



Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)



Progress Report January – June 2018

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PROGRESS REPORT ON APAARI ACTIVITIES (January – June 2018)

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) was established in 1990 at the initiative of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, a unique voluntary, membership-based, self-mandated, apolitical and non-profit multi-stakeholder organization in the Asia-Pacific Region. The main objective of APAARI is to promote and strengthen agriculture and agri-food research and innovation systems through partnerships and collaboration, capacity development and advocacy by facilitating intra-regional, inter institutional, and international cooperation. APAARI has been active in fostering the overall agricultural development by addressing the concerns of hunger, poverty, environmental degradation and sustainability of agricultural production. It has completed 28 years of its existence with an impressive record of achievements. To know more about the organization, please visit: www.apaari.org

APAARI co-organized and participated in meetings, conferences and workshops during the period of January to April 2018. The key ones include (i) ASTI Project implementation with Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD); (ii) USDA Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation at Bangladesh; (iii) Workshop on the Banana Bread and Coffee Sustainable Consumption; (iv) International Conference on Social and Sustainability Science in ASEAN: Agri-food Systems, Rural Sustainability and Socioeconomic Transformations; (v) Visits to CoA, TARI, Academia Scinica, ICDF, WorldVeg Centre; (vi) ASTI Project implementation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI); (vii) The 3rd CryoSymp 2018; (viii) ASTI Project Implementation with Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS); (ix) Visit to AREEO; (x) ASTI Project Implementation with IAARD-ICASEPS; (xi) CGIAR GreenPass Phytosanitary Protocol for Germplasm Exchange, Expert Consultation, Rome, Italy; (xii) APAARI at the Science week at University of Kisangani, Kisangani, Congo; (xiii) XIXth Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology and Bioresources (APCoAB); (xiv) APAARI Holds 2018 Executive Committee Meeting; (xv) Regional Expert Consultation on Agricultural Biotechnology - Scoping Partnership to Improve Livelihoods of Farmers in Asia-Pacific; (xvi) Regional Training on the use of Drones, Satellite Imagery and GIS for Agriculture An eye in the sky for agriculture; and (xvii) APAARI's first participation at the European Development Days 2018.

I. Meeting/Workshops/Conferences

1. ASTI Project implementation with Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD), Jakarta, Indonesia.

A visit was made to the Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD), Ministry of Agriculture, in 8 January 2018 by Norah Omot, ASTI Coordinator and Dr Ravi Khetarpal. The purpose of the visit was to explore the possibility of IAARD accepting to becoming a member of ASTI project and to discuss on a likely inception workshop on the ASTI project for IAARD staff. A presentation was made on the project by Norah Omot. The key people met were Dr Prama Yufdy, Executive Secretary-IAARD, IAARD staff members Ms Erlita Adriani and Ms Seta Augustina, and ACIAR Country Manager Ms Mirah Nuryati.

During the visit, Dr Khetarpal also discussed on the possibility of IAARD rejoining APAARI as a regular member. APAARI invited IAARD to its Executive Committee meeting in May 2018 along with a senior official from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. USDA Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal went for a final lap of the mission on the phytosanitary capacity evaluation of Bangladesh under USDA programme. During the mission, he held meetings with high level officials to finalize recommendations for the government.

3. Workshop on the Banana Bread and Coffee Sustainable Consumption, Bangkok, Thailand.

Rishi Tyagi, Coordinator, APCoAB, participated in a one-day Workshop on the Banana Bread and Coffee Sustainable Consumption, organized by Agriculture and Food Marketing Association for Asia and the Pacific (AFMA) and Great Earth International, Bangkok on January 18, 2018. Awareness was generated to save the over-ripe banana fruits and using the same in form of baked products for sustainable consumption.

4. International Conference on Social and Sustainability Science in ASEAN: Agri-food Systems, Rural Sustainability and Socioeconomic Transformations at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

APAARI was co-organizer of the International Conference on Social and Sustainability Science in ASEAN that held at the at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand from January 23-25 on the theme Agri-food Systems, Rural Sustainability and Socioeconomic Transformations. This event grouped together researchers and representatives from the various institutions and organizations interested in the food security of the Southeast Asian.

As one of the lead organizations in agri-food innovation systems in the region, APAARI used the occasion both as member of the organizing committee and participant to showcase its prowess in promoting the exchange of scientific and technical knowledge and information in agriculture through capacity development and knowledge sharing activities. During the 3 days of the conference, APAARI used the various platforms to present the association's approach to enhancing agri-food systems through transformational learning and capacity development.

APAARI used 5 platforms to showcase its activities and share information and knowledge on its production and facilitation of the flow of global knowledge in improving sustainable agriculture through innovation.

5. Visits to CoA, TARI, Academia Sinica, ICDF, WorldVeg Centre (Taipei, Taichung and Tainan) Taiwan.

During the Executive Committee Meeting on November 12, 2017, Council of Agriculture (COA), endorsed the expansion of activities in relation to bioresources under APCoAB programme. A visit to Taiwan was made to discuss about further strengthening the collaboration with Taiwan, for expansion of APCoAB activities, activities in the Pacific and involvement of COA in ASTI project of APAARI. Visits were also made to 9 scientific organizations including World Vegetable Centre dealing with agriculture research and policies to explore the possibilities of collaboration in areas of agricultural biotechnology, bioresources and other mandated activities of APAARI. In principle, COA agreed that a comprehensive proposal inclusive of expanded activities under APCoAB, Center of Excellence, and the activities in the Pacific may be submitted by APAARI for consideration of COA.

