

Opening address by Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs
Acting Chair of ASP steering committee

At the opening session of the Asian Soil Partnership Steering Committee
on the Workshop: towards a regional implementation plan for Asia
On Friday 16 December 2016
At Centara Grand Hotel at Central Plaza Ladprao, Bangkok

The GSP secretariat

The focal points of the ASIAN Steering Committees

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs, the Assistant Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives acting Chair of Asian Soil Partnership have an honor to preside over the opening session of the ASP steering committee. I would also like to greet you all again.

It is

warmly welcome you to Thailand and would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Global Soil Partnership, FAO for your contributions and jointly organizing this meeting. It is also a great honor for Thailand to be appointed the Chair of ASP, and to be partnership of this regional collaboration. It is also a warm feeling to see you all working together in an attempt to develop the regional implement plan and to make better for Asia in promoting the sustainable soil management which requires a true sacrifice and dedication to accomplish.

The ASP workshop today is considered the Third regional meeting since the consolidation of the ASP in 2012. The objectives of this workshop are: (1) to endorse the 5-year implementation plan for Asia; (2) to plan the execution of core activities in the plan;

and (3) to consolidate the Asian Soil Partnership by running the first meeting of the steering committee and introducing national focal points to the Chair and Secretariat for the region.

The meeting is held for 3 consecutive days from 14-16 December 2016. The activities are:

The First day, the Chairs of 5 pillars will be reporting the plan of each individual pillar, the brainstorming ideas, and the endorsement of the ASP implementation plan.

The second day will be the field trip to Chachoengsao province. This activity provides the opportunity for the members to observe two success cases of the Royal's Initiative on the Sustainable Soil Management at Khao Hin Sorn Royal Development Study Center, and the success case of soil doctor who has adopted the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to his farm for many years.

Last day, there will be the presentation regarding the core activities from 5 pillars to be executed and following by the meeting of the Steering Committee.

The total 70 participants of the ASP meeting are the representatives of FAO GSP, the Chairs of 5 pillars, the ITPS from Japan, India, Pakistan, and Thailand, the National Focal Points from 13 member states, namely Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, and the representatives of the ASP Thailand.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Our gathering today reaffirms the commitment of the global community reflecting that Asia is ready. And Asia is well aware of the important roles of soil which is the foundation for life and the keystone of **food security, zero hunger, human well-being, and climate change**.

In recognition of its vital roles, the 68th session of the UN General Assembly declared the Fifth of December of every year as the World Soil Day, and the Year 2015 "the International Year of Soils" in order to raise awareness and promote the sustainable soil management to preserve and protect the soils over the long term. In this regards, Asia should also dedicate our efforts as the strong partnership in promoting the sustainable

management of soils as the process towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The organizer kindly hopes that the meeting will create a strong interactive partnership and enhance the sharing of experiences and collaboration between all stakeholders. Most importantly, the member states jointly make a synergy of efforts in developing the Asian implementation plan to conserve and to protect the soil resources in a sustainable manner, especially, in the face of new global challenges. It is, moreover, to stimulate the investment from the promising donors that would help strengthen the capacities and the stability of the regional development taskforce.

On behalf of the Chair of the ASP Steering Committee, I strongly encourage the focal points from all member states, the ITPS, and the Chair of Pillars to brainstorming and share essential knowledge and experiences to ensure the commitment of our efforts to the concrete actions for soil resources conservation, protection, and the sustainability. This will be the legacy for our children and future generation as we will leave no one behind.

No soil...No food...Health Soil and Healthy Food.

Again, I would like to thank the GSP, Chairs of Pillars, and all of you that reviewed and helped draft the implementation plan presented during this meeting.

Now, this is an opportune time for me to invite the Vice Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives to declare the official opening of the ASP workshop.

{ ผู้ช่วยรัฐมนตรีฯ กล่าวเปิดประชุม }

**Statement by General Patamapong Prathompat
Vice Minister for Agricultural and Cooperatives**

**At the opening session of the Asian Soil Partnership Workshop:
towards a regional implementation plan for Asia**

On Wednesday 14 December 2016 at 09.00-09.45 hrs.

At Centara Grand Hotel at Central Plaza Ladprao, Bangkok

Mr. Jongjin Kim, Deputy Regional Representative, FAO RAP

Dr. Juadee Pongmaneerat, the Inspector
of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

Mr. Lertviroj Kowattana, Deputy Permanent Secretary
of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

The focal points of the ASIAN member states

Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, I would like to thank you all of you for paying a great respect to
His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The Kingdom of Thailand is one of the food resource producers in the world, most of our population are in agricultural sector. The important issue to the success in cultivation is to have good soils, enough water and good management but due to the changes not only in environments but also the use of land which causes land degradation and soil fertility decreased, the result of these impacts make land unsuitable for cultivation eventually.

