Member States made the presentations on the progress and achievements in the implementation of ASEAN SAS at national level. The presentation was structured under three components: Policy Framework, Production Technologies and Market Linkages. The presentations appear as **ANNEX 5**.

14. With regard to the presentations on the progress and achievements of the ASEAN SAS, the Meeting witnessed policy dialogue in progress, and the implementation of production technologies served as fundamental ground for market linkages that can be gradually picked up in the second half of project implementation.

#### **Agenda 5: Activities and Outlook for 2016**

15. Dr. Thomas Jaekel updated the Meeting on the status of ASEAN Bio-Input database and the Regional Training on Regulatory Laboratory Practice on BCA and Bio-fertilizer. He informed the Meeting on the expression of interest from Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia for capacity development activities on mass production of BCA. The presentation appears as **ANNEX 6**.

16. The Meeting took note of the regional activities and outlook for 2016 with regard to the implementation of the AIFS Framework together with the implementation timeline presented by Ms. Pouchamarn Wongsanga. She highlighted the areas where ASEAN SAS could contribute to food security and nutrition in the region. The presentation in details appears as **ANNEX 6**.

17. Dr. Varughese Philip, Chairman of the ASEAN Soil and Nutrient Management (SNM) Expert Group updated the Meeting on the progress made in 2015 and the outlook for 2016 of the SNM Expert Group. The framework of the SNM Guidelines was finalised at the Regional SNM Expert Group Meeting held in Singapore in 2015. He informed the Meeting of the plan to organise the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional SNM Expert Group Meeting in 2016, which was tentatively scheduled to be held in Brunei Darussalam aiming to review the 3<sup>rd</sup> draft of the

SNM Guidelines. He further presented the overview of the draft Regional Guidelines on SNM. The presentation appears as **ANNEX 7.**

18. The Meeting took note of the summary on national activities and outlook for 2016 by country presented Dr. Thomas Jaekel presented. The presentation appears as **ANNEX 8.**

19. Ms. Alison Eskesen from Grow Asia updated the Meeting about the structure Grow Asia, its elements, goals, principles, and approaches in facilitating multi-stakeholders partnership across the value chains. She informed the Meeting on the partnership and working group arrangements in the four countries (Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam). She highlighted the pathways towards achieving project scaling up through replication, companies set commercial values on the project approach, market-based approach adopted by government, donor funding, and integration of farmer organisations into the value chain. The presentation appears as **ANNEX 9.**

20. In response to inquiry on Grow Asia's view towards the challenges and area of working together under ASEAN platform, it was clarified that the AIFS Framework fits on most of Grow Asia roles in terms of integrating the SMEs. The common challenge was involving farmers and creating more synergy to bring all relevant stakeholders into active business engagements. The business concrete model was needed to scale up projects and ensuring sustainability of project impacts.

21. Regarding the question raised by Indonesia whether crops will be prioritised by Grow Asia after corn in Indonesia or not, it was clarified that the initiative would come from the country.

22. Singapore raised the concern to ASEAN SAS team regarding the project outlook in the next couple of years. The Meeting was informed that the outlook depends on the overall investments and the synergies with potential collaborators. Business models were developed as a management mechanism that would enable ASEAN SAS to work beyond the grants.

23. The Meeting noted the importance areas for future cooperation with Grow Asia in terms of 1) use of existing initiatives and outreach models for implementing ASEAN SAS technologies; 2) reaching ten millions small farmers; and 3) having close alignment with respective government in actual implementation by the private sector.

24. The Meeting noted that Brunei Darussalam expressed the interest to join Grow Asia initiative. Grow Asia welcomed the interest and suggested the government of Brunei Darussalam to submit the Country Expression of Interest to Grow Asia.

25. The Meeting discussed and agreed on possible activities and outlook for 2016 as the followings:

- The need for capacity development among government colleagues;
- Showcasing the success models for market inclusivity;
- Promoting partnership to jointly support ASEAN Member States;

- Operationalisation of regional policies into national policies;
- Market linkage implementation through value chains and PPPs; and
- Utilise Grow Asia as a platform to cooperate not only on technical issues but also partnership to support AMS and SMEs.

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