6. ASTI Project implementation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

A country visit was made by Norah Omot and Ms Thansita Tanaphathrujira to Myanmar from 8-9 March 2018. The purpose of the visit was to discuss with the Department of Planning (DOP)-Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI) on the status of the ASTI Agreement between MOALI and APAARI, and to discuss the ASTI project activities. During the visit, Norah Omot gave a presentation on the project to a group consisting of representatives of a number of agricultural and university institutions and the staff, senior officials and policy advisor of MOALI. After the presentation, discussions were held around several topics including, which agencies they will invite to participate in the ASTI surveys, the types of survey forms for different agencies, the project impact

matrix, research outputs, and the Myanmar agricultural research systems. DOP-MOALI also clarified on the government processes that needed to be met to finalize the agreement. The key people met were Dr Tin Htut-Permanent Secretary-MOALI, Mr Kyaw Min Oo-Director General-DOP-MOALI, Dr Thanda Kyi-Director-International Cooperation Division (ASEAN)-DOP and Dr Cho Cho San, DOP. During the visit APAARI staff also discussed on the possibility of MOALI joining APAARI as a regular member. APAARI invited MOALI to its Executive Committee meeting in May 2018.

7. The 3rd CryoSymp 2018 by Mahidol University, ISHS, APAARI – APCoAB and others, Asia Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

The CryoSymp 2018 was organized jointly by APAARI-APCoAB, Mahidol University, Bangkok in collaboration with International Society of Horticultural Science (ISHS), Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research and DOA, Bangkok, on March 26-28, 2018 at Bangkok, Thailand. A total of about 110 participants from 25 countries attended the symposium. The program comprised three sessions – Session I: Research in Plant Cryopreservation. Session II: Cryobanking, and Session 3: Methods in Plant Cryopreservation. Invited (3), oral (32) and posters (35) were presented related to various aspects of plant cryopreservation. Dr Rishi Tyagi, Coordinator, APCoAB, made a presentation on “Does cryopreservation stress impacts genotype integrity? A case study with germplasm of *Musa* spp.”. He served as the member of (i) International Advisory Committee and (ii) Scientific Committee of CryoSymp 2018.

8. ASTI Project Implementation with VAAS and IPSARD, Hanoi, Vietnam.

On April 5-6, Gert-Jan Stads and Norah Omot visited the Department of Information-Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS). The purpose of the visit was to discuss on the Vietnam Agricultural Research Outputs, the Vietnam Agricultural Research system and to discuss issues related to the ASTI surveys. During the visit, important connections were made to the Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development (MARD) and the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD). IPSARD agreed to be involved with the analytical capacity component of the project. Key people met were Dr Tran Dahn Suu-A/Director-VAAS, Mrs Xuan-Survey Coordinator-VAAS, Dr Trang Truong-Director-Division of Strategy and Policy Study-IPSARD, Dr Nguyen Tuan-Director General-IPSARD, Ms Nguyen An-ACIAR Country Manager, Dr Thuynt-MARD.

9. APAARI Chairman and Executive Secretary visited AREEO, Iran.

Dr Yusuf Zafar, Chairman, APAARI and Dr Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary visited Iran from 4-6 March and had discussions with Deputy Minister of Agriculture and senior officials of AREEO for strengthening relationship with AREEO, and number of key points were deliberated and agreed upon. AREEO agreed on facilitating their annual paid membership fee to APAARI through ICARDA through a tripartite agreement, and also agreed to convening and hosting of important APAARI events of in Iran. AREEO also appreciated APAARI for exploring the possibilities of facilitating sabbatical opportunities of Iranian researchers in Asia Pacific countries and provide same in Iran. AREEO will inform APAARI about decision to join and support the ASTI project soon. Besides, AREEO will appreciate publicizing its achievements and events on APAARI website and social media. Both AREEO and APAARI thus look forward for a stronger long term partnership.

10. ASTI Project Implementation with IAARD-ICASEPS, Jakarta, Indonesia - a visit by Ravi Khetarpal and Gert-Jan Stads,

A visit was made on 9 April by Dr Gert-Jan Stads, IFPRI ASTI Programme Manager and Dr Ravi Khetarpal to IAARD. The purpose was to meet with IAARD and Indonesian Centre for Agriculture,

Socio-Economics and Policy Studies (ICASEPS) to firm up on the Agreements of the ASTI project, involving both IAARD and ICASEPS. During the visit, Dr Gert-Jan met with staff of IAARD including 2 focal points who would be coordinating the data collection. He discussed the ASTI methodology and survey forms in detail with them. They also discussed with him the internal datasets that were available at IAARD. The 2 focal points nominated were Mr Arif Surahman and Mr Dhani Gartina.

