

**A  
REPORT  
ON  
ASIA - PACIFIC ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
INSTITUTIONS  
(APAARI)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) was established in December 1990 and has since grown into an important regional forum to promote the development of National Agricultural Research System (NARS) in the Asia-Pacific region through intra-regional and inter-institutional co-operation. APAARI's policies, plans, strategies and programmes focus on resolving regional concerns on increase productivity and resource-use, food security, protect/conservethe environment, poverty and agricultural sustainability.

The overall objectives of the Association are to foster the development of agricultural research in the Asia-Pacific region so as to promote the exchange of scientific and technical information, encourage collaborative research, promote human resource development, build-up organizational and management capabilities of member institutions and strengthen cross-linkages and networking among diverse stakeholders. To meet these needs, the Association:

- i. convenes General Assembly once in two years, holds regular Executive meetings yearly and organizes consultations, workshops, training's etc
- ii. collects, collates and disseminates research findings
- iii. maintains links with other fora in the region and outside through meetings/participation and information exchange, and
- iv. promotes need – based collaboration in research projects among member institutions, analyzing priorities and focusing on regional agricultural development

Presently, 17 institutions are member of APAARI representing the NARS of Australia, Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Iran, Republic of Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and Samoa. The CGIAR centers operating in the region (IPGRI, ICRISAT, ICARDA, ISNAR, IRRI, IWMI), and the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Centre (AVRDC), CABI, CIRAD and more recently ICIMOD and ILRI are its associate members. APAARI has been supported by the FAO. CG Centres, GFAR. and donor agencies such as IFAD and ACIAR. However, due to the bottom-up character of the

organization APAARI is becoming more and more self-sustainable. It gradually takes the role of being the ARD forum for the Asia-Pacific region.

## **STRENGTHENING REGIONAL NETWORKS**

APAARI plays the role of a facilitator/catalyst to promote and coordinate network activities. Emphasis has been to strengthen partnerships between NARS, IARCs and other partners, and how best through regional networks, information and material exchange, sharing of crop improvement results, and effective means to conserve and use genetic resources can be collectively promoted by member NARS. APAARI has been supportive to the Cereals and Legumes Asia Network (CLAN), Tropical Asian Maize Network (TAMNET), Underutilized Tropical Fruits Asia Network (UTFANET), Council for Partnership in Rice Research in Asia (CORRA), PGR Networks (IPGRI) and the Group on Fisheries and Aquatic Research (GoFAR).

It is better to link APAARI's activities with South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) too.

## **EXPERT CONSULTATIONS**

APAARI has organized several Expert Consultations pursuing on key areas of research and development of interest and benefit to NARS in Asia and the Pacific Region.

These regional meetings have been effective in building required partnership for agricultural research and development in the region.

## **PUBLICATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION**

Diverse publications for the benefit of NARS in particular, have been brought out:

1. **APAARI Newsletter:** Two issues yearly are published during June and December, providing information on research development related matters in agriculture both in the regional and global context. With a mailing list of about 600, the newsletter is widely circulated, facilitating free flow of information dissemination among member NARS, IARCs, NGOs and other partners including donors.
2. **Proceedings of Expert Consultations:** APAARI has brought out six proceedings of the expert consultations organized, to promote collaborative activities in these specific R & D issues.
3. **Directories of NARS Institutions:** Two regional directories for South and Southeast Asia have been published. These provide to member NARS, useful contacts for exchange of information.
4. **Success stories on agriculture and related fields:** Success stories of significant agricultural breakthroughs in the Asia-Pacific region, largely through the efforts

of NARS have been reviewed and published, and widely distributed. These cover diverse topics.

\* **Crops and Commodities:** Baby corn production in Thailand; Hybrid Rice in China; Hybrid Cotton in India, Palm Oil Industry in Malaysia, Cotton Production in Pakistan; Wheat Production in Iran; Direct-Seeded Rice in Malaysia, Groundnut in China and Oilseeds in India.

\* **Farming systems:** Transformation in Korea Farming; Tilapia Farming in the Philippines; Orchids in Thailand; Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Rice in Indonesia.

• **Other topics:** Such as Dairying in India; Orchids in Thailand and Agro-Tourism in Australia and recently Bivalve Mariculture in India (Pearl Oyster, Edible Mussel and Oyster). A success story in Coastal Eco-system Development has been useful to promote dissemination of information and technology transfer.

Three more success stories are being processed for printing:

- " The Farming of Red Seaweeds (Carrageenophytes) in the Philippines "
- " Labour Saving technologies of Rice in Korea – Direct Seeding and Machine Transplanting "
- " Successful Research and Development of Integrated Agriculture-Crop-Livestock Farming System in Vietnam "

Further, Dr. S.K Vasal, Team Leader, Regional Asian Maize Programme is still working on a Manual on Hybrid Maize Technology for appropriate benefit to the NARS in the region. He has been requested to expedite its publication.

