



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

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
(1/2016)**

**PROCEEDINGS**



**Bangkok, Thailand**

**08 September, 2016**



## **ASIA-PACIFIC ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS (APAARI)**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING (1/2016)**

**8 September 2016, Bangkok, Thailand**

### **PROCEEDINGS**

The first meeting of the APAARI Executive Committee (EC) for 2016 was held at the Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand on 08 September 2016. Dr. Waraporn Prompoi, Deputy Director General, Department of Agriculture (DOA), Thailand was the chairperson representing Mr. Somchai Charnnaroungkul, Chairman, APAARI & DG, DOA, Thailand and Dr. Shah Md. Ziqrul Haq Chowdhury, Member Director (Livestock), BARC, was the Co-Chair representing Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Co-Chairman, APAARI & Executive Chairman, BARC, Bangladesh. The Agenda items discussed are given in Annex. I. The meeting was attended by 20 participants including 9 APAARI EC Members. Members of the Task Force engaged for the Strategic Planning Exercise (20117-2022) were also invited to participate. List of participants is attached (Annex. II).

The meeting considered and discussed all agenda items in order of its schedule. The minutes of the meetings are detailed below:

#### **Agenda Item No. 1. Opening Remarks by Chairperson**

EC Meeting was initiated with the opening remarks by the Chairperson, Dr. Waraporn Prompoi, Deputy Director General, Department of Agriculture (DOA), Thailand. Dr. Waraporn appreciated the achievements made by APAARI and emphasised on its greater role on four program areas on which APAARI is now focusing, i.e. the partnership and networking, knowledge management, capacity building and advocacy. She was of the view that the APAARI strategies in the proposed Strategic Plan should be able to respond to the changing needs of the Asia-Pacific Region (APR). She elaborated that whilst the region has experienced rapid economic growth in recent years and consequently has made impressive progress against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), large disparities persist and the most poor continue to be denied their share of the benefits. She pointed out that 18 per cent of the APR population (or 772 million people) still live on less than US\$ 1.25 per day and rising incomes and purchasing power are placing pressure on food supplies, driving an increase in income inequality and raising questions of future sustainability. Thus, in this context she asked APAARI as a regional forum to play its role in building partnerships for wide spread agricultural research and innovations by engaging all NARIs, NAROs, CG Centres, Farmers' Associations, NGOs, and other stakeholders and contribute towards realizing its Vision 2030. Finally, she declared the first APAARI Executive Committee Meeting 2016 open.

#### **Agenda Item No. 2. Welcome Remarks and Introduction by EC-APAARI**

Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary, APAARI welcomed and thanked Dr. Waraporn Prompoi, for chairing the Executive Committee Meeting and for her opening remarks and also welcomed the participants. Dr. Ghodake then formally introduced all the participants one by one and elaborated all agenda items that were to be placed in the EC Meeting and also apprised the members about the documents/papers made available for the meeting. It was confirmed that the needed quorum for holding EC was complete to make decisions as 9 out of 12 EC Members were present in the meeting. He then requested the Chairperson to officially release two recent publications of APAARI (i) APAARI Vision 2030; (ii) Development of Communication Strategies for Adoption of Agri-Biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific.

### **Agenda Item No. 3 Approval of Agenda by the EC**

The already framed agenda as circulated was officially approved for discussion in the EC Meeting being held on 8 September, 2016.

### **Agenda Item No. 4 Minutes of the last meeting (2/2015)**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI presented the salient features and key decisions from the proceedings of the last EC Meeting (2/2015) that was held on 10 December, 2015 (Annex-III). The EC members perused the minutes and these were formally approved. It was emphasized on engaging all stakeholders, farmers' organizations in decision making. It was also proposed to establish a Foresight Global E-Forum of all stakeholders with APAARI taking a leading role. Dr. Ghodake assured that APAARI will consider becoming a partner of such a Platform.

### **Agenda Item No. 5 APAARI Progress Report December-2015 to August 2016**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI presented the progress report (Annex-IV) for the above mentioned period which covered the major events / activities including, APAARI Strategic Plan, CRP Dryland Cereals Scholarship Program, meetings and workshops knowledge management (publications) and information sharing, , project planning and organizing, membership drive collaboration, participation in various International meetings organized by other organizations, planning of the forthcoming events, staff changes, etc.