11. CGIAR GreenPass Phytosanitary Protocol for Germplasm Exchange, Expert Consultation, Rome, Italy.

Key representatives from research institutions and organizations working in food and nutritional security across the globe met for two days in Rome from 18-19 April 2018 to share notes and ideas on how to develop phytosanitary protocols for expediting crop germplasm exchange with special reference to that of CGIAR gene banks. The discussion led to the development of a science based phytosanitary protocol (Green Pass) that takes into account the germplasm health at various stages of its collection, evaluation and conservation. The outputs of the meeting would be submitted to FAO to make it as an international protocol or as a best practice for a faster and smoother exchange of germplasm that would eventually expedite the development of new varieties of crops that can meet food and nutritional security in the era of climate change.

Organized by Dr. Lava Kumar, Head of Germplasm Health Unit at IITA, Nigeria, the other attendees-experts were; Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary of APAARI in Thailand, Dr. Bonnie J. Furman Agric Officer at PGR-Agrobiodiversity FAO Rome, Dr. Charlotte Lusty Genebank Coordinator at Crop Trust, Germany, Dr. Radha Ranganatha from the International Seed Federation Switzerland and Dr. Michael David Halewood from Bioversity International in Rome.

12. APAARI at the Science week at University of Kisangani, Kisangani, Congo



The University of Kisangani under the auspices the European Union and the Center for International Forestry Research -CIFOR, organized the 5th session of the Science Week at the Faculty of Sciences of University of Kisangani from 7-12 May 2018. The one-week event brought together researchers, scientists and journalists from around the globe to share knowledge and add value to the research endeavors at the University of Kisangani.

For five days running, researchers and scientists from research institutions and Universities the world over, drilled Masters and PhD students on dominant themes in the world of Forestry in particular and the environment in particular.

Aligned to the seminar presentations was a back to back capacity development of science journalists from the major media organizations in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These men and women of the men were reinforcing and sharpening their skills in reporting science related themes especially in environment related. For one week, the journalists were drilled by researchers and scientists on current themes in environment in general and Forestry in general.



Closing the one-week event, the Rector of the University Professor Faustin Toengaho saluted the sustained partnership of his institution with the European Union through the Center for International Forestry Research-CIFOR. He underscored the milestone the event which is in its fifth session has achieved as a knowledge watershed for budding scientists who are the future architects of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Rector singled out the novelty of the 2018 edition that zeroed in on research and project work of Masters and PhD students. During the Science week,

The Knowledge Management Coordinator of the Asia- Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions-APAARI used the occasion to present the mission and goal of APAARI especially the identification and sharing of knowledge in agri-innovation systems. This attracted discussions with students with related topics in knowledge management.



The Science week has become a yearly activity organized by the University authorities with assistance from national and international organization especially with support from the Center for International Forestry Research-CIFOR since 2013.

13. XIXth Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology and Bioresources (APCoAB)

The XIXth Steering Committee Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology and Bioresources (APCoAB) was held on May 28, 2018 at Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting was attended by 18 participants comprising Chairman, Vice Chairman and members of Steering Committee, special invitees and observers. Dr Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary, APAARI, welcome the participants. Dr Yusuf Zafar, Chairman, Steering Committee, emphasized the importance of agricultural biotechnology and bioresources and gave a brief account of status of bio-tech crops grown in Asian countries. **Dr Chung-Hsiu Hung**, Vice Chairman, expressed his satisfaction for the progress under APCoAB and assured continued financial support from COA for the activities in areas of agricultural biotechnology and bioresources in Asia-Pacific countries. Dr Rishi Tyagi, Coordinator, presented the action taken report, progress report, revised work plan and audited financial statement of APCoAB. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and all members appreciated the progress and provided some suggestions for further improvement.



Participants of the XIXth Steering Committee meeting of APCoAB

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14. APAARI Holds 2018 Executive Committee Meeting

APAARI Executive Committee meeting held on 28 May 2018 at the Rama Gardens Hotel in Bangkok under the chairmanship of Dr. Yusuf Zafar and Dr. Birte Komolong, who sat in for the Vice chair, Dr. Sergie Bang.

The meeting included an overview of the previous Executive Committee meeting held in November 2017, the recommendations made, actions taken and progress report of activities. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary, presented the institution's balance sheet of the year under review. An optimistic membership drive was undertaken with four new members and more prospects in the pipeline. It was equally an opportunity for each staff to present the work plan that dovetails APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The special invitees were given a voice to talk about their organization, possible collaboration with APAARI to strengthen research and innovations for sustainable agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific region.

The amendment of the current APAARI constitution of the organization was one of the points on the agenda. This is to enable the institution keep pace with its shifting role and function. Because of time constraints members agreed to set up a Task Force to work on a draft that will be circulated to members. The meeting rose on a note of work well done to the staff.

Special guest at the EC meeting were from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI), Myanmar; CropLife Asia, Singapore; Indian Council of Agricultural Science (ICAR) from India; Forum for Agricultural Research (FARA) Africa, International Association for Agricultural Sustainability (IAAS), Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Indian Institute of Technology (IITB-Mumbai), Chulalongkorn University School of Agricultural Resources (CUSAR) and Mahidol University, Bangkok.