These booklets stress on inter-institutional collaboration in sharing available expertise and technology among member NARS, to boost agricultural production in particular.

5. **Agricultural Research Systems:** Two sub-regional reports that in South and Southeast Asia have been brought out. These present case studies reflecting organization and management, and growth and development of NARIs/NARS.
6. **Status reports:** A NARS status report for the Asia-Pacific has been published. All members of APAARI have contributed a status report about their NARI/NARS. Also a Status Report on PGR Conservation and Use is published. This regional synthesis report, undertaken on behalf of the FAO, provides information on plant genetic resources utilization and conservation in Asia and the Pacific. It is an APAARI-FAO joint publication.

## **OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

**MoU with IPGRI:** IPGRI and APAARI have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote/strengthen PGR Networks under APAARI umbrella and make them more sustainable. A workplan for 2-years is being developed.

**APAARI's Collaboration with GFAR:** First and Second Management Group meetings and in the NARS-SC meeting in May during the MTM in Beijing, China, and at the Inter-Centre Week of Washington, USA. APAARI as a regional forum presented at GFAR at Dresden, Germany, some case studies in research partnerships conducted by NARS with IARCs and other partners. These case studies deal with TAMNET, Rice-Wheat Consortium (RWC), NACA and also Hybrid Rice in India.

The resource conservation technology (RCT) like relay/surface seeding, use of Chinese hand tractor (CHT) with accessories (Three-in-One operation), zero-till seed drill and bed-planting technologies for wheat seeding in Indo-Gangetic Plains under the banner of RWC is found to be very promising.

**ISNAR, CABI and FAO/WAICENT collaboration in Information Networking:** ISNAR has assisted APAARI in the development/establishing of a homepage for APAARI on the internet, which now can be viewed at <http://www.apaari.org>. An ISNAR/CABI project proposal on information network is under consideration for donor's support, to create information technology base for APAARI. As a first step an electronic conference with identified Information Nodal Points (INPs) of the NARS in the region and a number of regional networks (APAFRI, NACA and APHCA) is currently being held to discuss the establishment of an Asia-Pacific Regional Agricultural Information System (APRAIS). Such a system should make research information and knowledge interactively available to member NARS and other partners. Components of an APRAIS would be a gateway to different resources available in the region and e-mail conferencing facilities available to all stakeholders in ARD. A discussion paper on the need for an APRAIS has been prepared by CABI in co-operation with the NARS secretariat of the GFAR. Recently APAARI had organized an Expert Consultation on the establishment of an Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System of which the outcomes are presently dealt with by APAARI and the several partners involved.

**Collaboration with CABI, ISNAR and ACIAR in capacity building:** Two workshops focusing on information management were organized with APAARI as co-sponsor. Mr. Reinier Hoffen, APO, APAARI based at New Delhi office attended both the workshops and also presented a paper on APAARI Information needs, while Ms. Achara, Information Technology Manager at APAARI office at FAORAP, Bangkok participated in the meeting held at AIT, Bangkok.

**Collaboration with FAO and SGRP/CGIAR in regional workshop:** APAARI was one of the co-sponsors of the 'Regional Meeting to promote and facilitate implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Asia and the Pacific'. The meeting was convened by the FAO of the United Nations. APAARI and the CGIAR systemwide Genetic Resources Programme (SGRP). APAARI participated in this workshop and presented a paper highlighting its activities.

APAARI was also co-sponsor in the policy meeting on 'Impact on Research and Development of *Sui Generis* Approaches to Plant Variety Protection of Rice in Developing Countries' held at IRRI, Los Banos, Philippines.

**Developing APAARI Vision 2025:** APAARI had organized a brainstorming meeting to discuss its future perspective plan – Vision 2025. The vision document was further revised incorporating suggestions from participants and discussed during an Expert Consultation in connection with the Executive Committee meeting of APAARI held at FAORAP. The resulting vision 2025 document is made available and formed the background document for recent discussions on strategies for implementing the vision in the Expert Consultation in Chiang Rai, Thailand.

## **EPILOGUE**

APAARI is a neutral regional forum that provides NARS a platform to exchange views and information. It promotes collaboration and inter-institutional linkages among national, regional and international organizations such as NARS, CGIAR, GFAR, FAO, IFAD, ACIAR etc. APAARI has an overall facilitators role and is working partnership mode to strengthen regional collaboration for agricultural research and development in the Asia-Pacific. To plan ahead its activities and to provide a perspective, APAARI had brought out its '**Vision 2025**'. With the implementation of activities focused in this vision document, the beginning of the next millennium will find APAARI working on its future strategies, priorities and programmes more effectively to emerge as a strong regional forum in the Asia-Pacific to serve the needs of the NARS and the diverse stakeholders.