It was pointed out as to how the propped actions be pushed into operational plans. It was clarified that after the Strategic Plan is approved, the Operational Plans will be developed on biennial basis.

APAARI Progress Report December 2015 – August 2016 was endorsed by the EC.

### **Agenda Item No. 6 (Membership Fee Payment Status)**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI presented the report on the current membership status and informed that the APAARI Secretariat and its partners continued APAARI drive for mobilizing membership and as a result of this drive memberships increased from 55 in 2014 to 68 in 2016 (Annex-V). The membership payment status as on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 was found satisfactory.

The representative from COA, Chinese Taipei emphasized on continued support of COA, Chinese Taipei for APAARI Programs including APCoAB Program. Members recognized significant contribution of Chinese Taipei to APAARI programs and activities. The question was raised as to why China is not the member of APAARI. It was clarified that APAARI membership is open to all the countries in the Asia-Pacific region and APAARI had been making sincere efforts to get China included as its valued partner. Also a clarification was sought about the

membership category I, II, III for the NARS. This was clarified that this distinction is due to the difference in the amount of membership fee (Category I - \$10,000, Category II - \$6,000, Category III - \$3,000).

The progress on membership / fee payment status was appreciated and approved by the EC

#### **Agenda Item No. 7 Audit Report and Audited Financial Statements: 1 January - 31 December 2015**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI presented the audited financial statements for the period 1 January to 31 December 2015 as prepared by the APAARI's External Auditor – The GAAP Professional Audit Co. Ltd (Annex-VI). The report was unqualified and satisfactory in all respects and the comments from the Auditors were quoted as “presented correctly and reasonably, as they should be and comply with generally accepted accounting principles”.

During the discussion, it was pointed out that the Auditor from the Audit Firm should present the Audit Report in EC meeting or General Assembly Meeting (GAM). It was highlighted that organizations like APSA or APAARI do not have “Auditors” as regular staff and generally the Head of the organizations presents the financial report based on the report of an external auditor. There was a suggestion that in EC Meetings the auditor may present the financial statements and once approved by the EC, the same can be presented by the Executive Secretary APAARI at GAM etc.

The audit report and the audited financial statements as audited by APAARI external auditor for January-December, 2015 were approved.

#### **Agenda Item No. 8 (Financial Statement 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. to 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2016)**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI apprised the EC on the financial statement and position of APAARI for the period 1 January to 15 August 2016 (Annex-VII). Detailed statements including funds received, transferred and currently available and funds spent during the period 1 January to 15 August were presented. He also presented the derived balance and also the funds available in various bank accounts. It helped to derive estimates for funds receivable and to be spent and carry over balance to 2017.

During the discussion, Ms. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, Deputy Director of Dept. International Affairs, COA, Chinese Taipei, presented a formal official letter of approval of grant of US\$50,000 to APAARI as its commitment for APAARI activities mainly APCoAB Program. The Chairperson, Dr. Waraporn while accepting the payment on behalf of APAARI appreciated the good gesture and commitment of COA, Chinese Taipei.

EC endorsed the income / expenditure statement subject to Auditor's Report to be presented for the whole year's financial statement in next EC likely to be held in March-2017.

#### **Agenda Item No. 9 APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-2022**

Subsequent to the approval of APAARI Vision 2030 by APAARI EC in December, 2015 and consequent decision to develop comprehensive APAARI Strategic Plan – 2017-22 to help providing direction and guidance to APAARI. The Task Team developed the Strategic Plan 2017-2022 based on the inputs from the members of Advanced Consultation Group. Dr. Simon Hearn and Dr. Emma Zalzman made presentations of respective components explaining the salient features of the SP.