15. Regional Expert Consultation on Agricultural Biotechnology - Scoping Partnership to Improve Livelihoods of Farmers in Asia-Pacific

In pursuance of the recommendations of an International Symposium on “The Role of Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition” organized by The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations organized, on February 15-17, 2016, at Rome, a multi-stakeholder “**Regional Expert Consultation on Agricultural Biotechnology - Scoping Partnership to Improve Livelihoods of Farmers in Asia-Pacific**” was organized by APAARI/APCoAB, Bangkok, Thailand and COA, Taiwan on May 29-31, 2018 in Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok. Other technical and financial collaborators were ACIAR, Australia; Research Program on Grain Legumes and Dry Land

Cereals, ICRISAT, India; BCIL, India and DOA, Thailand. The objectives of Expert Consultation were to: (i) provide a platform to explore initiatives and mechanisms of sustainable partnership and networking for capacity and institutional building, developing regulatory framework, communication strategies, enabling policies for application of biotechnologies including bioprospecting of bioresources at regional level; (ii) share technical knowledge, experiences and learn lessons from public-public, public-private, and private-private partnership to accelerate the application of agricultural biotechnologies and establish the mechanisms to ensure continued exchange of information on experiences with agricultural biotechnologies; and (iii) identify important areas of agricultural biotechnologies and scoping the new and innovative ways of making investments to improve the livelihoods of farmers in Asia-Pacific region.

A total of 62 participants belonging to 22 countries comprising research managers, senior officials, researchers from NARS of member countries of Asia-Pacific, CG centres, CropLife Asia, FAO, USAID, USDA and APAARI secretariat joined the 3-day deliberations during Expert Consultation. Dr **Chung-Hsiu Hung**, Director General, COA, Taiwan, delivered the inaugural address and Dr Yusuf Zafar, Chairman, APAARI, chaired the inaugural session.



Chung-Hsiu Hung, COA, Taiwan
Agricultural Biotechnology



*Inaugural Session of Expert Consultation on
delivering Inaugural Address*

16. Regional Training on the use of Drones, Satellite Imagery and GIS for Agriculture An eye in the sky for agriculture

The Regional Office of the FAO for the Asia Pacific, organized a one-week hands-on regional workshop on the use of the drones, satellite imagery and GIS in agriculture from June 4-8 at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok. This brought together 30 participants from Ministries of Agriculture, FAO country offices and ITU member countries in the Asia-Pacific region like Afghanistan, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Philippines and Papua New Guinea.



Situating the urgency and importance of the training, the regional Knowledge and Information

Management Officer at the ROAP, Gerard Sylvester, the “use of sustainable information and communication technology in agriculture in not an option; it is a necessity.”

Research indicates that agriculture will be the single largest application of drones as 80% use of the drones will be in the field of agriculture since agriculture is currently carried out over large farmlands which are very difficult to monitor. It will be easier to fly a drone over the farm land and collect the imagery get better insight about the farm.

The objective of the hands-on training was to introduce the use of drones in the agricultural sector in the region by providing tips on the use of drones and drilling the participants on how to use the lessons learnt in real life situations. Unfortunately, many countries in the region are still to adopt this innovative technology to improve agricultural productivity.

From the assessment of the participants, the workshop objectives were fully attained as it was a well-balanced training; both in Knowledge learning and skill development.

The workshop was organized in partnership with APAARI, UIT, Digital Globe,



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17. APAARI's first participation at the European Development Days 2018

Organized by the European Commission (EC), the European Development Days (EDD) took place from 5-6 June 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. Under the main thread of ‘Women and girls at the forefront of sustainable development: protect, empower, invest’, the EDD2018 agenda was framed by three major themes emerging as key priorities in today’s current context:

- ensuring the physical and psychological integrity of Girls and Women
- promoting economic and social rights and empowerment of girls and women
- strengthening girls’ and women’s voice and participation

Many speakers and participants from all over the world held discussions on these themes, including high-level guests, such as Jean-Claude Juncker, President, EC; Her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians, Her Majesty the Queen of Spain; Paul Kagame, President, Rwanda; Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President, Malta; Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President, Burkina Faso; George Weah, President, Liberia; Mahamadou Issoufou, President, Niger; Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations; Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women; and Antonio Tajani, President, European Parliament. Their participation demonstrates high importance of the girls- and women-related issues on the political agenda.



(Ms. Martina Spisiakova represented APAARI and TAP at the EDD 2018)

APAARI's main contribution to the event was a stand in the 'Global Village' space showcasing activities of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) in transforming agricultural education in the Asia-Pacific region. The focus was on developing functional capacities of young professionals, women in particular, to enhance agricultural innovation systems. Representing the TAP, APAARI highlighted its ongoing activities on this topic, as well as initiatives of other TAP partners. This included activities of the Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Bangladesh, Lao People's Democratic Republic and other pilot countries of the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project in other regions.

During the event, APAARI had a chance to interact with other exhibitors at the Global Village, particularly those that shared similar initiatives. On the sub-topic of gender equality in education, for example, it was stressed that tackling global challenges like climate change and healthcare in sustainable and inclusive ways requires the active involvement of educated women as well as educated men. Yet, the gender imbalance is particularly stark in the critical areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Addressing the challenges of gender inequality in education is complex and requires the involvement of men and boys, women and girls throughout society and its institutions.



