

Report of the Bi-Annual Meeting
FAO Regional Vegetable IPM Programme in Asia
Sihanoukville, Cambodia
05-07 April 2006

1. INTRODUCTION

The second phase of the FAO Regional Vegetable IPM Programme commenced in July 2002, and has been implementing activities in five core member countries in the Mekong Region, namely Cambodia, Yunnan Province of China, The Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.

The first Bi-Annual Regional Meeting (the Inception Workshop) was held in February 2003 at Siem Reap Province, Cambodia. After rotating among other member countries, this 7th Bi-Annual Regional Meeting returned to Cambodia, and was held near the ocean in Sihanoukville.

Similar to the past meeting, the overall objectives of this gathering were:

1. To review findings and management responses from the Mid-Term Review Mission, and discuss implications of these for future program implementation.
2. To exchange experiences regarding selected activities from each Mekong Sub-Region member country,
3. To discuss other topics as per participants' interests.

Through this meeting, participants were able to review past achievements and experiences, identify future challenges, work together to set out effective measures to overcome those challenges, and increase ownership of the FAO Vegetable IPM Programme among member countries.

The meeting was organized by staff of the FAO Vegetable IPM Program in collaboration with the Department of Agronomy and Agricultural Land Improvement of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries.

A total of 28 participants attended, including national counterparts and FAO-IPM staff from each member country, a donor representative and resource persons. A schedule of the meeting activities is attached in **Annex 1**, and list of participants in **Annex 2**.

2. MAIN ACTIVITIES

2.1 Field Visits

After arriving in Phnom Penh the previous day, on the morning of Wednesday, April 5th, all participants travelled by bus to Sihanoukville. Along the way, they stopped for two field visits. The first was in Tang Trapang Village, Phnom Srouch District in Kampong Speu Province, where participants viewed work on integrated fish, rice and vegetable production, and talked with farmers involved in this activity. The second

stop was to visit a similar activity which also included fruit trees and mushroom production in Prey Noup 2 Village, Prey Noup District, Sihanoukville.

2.2 Opening Comments

After arriving in Sihanoukville in the afternoon of the first day, the meeting began with opening remarks by H.E. Koun Saron, the Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, who complemented all participants on their past achievements, and wished them success both in the meeting itself and in meeting future program challenges.

Following this, Jan Willem Ketelaar, the FAO Vegetable IPM Programme Team Leader/IPM Expert expressed his welcome to the participants, and gave an overview of the main objectives of the meeting.

2.3 Presentations and Discussion on country specific activities

National counterpart from each member country gave a brief presentation on an interesting aspect of their ongoing program, including new activities, innovative results or challenging issues. Presentations were followed by additional comments from others, questions and discussions. General topics of these are given below, and the presentations are included in **Annex 3**.

- Yunnan Province, China: *Vegetable IPM Impact Story Contest*
- Vietnam: *Country Progress Report*
- Lao PDR: *Lao National Vegetable Integrated Pest Management*
- Cambodia: *Participatory Farmer Action Research on Soil Ecology and SRI*
- Thailand: *Promotion of Safe and Standard Crop Production*

2.4 Review and Discussion of MTR: Recommendations and Follow-up

The FAO Vegetable IPM Programme Team Leader next presented an overview of issues raised and recommendations made by the Mid-Term Review Mission, including some initial responses and follow up action taken by the FAO Programme. These included the following:

- *Sustainability of FFS (programs)*: Country-ownership, broadening stakeholders (inc. NGO and private sector), training models/cost effectiveness, sustained community learning
- *Information Exchange & Documentation of Program results*: Regional meetings twice a year, activity documentation for local policy and buy-in support, website formulation
- *Pesticide Policies and their enforcement*: Preliminary work in Cambodia and Laos, further supported under likely SIDA/SENSA Programme
- *Cooperative Programme Governance*: Set up of stakeholders forum with broader stakeholder participation
- *Private Sector, Consumer Awareness, Market Access*: ongoing, new initiative (e.g. GAP/Safe Vegetables initiatives (Thailand/Vietnam))
- *Strengthening research linkages*: ongoing & new initiatives (e.g. disease work with Yunnan Agricultural University)

- *Programme Log-frame*: Additional activities integrated in country programmes, no further revision of Country Strategy Papers but more structured reporting against log-frame
- *Quality control of FFS*: ongoing, new initiative (e.g. M&E design for Safe Vegetables programme Vietnam)
- *Impact Assessment*: ongoing & some new initiatives (e.g. FFS impact story contest (Yunnan))
- *Phase III Formulation*: Recommended for further discussion on priorities and logistics, possible formulation in 3rd - 4th quarter of 2006

Then, each member country gave comments on country-specific recommendations made by the Mid-Term Review Mission. These largely reflected those given in the FAO Management Response to the mission's report issued in January, 2006, with some updated information on further actions taken since that time.