There was in-depth discussion on the SP-2017-2022 with most of the members appreciating the procedure followed and the efforts made by the Task Team. As the draft SP document has already been widely circulated, its full version is not annexed. However, summary is attached (Annex-VIII) for the information of the EC members

Points were raised to clarify the roles and responsibilities of APAARI Secretariat and APAARI as an Association for implementing the Strategic Plan 2017-22. It was clarified that the APAARI members and partners implement the activities and not the APAARI Secretariat. Hence, the member countries have to include the activities in their Operational Plans. APAARI is a networking agency and its secretariat has to play an effective facilitation role. A few EC Members were of the view that an Operational Plan should have a part of the current SP-2017-2022, but it was clarified that the Operational Plan can only be developed once the SP is approved by the GAM that would be held in November 2016. Operational Plan will be more specific and effective monitoring and evaluation will be done through NARS that will be implementing the activities.

It was agreed that the minor changes proposed will have to be incorporated before the SP-2017-2022 will be ready for circulation amongst all stakeholders by Mid. September, 2016. Once feedback is received from the stakeholders the SP shall be refined and presented to the General Assembly for its final endorsement.

EC approved the Strategic Plan 2017-2022 for further circulation to APAARI members and partners.

#### **Agenda Item 10 Additional Members on EC Representing AIRCA and Higher Education Sector (Universities)**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI appraised the EC members on the proposal (Annex-IX) to amend article 10 of APAARI constitution to accommodate for two additional seats on the APAARI Executive Committee to represent AIRCA and the Higher Education Sector (Universities).

EC approved the proposal and the final endorsement will be considered by the General Assembly in November 2016.

#### **Agenda Item No. 11 (Rejuvenation and Strengthening of APCoAB Prpgram)**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI apprised the EC on the current status of APCoAB Program (Annex-X) and the need for its rejuvenation and strengthening under the recently developed APAARI Strategic Plan. He informed that APCoAB has been one of the important programs of APAARI that was established in 2003. Its major objective was to serve as a neutral forum for the key partners engaged in research, development, commercialization and education/learning of agricultural biotechnology as well as environmental safety in the Asia-Pacific region. COA, Chinese Taipei had been continuously supporting APCoAB Program since 2008 and will continue to support this program for next 3-4 Years. It was emphasized the focused activities relating to agricultural biotechnology should continue. The Steering Committee of APCoAB is planned to be held on 31 October at Taichung, Chinese Taipei.

The rejuvenation and strengthening of the APCoAB program focusing on advanced biotechnology was endorsed by the EC.

## **Agenda Item 12 APAARI Governance and Development: Resource Mobilization – Short to Long Term Implications**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI presented to the EC that since the approval of APAARI Vision 2030 in December 2015, the APAARI has been planning for developing extensive Strategic Plan 2017-22 so as to shape its pathways towards delivering on its Vision 2030 in order to effectively strengthen agri-food research and innovation systems in the APR. Then based on the Vision - 2030, the APAARI Strategic Plan (2017-2022) was developed. To achieve various targets under the SP, some fundamental changes are needed for improving APAARI governance and development (Annex-XI). This change is going to be the principal driver not only in APAARI becoming efficient and effective but also encouraging and promoting APAARI partners and collaborators to be effectively engaged and participating in much needed collective actions as mentioned in APAARI Strategic Plan. From Jan. 2017 additional resource mobilization in terms of human and financial resources will be needed. EC was requested to approve the proposal for early implementation so that the same may be placed in the upcoming GAM in November 2016. Two vacant positions and five new positions were requested for recruitment along with a financial plan. It was also emphasized that the reform in APAARI is extremely necessary to realize its Vision 2030 and for this resource mobilization both for human and financial resources has to be take place at the earliest.

Deliberations on this agenda item drew attention that equal salary structure for the same category of staff must be observed. It was agreed that out of the reserve fund of nearly 1.0 million, an amount of USD 75,000 per year may be utilized for two years to meet such expenses.

EC approved two instalments of US\$75,000 each to be utilized from the reserve fund.