(Her Majesty the Queen of Spain attending the event and engaging with participants)

A number of institutions that took part in the EDD 2018 offer free online courses in agriculture that could benefit the APAARI community in Asia-Pacific and beyond. For example, the University of Wageningen, offers open courses on food production, nutrition, animal breeding, genetics, and many other topics. Access Agriculture – an international NGO – offers agricultural training videos in local languages. These include, for example, floating vegetable gardens, managing bacterial leaf blight in rice or tomato leaf curl virus, as well as many other processes that could provide solutions to farmers and/or be a topic of further research by agricultural scientists. The DEVCO Academy is another public learning platform providing free access to a wide range of topics, including development policies, thematic areas, methodological approaches and financial management. APAARI has recently shared links to these resources through its APAARI Network Highlights!

Strategic discussions on engagement and partnership through joint project development were held by APAARI with the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, EC; Directorate-General for Research, EC; FAO Liaison Office with the European Union and Belgium; European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD); Bayer; GIZ; and Oxfam.

APAARI has been following up on its participation in the EDD 2018, where it was actively advocating the role of the TAP and the need for transformation in agricultural education systems as a pre-condition for effectively agricultural innovation systems. APAARI remains positive that its participation and the many meetings at the EDD will lead to fruitful partnerships and collaboration in the future.

18. Andhra Pradesh State Mega Seed Park Ltd Work Plan meeting - Vijayawada, AP, India

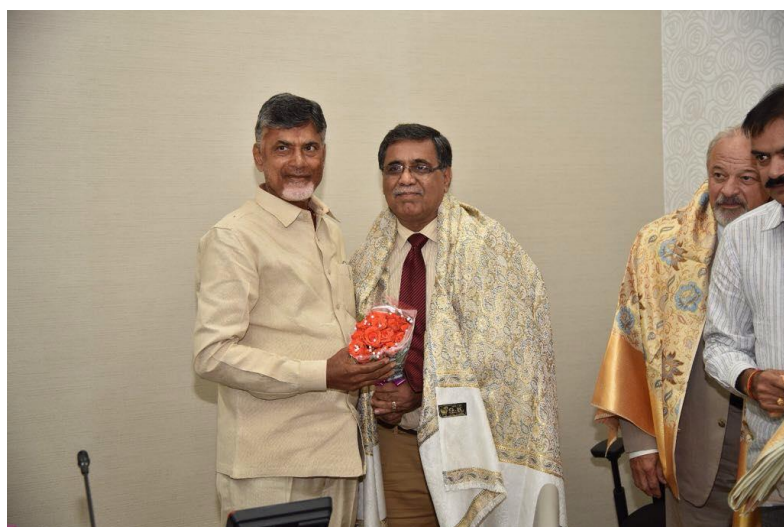
The Mega Seed Park (MSP) is an initiative of Government of Andhra Pradesh and Iowa State University to give a fresh boost for the seed sector in AP. MSP intends to forge multiple partnerships among academics, researchers and knowledge bases, farmers, and as a cornerstone, public, private and farming community sectors of agriculture. Such partnerships enhance overall seed and food production. MSP goals are tenable farmer access to good quality seed; forge partnerships; create an enabling environment for advanced research, improved human resources, infrastructure and policy and regulatory framework; facilitate agricultural and hort universities transformation through commercialization of research and enhance food security through seed security. The main purpose of the work plan meeting held at

Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh from 20-21, June 2018 was to define the short term and long-term work plans for effective implementation of MSP goals. The participants include farmers, FPOs, NGOs, community Managed Seed Systems personnel, Government officers, private industry, international experts, seed science leaders from the state, national and international research organizations/ universities. Important international organizations that contributed to the work plan are APAARI, Thailand, CYMMIT, Mexico and IRRI, Philippines and ICRISAT, India, in addition to consultants and senior professors from Iowa State University, USA. Detailed work plan developed for seed technology and research; knowledge consortium, business and policy and capacity building.



Participants of Mega Seed Park workplan meeting with the honorable Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh

A delegation met Sri N Chandra Babu Naidu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and discussed the work plan meeting proceedings. Dr Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary, APAARI explained the key roles played by APAARI in the region including India. Hon'ble CM appreciated and directed the officials to get associated with APAARI. Government of Andhra Pradesh approved the MSP policy recently for implementation.



Honouring APAARI Executive Secretary with a shawl by the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh while assuring to become APAARI member

II. Activities Undertaken

1. Knowledge Management Programme

1.1 APAARI Website

The APAARI website is based on the Wordpress Content Management system and it is updated regularly on news from partners, publications, events and opportunity announcements. It is an interactive version accessible on tablets and mobile phone, and with social media integration of applications like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blogger. The site also features easy to navigate drop down menus which link pages to overview about APAARI, collective resources of publication, the ongoing projects and essential information on how to become a member.