2.5 Donor Views on the Mid-Term Review and Follow-up

Next, the Team Leader related comments received from donor countries not present at the meeting. Although no formal comments had been received from the Netherlands, informal indications were general satisfaction with the overall progress of the programme and the Mid-Term Review, but that no direct funding would be available for Phase II from the Netherlands-FAO Partnership Programme or from any other Dutch Government source. Dutch participation in a possible Phase III programme is also not likely.

Comments from Australia also noted progress, as well as good take-up and sustainability of IPM practices in some countries. The importance of long-term sustainability, national and policy support was noted, as was regional linkages and networks. Other challenges and opportunities mentioned included pesticide policies and enforcement, impact assessment, quality control of FFSs, and the development of cooperative programme governance. Whereas Australian donor priorities have shifted substantially away from rural development over the last few years, AusAID would be able to consider limited add-on funding for Phase II and reflect on participation on a possible Phase III upon submission of a draft project document.

Dr. Ingrid Norstein, First Secretary from the Norwegian Embassy in Hanoi commented that she felt the Mid-Term Review report was quite positive in comparison to others she had seen. She commended efforts to incorporate the MTR recommendations into program implementation, and encouraged further work in this regard. That FAO should move away from implementing to a more normative role was advised, and that continued efforts to incorporate the private sector, universities and research institutions, and market issues should be pursued. The Norwegian Government would be willing to consider add-on funding for Phase II as per priorities pointed about by the MTR as well as consider participation in a possible Phase III Programme upon submission of a draft project document.

2.6 Updates on Training and Resource Materials

Each member country was requested to bring copies of training or resource materials that had been recently produced for display. These were briefly presented, and sign-up sheets provided for those requesting additional copies. The regional IPM

programme has-in the meanwhile- distributed the ordered documents to the participants.

2.6 Updates on Impact Assessment

Brief presentations were given on on-going impact assessment work in Cambodia and Yunnan Province of China. These presentations are included in **Annex 4**.

2.6 Group Discussions and Presentations

In the afternoon of the second day, meeting participants selected a number of topics for small group discussions during the following day:

- Training of Trainers Models
- Training on Production Standards
- Monitoring and Evaluation, and Impact Assessment

Each group's discussion focussed on identifying common issues and appropriate solutions. The outcome of these small group discussions were presented in the afternoon, and summaries are included in **Annex 5**.

During this workshop, there was also a discussion on key diseases faced by vegetable farmers such as bacterial wilt and root rot diseases. The discussion was led by Damien and focused on preventive methods. Damien mentioned that bio-fumigation had been used effectively in Australia. In this regard in-depth discussions were held on how to apply bio-fumigation effectively to control certain soil-borne diseases. Finally, the discussion concentrated on how to incorporate bio-fumigation work in FFS and post FFS activities in Cambodia. To start such bio-fumigation work, it was agreed to include this topic for discussion in upcoming refresher training courses.

There was a presentation on using 'sweet and sour' traps to control stem fly in French bean in Phuc Tho commune, Ha Tay. This experience originated from research in Vietnam and was presented by Damien Cupitt, an Australian Volunteer working with the FAO Programme based in Hanoi. Through this study, it was concluded that the presence of stem fly was high at early bean crop growth stages. Appropriate fertilizer use is one of the good methods to prevent damage by stem fly because healthy plants could compensate easily for bean fly damage.

During this same period, Harry van der Wulp from AGPP-Rome gave a brief presentation on the World Health Organisation's recommended classification of pesticides by health hazards. Examples were given to illustrate how WHO classes were calculated based on active ingredient *and* formulation.

2.7 Wrap-up and Evaluation

At the end of the third day, participants were asked to fill out a written evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the meeting, and to provide suggestions for the next gathering. A summary of the evaluation results is included in **Annex 6**.

Finally, it was tentatively scheduled that the next Bi-Annual Regional Meeting will be held in Yunnan Province, China from 24-26 October 2006.