

# Regional Rice Initiative





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## Objective

To assist member countries to:

1. focus on the importance of goods/services produced by and available from rice ecosystems
2. identify sustainable rice production practices to enhance resilience and increase efficiencies in rice production to improve food security





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## A Pilot Project

Designed to contribute to not only SO<sub>2</sub> objectives but also *Rice Strategy for Asia* being formulated by RAP in response to APRC





# Regional Rice Initiative

Implemented by an **interdisciplinary team** across technical and geographical boundaries

- 5 FAO offices (Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, HQs, RAP) and 3 governments actively involved
- 15 technical officers involved from 7 different units at HQs and RAP
- Budgets allocated to 12 different technical officers and partnerships developed with over 10 national and international entities

# Rice fields – more than just rice!





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Rice fields – **more than just rice!**

Component 1 – Water and Rice/Fish systems

Component 2 – Biodiversity, landscape, and ecosystem services

Component 3 – Management practices

Component 4 – Social, economic and policy cross-cutting issues



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## Major achievements as of mid October

- National needs and target areas identified through national planning workshops in 3 countries
- Assessment tools developed and applied in 3 countries (i.e. rice ecosystem assessment, climate change models, trees outside forests methodology)
- 30 FFS initiated in Indonesia and Philippines
- Over 600 farmers trained with new curriculum developed on *Save and Grow*
- Contribution to Africa Rice



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## Activities in Progress

- Assessments of aquatic biodiversity in rice field for food and nutrition security
- Policy analysis of pesticide-related regulations in the Philippines (to be concluded soon)
- Trees outside Forests assessment
- 30 FFS in 2 countries
- GIAHS assessment in Ifugao province, Philippines
- Climate change impact study in Lao PDR
- Refinement of AMICAF model in the Philippines and application to economic assessment at regional level



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## Lessons Learned To date

Areas and geographical coverage supported under RRI are limited:

- should follow a value chain approach by:
  - linking sustainable rice production intensification to local food systems and markets, other post-harvest issues, diet diversity and health in collaboration with private and public institutions
  - incorporating trade and rice economy to be addressed by the Rice Strategy for Asia
- Should support non-ASEAN countries in 2014 as well to address diverse Asian rice situations



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## Lessons Learned To date

Nature does not cooperate necessarily with humans and their artificial deadline:

- should take crop seasons into account in programming and work planning – this couldn't be done properly in Indonesia
- should continue to assist 3 countries in 2014 to conclude the pilot project and to address other dimensions of rice value chain, as millions of people in Asia rely on rice for food security, especially smallholders and the vulnerable



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## What's Next?

- ✓ Discuss findings at country and regional levels in November/December 2013
- ✓ Keep momentum created on multidisciplinary work at different levels across countries to ensure producing envisaged results
- ✓ Explore the possibility to address other dimensions of the value chain and to cover 1 or 2 more countries under Phase II 2014-15



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## Objectives:

1. Review and discuss the outputs produced or deliverables to date as well as new and innovative findings and approaches that contribute to achieving the goals of the SO2 *“Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner”*
2. Identify lessons learned, including positive outcomes and constraints encountered
3. Identify and discuss the synergies created (or to be created) by the different components and sub-components of the RRI



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## Objectives:

4. Forge and provide policy recommendations and advice to other existing regional initiatives in Asia (or ASEAN), especially a Regional Rice Strategy to be formulated by RAP
5. Propose key elements and components of the RRI Phase II to be formulated and implemented in the next biennium 2014-15

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