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej was aware of these problems when visiting his people both to the low land and the high land cultivation areas. His two major working

principals are to rely on true knowledge of nature and its laws in solving problems and to resolve abnormal conditions. Several study centers were established to initiate projects such as acid sulfate soil, soil degradation, saline soil, organic soil, vetiver for soil conservation and crop manure to carry out research works and experiments before transferring knowledge to farmers.

His Majesty has received international recognition in his ability as soil resources specialist and was requested to allow the day of the 5 December, His Majesty's birthday as a world soil day.

During the workshop, participants will be visiting one of his royally initiated rural development projects at Khao Hin Sorn Royal Development Study Center. This center has been carrying research on problem soils to convert the areas to be suitable for cultivation once again. As for farmers, after learning how to improve soils from the center and transfer knowledge to the real practice with their land in order to increase yields and income for better living finally.

Ladies and gentleman, I do hope that His Majesty's initiated projects would be a very useful and possibly will be applied to partner countries in Asia and global eventually.

I may now give the floor to, Mr. Jongjin Kim, Deputy Representative of FAO as a co-organizer and follow by Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs, the Functional Chair of the ASP.

Thank you very much.

WELCOME ADDRESS

of

Jongjin Kim

Deputy Regional Representative

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

delivered at the

3rd Asian Soil Partnership Workshop: towards a regional implementation plan for Asia

Bangkok, Thailand

14 December 2016

**Your Excellency, General Patamapong Prathompat, Vice Minister for Agriculture and
Cooperatives**

Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs, Functional chair of the ASP

Distinguished delegates and participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to welcome you to the third Asian Soil Partnership workshop. I wish to express our special gratitude to each of you who are attending this workshop, given recognition to the importance of soil resources and join in our important efforts and undertakings, despite of busy schedule in your own country.

Soil is a core component of land resources and the foundation of agricultural development and ecological sustainability. The goal of improving global food security and

nutrition, in the context of population growth, land degradation and climate change, cannot be satisfactorily achieved unless soils are placed at the very top of the development agenda.

The last year we celebrated the International Year of Soils (IYS) for raising awareness of the importance of soils for food security, nutrition and essential ecosystem services. This year, 2016 is designated as the International Year of Pulses and FAO has been facilitating to increase public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security and nutrition.

In synergies for promoting the both soil and pulses, FAO set this year for Soils and Pulses – Symbiosis for Life to encourage the production of pulses to improve soil health, more pulses consumption for economic, social and human well-being, and developing good practices and policy solutions to contribute to Agenda 2030 implementation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Regional Soil Partnerships (RSP) were established among active stakeholders to establish an interactive consultative process with national soils entities as well as with regional soil science societies and other relevant regional mechanisms. The RSP is to provide guidance on regional goals and priorities and the required implementation mechanisms, and regularly review progress in reaching common objectives and targets.

The Asia Soil Partnership (ASP) was established in February 2012 in Nanjing, China to increase awareness on the fundamental roles of soils for human well-being, food and nutrition security, sustainable development and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In September 2012, an ad-hoc meeting of the Asian Soil Partnership was organized in Tsukuba, Japan to define a road map that was consolidated through the Tsukuba Statement. Then in May last year in Bangkok, Thailand, after the endorsement of the global Plans of Action, 2nd Asian Soil Partnership consultation workshop was held to develop the

regional implementation plan for the region.

Now this 3rd Asian Soil Partnership workshop is organized to further develop and facilitate the Asian Soil Partnership through discussing and endorsing the regional implementation plan and core activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to highlight that the in recognition of the tremendous efforts and dedication of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej in soil resource development and that originated the 5 December, the birthday of His Majesty the late King, as the World Soil Day.

Thai authorities had played a crucial role in promoting the World Soil Day and the designation of 2015 as the International Year of Soils. I would like to extend our earnest appreciation to the government of Thailand in taking a leadership role in promoting awareness on soils and food security.

I would also like to thank the Land Development Department to take the Secretariat role of Asian Soil Partnership and organizing this workshop. I hope that this workshop would facilitate us in implementing soil resources management and facilitate strengthening the soil institutions through capacity development and investing in sustainable soil management practices.

I wish you all for a productive meeting.

Thank you.