## **Agenda Item No. 13 APAARI Work Plan September – 2016 to December-2016**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI presented the Work Plan from September to December, 2016 (Annex-XII). The main activities included holding of the 13<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Meeting to be held on 3 November 2016 at Taichung, Chinese Taipei Expert Consultation on Best Practices in Agri-Food Innovations in Asia and the Pacific at Taichung, Chinese Taipei, Training Program on Food Safety Management in Chinese Taipei, co-organizing first International Agro-biodiversity Congress, publications, etc. Biennial operational plan 2017-18 will be developed in early 2017, subject to approval of the Strategic Plan 2017-22 during the General Assembly meeting on 3 November. It was emphasized to generate more money through membership drive and also using the carry over money from the past years to undertake additional activities.

EC endorsed the APAARI Work Plan September - December, 2016 as was presented.

## **Other Matters**

### **Item No. 14 Expert Consultation on Best Practices in Agri-Food Innovations in Asia and the Pacific**

Dr. Bhag Mal, and Dr. Ms. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, presented the details of the Expert Consultation on Agri-Food Innovations to be held in Chinese Taipei from 1-3 November, 2016. The detailed program, and the roles and responsibilities of APAARI as well as COA, Chinese Taipei were clearly elaborated (Annex-XIII). The point was raised that field day visit for half day instead of one full day will not be sufficient. However, it was clarified that due to major

focus on technical program and paucity of time, it is difficult to spare one full day for field visit. However this could be decided in consultation with other co-organizers.

EC approved the organization of Expert Consultation in Collaboration with other Co-Organizers

### **Agenda Item No. 15 14<sup>th</sup> APAARI General Assembly Meeting on 3 November, 2016**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI apprised the Committee on the proposed 14th APAARI General Assembly Meeting to be held in the afternoon of 3 November 2016 in Taichung, Chinese Taipei. The proposed outline agenda items were shared as under: (Details Annex-XIV)

- Chairman's address to the GA
- Consideration and approval of the agenda of GAM
- Progress report for the biennium 2015-16
- APAARI membership changes and status
- Annual audit report and financial statements for 2014 and 2015
- Interim audit report and financial statement – January - September 2016
- APAARI Strategic Plan: 2017-22 (for Approval)
- Additional members on the APAARI Executive Committee
- Resource mobilization plan as consequence of approved APAARI Strategic Plan
- APAARI reforms including constitutional change
- Election of APAARI Executive Committee for the Biennium 2017-18
- Closing remarks by Chairman
- Statement by incoming Chairman

There was some resistance from some members for approving APAARI reforms and constitutional change. The point was raised as to how the agenda on APAARI reforms and constitutional change can be placed before General Assembly unless it is agreed by the Executive Committee. The Executive Secretary, APAARI explained that the reform and constitutional change is very vital for the growth of APAARI to fulfil its Vision 2030 and implement Strategic Plan 2017-22 and hence be considered for approval otherwise the process will be delayed by two years. However, it was agreed that this agenda be placed before EC in March 2017.

EC endorsed that the item “APAARI reforms including constitutional change” may be placed before the next EC in March-2017.

### **Agenda Item No. 16 Terminal payment to Ms Urairat Rujrek**

The Executive Secretary, APAARI apprised the EC that Ms Urairat Rujrek has worked with APAARI as Administration and Accounts Officer for 18 years and looked after major responsibility of administrative and financial matters and also providing logistical support to all APAARI events and activities. She left the job effective 30 April 2016. It was proposed to seek EC approval for payment of an additional terminal payment of 2.5% of her present salary for her 18 years service with APAARI that comes to a rounded figure of USD 8000 (Annex-XV)

EC approved and endorsed the terminal payment as proposed.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In her concluding remarks the Chairperson of Dr. Waraporn Prompoi, Deputy Director General of Department of Agriculture, Thailand expressed her satisfaction and thanked all the EC members and other participants for their constructive and useful suggestions as well as for their

approval/endorsement of various agenda items discussed in the meeting. She expressed satisfaction on the progress and achievements of APAARI. She also emphasized on the need for increasing the membership of universities and other stakeholders to make APAARI a strong regional forum to effectively deliver its programs and activities towards strengthening agri-food systems in Asia and the Pacific

### **Vote of Thanks**

Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary, APAARI extended vote of thanks to the Chairman, APAARI, and all the members, participants and the staff.