APAARI Website and Statistics (1 January - 30 June 2018)

Month	Unique Visitors	Number of Visits	Pages	Hits
Jan-18	13,106	28,129	203,959	254,006
Feb-18	9,011	17,472	284,706	332,122
Mar-18	8,996	19,772	201,025	278,938
Apr-18	6,950	14,913	165,078	244,057
May-18	10,552	18,802	255,761	327,191
June-12	19,376	25,628	185,470	244,789
Total	67,991	124,716	1,295,999	1,681,103

The chart above shows the trend of visits to APAARI website with URL www.apaari.org for the past six months. Unique visitors are recorded based on the IP addresses of the visitors while the number of visit is basically how many times the site, and its pages, was visited on a monthly basis. Based on the recorded web statistics ([AWStat](#)), the amount of traffic to the APAARI site depends on the following factors:

- i. Direct address/Bookmark/Link in email: 47.9%
- ii. Organic (Search engine like Google, Yahoo, Bing etc): 20%
- iii. External pages (Social media platforms): 31.7%
- iv. Others: .4%

1.2 APAARI Social Media

APAARI is currently active in updating its social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogger and Slideshare. The measurement of interests among these social media varies depending on the application. For Facebook, it is measured by the number of Likes; Twitter, Blogger and Slideshare has its Followers; and LinkedIn is in the Connections it established. With Facebook, the interest can be shown not merely by the number of Likes, but also on the amount of people following the network. Up to date APAARI Facebook has 588 Likes (with 610 who follows); Twitter has 287 followers; and 199 connections for its LinkedIn account. Blogger and Slideshare networks have been dormant although it contains substantial information about the latest blogs and slide presentations. Blogger has four blog posts written by APAARI staff on various topics: High-Level Policy Dialogue on Investment in Agricultural Research for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific; The Committee on World Food Security CFS44; and the 3rd Symposium on Cryopreservation. The SlideShare, on the other hand, has 38 slide presentations uploaded with the following presentations on: About APAARI, to enable people to learn about the association; APAARI Webinar with Universities on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems - Bringing system-wide change in the Asia-Pacific; presentations from the Expert Consultation on Underutilized Crops; presentation on Bringing Transformational Learning

and Capacity Development to Universities in Asia-Pacific to Enhance Agricultural Innovation Systems; and “Does Cryopreservation Stress Impact Genotype Integrity? A Case Study with Germplasm of Musa pp.”.

1.3 APCoAB Website and Social Media

The site has a new look with updates related to Biotechnology and Bioresources in Asia and the Pacific. The news section is updated on a regular basis with sources from APAARI partners and global feeds, events with latest publications available for download. The migration of APCoAB website to APAARI server last year resulted in the inability to measure the site statistics due to shared hosting. The only method to measure the site’s behavior is to manually check the APCoAB related pages visited/browsed based on the reports recorded by [AWStat](#). With its latest social media engagement through Facebook, the purpose is to expand the information sharing related to APCoAB activities in the region. Posting of news, events and expert consultations will be the major source of increasing engagement.

1.4 Partnership for Knowledge Management

APAARI signed an LoA with FAO-RAP (Bangkok) for knowledge management activities aligned to a workshop to be held in June 2018 on the use of Drones for Agriculture.



A Webinar on CD for AIS” was organized on 16 November 2017. It is APAARI-FAO Rome, collaboration on the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) that was based on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CD for AIS) project in 2017. APAARI, will equally promote the Common Framework on CD for AIS by printing and dissemination TAP promotional materials and presentations at various events, meetings and social media platforms. APAARI will also coordinate TAPipedia webinars and facilitate the expansion of TAPipedia network and facilitate other knowledge sharing products.

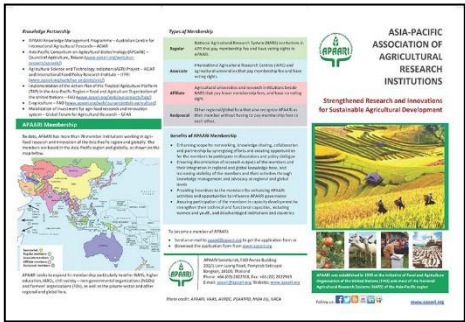
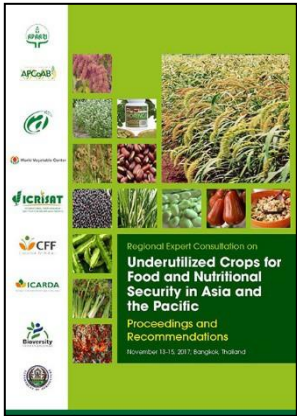
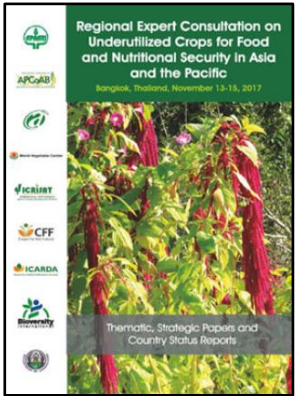
1.5. APAARI Network Highlights

APAARI disseminated three issues of its bi-monthly ANH between January and June 2018, the next will come up in July 2018. The network highlight is a compilation of latest news, announcements, opportunities, success stories and publications from partners and stakeholders and shared through email, website and social media platforms.

III. Publications

The latest APAARI Newsletter for December 2017 was published in early 2018 and disseminated to members and stakeholders. APAARI updated and published two category Flyers: APAARI Membership and APAARI General Flyer May 2018. Proceedings and Country Status Reports of Underutilized Crops Expert Consultation and Thailand Durian Success Story have been published. PDF copies are available for download from APAARI website.

