

Regional Workshop on Establishing a Regional Database of Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific & the 10th Session of the Technical Committee of CSAM, 17-19 November 2014, Siem Reap, Cambodia



Siem Reap, Cambodia. Participants from governments, research institutions and private sector associations of member countries, and representatives from international and regional organizations gathered here to assess the need and feasibility of establishing a database for agricultural mechanization in the region and to brainstorm practical frameworks and way forward to guide the Centre's future work in improving the quality and quantity of data and statistics in support of sustainable agriculture at a regional workshop on the topic organized by UNESCAP's Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM) on 17-19 November 2014, back-to-back with the 10th Session of the Technical Committee of CSAM and with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Representatives of 15 member countries briefed the meeting of the status quo of statistical systems and availability of statistics and data in the field of agricultural mechanization in their respective countries, while representatives from international and regional organizations and private sector associations shared the experiences and lessons of relevant regional initiatives. There was a general agreement among all participants that reliable, timely and comparable data and statistics are essential to inform evidence-based decision and policy making in promoting sustainable agricultural mechanization and they are equally important for other stakeholders including researchers and private sector, while major gaps exist in their availability at regional and global levels. Lack of a regional framework and insufficient capacity at country level were identified as main constraints.

The participants applauded the initiative of CSAM to deliberate on a regional database of agricultural mechanization in Asia and the Pacific, and discussed the options that CSAM can approach the issue following the presentations by resource persons. The meeting concluded by recommending CSAM to start developing an overall framework and preparing a draft template of core set data and indicators and to seek comments and consensus from stakeholders in 2015, as first steps of a regional effort to improve the quality and quantity of agricultural mechanization data and statistics in support of sustainable agriculture. CSAM was also encouraged to work closely with relevant regional initiatives, e.g. FAO-ESCAP's

joint work on Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics 2013-2017, to achieve synergy and complementarities.

The 10th Session of the Technical Committee (TC) of CSAM commended on the progress and achievements of the Centre made in 2014, while reviewing and endorsing the Centre's work report of 2014 and work plan of 2015. In response to the request of the 9th TC Session, Mr. Zhao Bing, Head of CSAM, made a summary report of the activities conducted by RNAM (CSAM's predecessor) on prototype/drawing exchange of agricultural machinery, and moderated the discussion on the need and feasibility of re-introducing a similar arrangement. TC members also discussed issues relating to CSAM's cooperation and partnership with major stakeholders, including the collaboration between the Technical Committee and the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Asia and Pacific Network for Testing of Agricultural Machinery (ANTAM).

Thirty-eight participants from 15 countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam, as well as representatives from Regional Office for Asia and Pacific of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO-RAP), Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific of ESCAP (SIAP) and Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) participated in the two events.

Mr. Pech Sovanno, Deputy General Director of General Directorate of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, Ms. Marit Nilses, Economic Affairs Officer of the Trade and Investment Division of ESCAP, Ms. Rosa Rolle, Senior Agro-Industries and Post-harvest Officer of FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Ms. Ismal Kumudini, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture of India, and Mr. Zhao Bing addressed at the opening of the Regional Workshop and the 10th TC Session.

On the last day of the meetings, the participants visited a local agricultural machinery dealership at Sangkat Chreav, Seim Reap City.