Publication	Month in which published	Cover
APAARI Newsletter December 2017	December 2017	
APAARI Membership Flyer	April 2018	

APAARI General Flyer	April 2018	
Expert Consultation on Underutilized Crops – Proceedings	April 2018	
Expert Consultation on Underutilized Crops – Country Status Reports	May 2018	

IV. Visits and Partnership

2.1. General Scoping for Partnership

2.1.1 APAARI Skype meeting with TAP and GFAR Secretariat at FAO Rome

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Martina Spisiakova had a skype meeting with TAP Secretariat at FAO, Rome, on 5th January to discuss on the progress of the TAP project, and also with GFAR Secretariat at Rome, to discuss on the modalities of partnership for transformational learning.

2.1.2 APAARI attended Steering Committee meeting with TAP via Skype at FAO Rome

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal attended the TAP Steering Committee via Skype on 17 January 2018 and on 21st April, 2018.

2.1.3 APAARI Meeting with CropLife Asia Director

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Dr. Rishi Tyagi had a meeting with Dr. Sianghee Tan, Director of Crop Life Asia on 15th November, 2017 and discussed the involvement of Crop Life Asia in APAARI and APCoAB activities.

2.1.4 APAARI signed an Agreement with FAO/GIZ Microbanker

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal signed an agreement with FAO/GIZ Microbankers in December 2017 for APAARI to occupy additional space on the 2nd floor of FAO Annex building.

2.1.5 APAARI Meeting with ICIMOD

Drs. Ravi Khetarpal, Rishi Tyagi and Dr. Dhrupad Choudhury, ICIMOD, Nepal met on February 3, 2018 to explore future collaboration between APAARI and ICIMOD.

2.1.6 APAARI Meeting with National Chung Hsing University and International Association for Agricultural Sustainability (IAAS)

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Dr. Rishi Tyagi met with Prof. Lee Tzong-Ru, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan; Vice Chairman and Michael Fu, Secretary General, International Association for Agricultural Sustainability (IAAS), Singapore, to discuss future collaboration between APAARI-IAAS and also the possibility of IAAS becoming an Associate member of APAARI.

2.1.7 A Visit and Meeting to APAARI by Chulalongkorn University

Dr Wayne Nells from Chulalongkorn University visited APAARI for discussions on various concept notes to be developed in higher education sector in collaboration with UNESCO and SEARCA and for involving APAARI during a meeting with IUCN to be held in March, to develop a collaborative proposal on Agrobiodiversity Index. The meeting was attended by APAARI staff -Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Fai Collins and Celilu Bitong.

2.1.8 APAARI Meeting with AFMA

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal had a meeting and discussions with Khun Thirach Rungruang of Agricultural and Food Marketing Association for Asia and the Pacific (AFMA) on possible areas of collaboration

2.1.9 APAARI Meeting with IFAD at FAO Office, Bangkok and at IFAD office, Rome

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Thansita Tanapatrujira attended a meeting with Dr. Fabrizio Bresciani of IFAD, Rome, at FAO office Bangkok on 23rd February on possible involvement and funding by IFAD on various areas of work by APAARI specially in Pacific and South Asia. Dr Khetarpal further met Dr Fabrizio at IFAD office in Rome on 20th April along with Country Manager of Pacific countries to discuss modalities of seeking IFAD support for mainstreaming Pacific island countries in APAARI's activities.

2.2.0 APAARI Meeting with UNESCO, Bangkok and Chulalongkorn University

Dr. Ravi attended a meeting at UNESCO with Sue Vize, Regional Advisor and Dr Wayne Nells (Chulalongkorn University) and other staff of UNESCO on the development of a project on mapping, assessing and strengthening higher education sector in agriculture in ASEAN countries.

2.2.1 APAARI Meeting with IUCN, FAO, UNESCO and UNESCAP about MAASEA

Dr. Rishi Tyagi and Geraldine Nemrod attended and participated in a meeting of core partners (APAARI, IUCN, FAO, UNESCO, UNESCAP) for discussion about the project on Mapping and Assessing Agrobiodiversity in Southeast Asia (MAASEA), 2018-2021, on March 7, 2018.

2.2.2 APAARI Meeting with RDA and KOPIA

Dr. Rishi Tyagi had a meeting with Dr Taek-Ryon Kwon, Director, International Technology

Cooperation Centre, RDA and Dr Yoo Eunha, Deputy Director and Head of Asia Team, Korea Program on International Agriculture, on March 9, 2018 to discuss future collaboration between APAARI and RDA in areas of agri-biotechnology and bioresources management.

2.2.3 APAARI Meeting with FAORAP and AIT, Bangkok

Fai Collins along with Ms Thansita visited and attended a meeting with FAORAP and AIT on preparations for the workshop on the use of drone and GIS imagery in agriculture.

2.2.4 Visits to Kasetsart University and to DOA regarding organization of Regional Conference on soil and Plant Health

[Details here \(Dr. Ravi and Dr. Rishi\)](#)

2.2.4 Meeting and discussion with officials of TECO office, Thailand, for additional support of APCoAB

[Details here \(Dr. Rishi\)](#)

V. Membership Drive

During the period January – April 2018, APAARI had 4 new members; International Association for Agricultural Sustainability (IAAS) and Panjab Agricultural University, India as Associate members; Mahidol University as Affiliate members and Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Science (TAAS) as Reciprocal member. Currently APAARI has 73 members.

VI. International/Regional Collaboration

During the period under review, APAARI had active discussions with FAO-RAP, ACIAR, TAAS, SAARC and DoA, Thailand, and organized and participated in several activities/ programmes including workshops, conferences and expert consultations.

VII. Forthcoming APAARI-supported Meetings/Workshops

1. ASTI Analytical Workshop, July 2018

The above workshop is planned for early July in Indonesia. The workshop will be attended by analytical experts from 3 countries (Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia) whom we have identified as having a strong analytical capacity. The workshop requires active participation from the experts to develop a common analytical framework and research agenda based on ASTI data. It is a small expert-based one for a total of at least 9 people.

Alejandro Nin Pratt (IFPRI Colleague) is leading the analytical part of the work and has identified the following research areas a) Examining the performance, strengths, weaknesses, and challenges of agricultural research in the region, b) Evaluating the impact of past and future research investment levels and resource allocation on the performance of research systems and the agricultural sector more generally, c) Providing forward-looking analysis on the future performance of research systems under different investment scenarios.

The research agenda however, will not exclusively focus on these 3 areas, because ASTI is keen on the process to be demand-driven and owned by countries so is eager to know what type of analytical research can be conducted in each of the 3 countries, based on ASTI data that has policy relevance to them.

VIII. APAARI Participation in meetings organized by other Fora

1. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Dr. Norah Omot made a visit to Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD), for ASTI project membership and APAARI membership, Jakarta, Indonesia, 8 January 2018.
2. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, under a USDA assignment carried out the mission of Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 15-22 January 2018.
3. Dr. Rishi Tyagi attended a Workshop on the Banana Bread and Coffee Sustainable Consumption, organized by Agriculture and Food Marketing Association for Asia and the Pacific (AFMA) and Great Earth International, Bangkok, Thailand, 18 January 2018
4. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Martina Spisiakova, Fai Collins Dzernyuy and Celilu Bitong attended and participated in an International Conference on Social and Sustainability Science in ASEAN: Agri-food Systems, Rural Sustainability and Socioeconomic Transformations at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, 23-25 January 2018.
5. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Dr. Rishi Tyagi visited CoA, TARI, Academia Scinica, ICDF, WorldVeg Centre and discussed possible collaboration, (Taipei, Taichung and Tainan) Taiwan, 29-31 January 2018.
6. Dr. Norah Omot and Ms Thansita Tanaphathrujira visited and had a meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI), for ASTI Project implementation and APAARI membership, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, 8-9 March 2018.
7. Dr. Rishi Tyagi, Fai Collins Dzernyuy and Celilu Bitong attended and participated at the 3rd CryoSymp 2018 organized by Mahidol University in collaboration with the International Society of Horticultural Science (ISHS), Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research and the Department of Agriculture -DOA, and APAARI – APCoAB, Asia Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, 26-28 March 2018.
8. Dr. Norah Omot and Gert-Jan Stads visited Department of Information-Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS), Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development (MARD) and the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD) for ASTI Project Implementation, Hanoi, Vietnam, 5-6 April 2018.
9. Dr. Yusuf Zafar, Chairman and Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary, APAARI. visited Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Senior Officials of AREEO, Tehran, Iran, 4-6 March 2018.
10. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal and Dr. Gert-Jan Stads visited IAARD-ICASEPS on ASTI Project Implementation, Jakarta, Indonesia, 9 April 2018.
11. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal attended the CGIAR GreenPass Phytosanitary Protocol for Germplasm, Expert Consultation, Rome, Italy, 18-19 April 2018.
12. Mr. Fai Collins Dzernyuy attended the Science week at University of Kisangani, Kisangani, Congo, 7-12 May 2018
13. Mr. Fai Collins Dzernyuy participated in ICTs for Sustainable Agriculture in the Asia Pacific: An eye in the sky for agriculture, Bangkok, Thailand, 4-8 June 2018.
14. Ms. Martina Spisiakova represented APAARI and TAP in the 2018 European Development Days, Brussels, Belgium, 5-6 June 2018.

IX. APAARI Sponsorship for Capacity Development

APAARI has invited nomination for the 3rd Master Class Training Course in Agricultural Leadership and Management to be held at Penang, Malaysia from 11-16 November, 2018.

X. Other Items

New Appointments

Knowledge Management Coordinator

Mr. Fai Collins Dzernyuy, from Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Cameroon, has been appointed as Knowledge Management Coordinator. He joined APAARI on 15 January 2018.

Consultant/Intern

APAARI has hired Ms. Geraldine Nemrod as APCoAB Consultant. She started working for APAARI on 5th February 2018 and will be on contract for four months.

APAARI accepted Ms. Lorene Siegwart from SupAgro, Montpellier, France as Intern for 4 months with effect from 2nd April 2018.

XI. Epilogue

This year, APAARI has continued to further expand its workforce and collaboration/partnerships through its major programmes on APCoAB, Knowledge Management and ASTI Project Implementation. Recent partnerships with universities and signed agreements have led to a more face to face interaction, discussion, memberships and visits in order to give more stimulus in promoting the objectives in strengthening agriculture and agri-food research and innovation systems in the region.