

Sustainable Rice Platform

“Upscaling SRP: Towards rice sector transformation”

6th Annual Plenary and General Assembly

Singapore, 7-9 December, 2016

Outcome Document

Overview

The Sustainable Rice Platform held its **6th Annual Plenary Meeting and General Assembly** on 7-9 December 2016 in Singapore, under the overarching theme of ***“Upscaling the Sustainable Rice Platform: Towards rice sector transformation.”***

The Sustainable Rice Platform is a global multi-stakeholder alliance convened by UN Environment and the International Rice Research Institute, with 63 institutional members including public and private sector value chain actors, research institutions, international organizations and civil society groups.

This year’s event brought together 106 representatives from diverse stakeholder groups from 20 countries to discuss collaborative approaches and innovative solutions to address critical sustainability challenges facing the global rice sector. The event’s theme was anchored in the Sustainable Rice Platform’s vision in response to the global call to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The meeting highlighted the strengths and opportunities of multi-stakeholder connections in addressing transformation of the rice sector in a sustainable way, and discussed the Sustainable Rice Platform’s 5-year Strategic Plan (2017-2021).

Delegates received the first samples of Thai *Hom Mali* jasmine rice produced under Sustainable Rice Platform management in northeast Thailand, as part of a pilot field programme implemented by the Thai Rice Department, GIZ-BRIA and Olam International.

A cocktail reception on 7 December was hosted by Bayer, Olam International and Syngenta.

This document provides a synthesis of key outcomes, including those of a meeting of the Sustainable Rice Platform Advisory Committee held on Day 3 of the event (9 December 2016).

Activity Report 2016

1. Membership/organization

- 1.1. The initiative doubled its membership from 29 in 2015 to 63 institutional members in December 2016, including FAO and a number of key global rice industry supply chain players. These partnerships offer major new strategic opportunities and avenues for outreach and upscaling, both across Asia and globally.

- 1.2. Secretariat capacity has been strengthened in the areas of resource mobilization, communications and also, from 1 January 2017, through the appointment of a Technical Coordinator.

2. Standard and Performance Indicators

- 2.1. Pilot field testing and benchmarking of the Standard was spearheaded by our members in Brazil, Cambodia, India, Pakistan, Thailand, USA and Vietnam. These validation activities were implemented through collaborative efforts among public, private and NGO partners, supported by 3 national-level kick-off training workshops. Participating organizations included Amru Rice, Battambang Rice Investment Co, Bayer Crop Science, Better Grain, Helvetas, Loc Troi Group, LT Foods, Mars Food, Natcap, GIZ-Better Rice Initiative Asia, Olam International, Sunstar, Syngenta, Thailand Rice Department, Rice Partners (Pvt) Ltd, UTZ and the Wildlife Conservation Society. The International Rice Research Institute is now compiling these data to prepare for a review and revision of the Standard to enhance its applicability and maximize relevance to smallholder rice farmers.

3. A new partnership in Vietnam

- 3.1. The Plenary hosted the public announcement of a new partnership between the Loc Troi Group (Vietnam) and the International Finance Corporation, to apply sustainable farming standards and practices in the firm's rice value chain. Under the agreement, IFC will support Loc Troi to apply the Sustainable Rice Platform Standard to 4,000 farmers in the Mekong Delta, who will be trained to produce high-quality rice in the initial phase. Technical support will be provided by the International Rice Research Institute.

4. Assurance and performance assessment

- 4.1. Options for a supply chain assurance and performance assessment scheme are under discussion to drive recognition and adoption of the Standard and Performance Indicators among both private sector supply chain actors and smallholder farmers. The focus will be on improvement and impact at smallholder level, as well as actual compliance with Standard requirements.

5. Upscaling

- 5.1. As part of its upscaling effort, the Secretariat also participated in bids supported by UN Environment and GIZ for several large-scale projects to be funded under the Global Environment Facility (Thailand), Least Developed Country Fund (Myanmar), the Global Climate Fund (Vietnam) and the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) facility (Thailand).

6. Strategic Plan 2017-2021

- 6.1. A new Strategic Plan was presented, with a new vision and objectives, including a proposal for a revised Membership Dues structure for 2017.

Key outcomes

Organization and governance

7. Advisory Committee Composition 2017-2018

7.1. The following members were elected by the General Assembly to the Advisory Committee:

Mr Hammad Naqi Khan (CEO, WWF-Pakistan, NGO representative)

Dr Matthias Bickel (GIZ, governmental representative)

Mr Luc Beerens (Mars Food, private sector representative)

7.2. The Chair thanked Prof Surinder Kukal (Punjab Agricultural University) for his participation in the Advisory Committee from 2014-2016.

7.3. The General Assembly also resolved to introduce a 2-year term limit to its public sector representatives, to allow rotation among member governments, and to introduce a revised Membership Dues structure. A final consultation with the membership will be undertaken prior to implementation of the new scheme.

7.4. At its meeting on 9 December, the Advisory Committee stressed that the transformative agenda of the Sustainable Rice Platform requires a global, high level governance structure. In order to deliver on this global agenda, the AC needs to accommodate additional high-level players, including higher-level representation by UN Environment. A process will now be established for nominating to the Advisory Committee additional senior members with strategic influence within the rice and related sectors (especially among international organizations).

8. Legal entity

8.1. The need and rationale for a legal entity for the Sustainable Rice Platform was discussed at the General Assembly and subsequently in more detail by the Advisory Committee. The pros and cons of the status quo (led by UN Environment) versus establishment of a legal entity to broaden choice and organizational flexibility, were discussed.

8.2. Two governmental organizations (Cambodia, Thailand) indicated their desire to continue to work under the umbrella of UN Environment and IRRI. Kh Ladda indicated that the Thai Rice Department had participated in SRP from the outset, based on the trust it had built with UNEP and IRRI.

8.3. Nevertheless, the meeting agreed on the benefits of creating a legal entity to bring flexibility or efficiency for specific purposes (e.g. as a vehicle to house SRP's assets and to conduct specified transactions) provided all existing partnerships and leadership under the UN Environment/IRRI umbrella are maintained.

8.4. BT reported on IRRI's experience in establishing not-for-profit foundations in Hong Kong, India and Singapore, whose Boards comprise IRRI officers- a model that SRP could readily replicate and that would be fit for purpose. He offered the model of Singapore for

consideration for the case of SRP. Copies of relevant documents have been shared by BT with the Secretariat and JL.

- 8.5. JL also confirmed precedents within UN Environment for creating independent entities. UN Environment and IRRI will now work together to identify feasible options for establishing a foundation.

9. Strategic Plan 2017-2021

- 9.1. It was agreed following the General Assembly debate that the Advisory Committee will work on developing the Strategic Plan / Business Plan, with a new rationale and charter.
- 9.2. The Advisory Committee discussed organizational needs to implement the three strategic pillars of the Strategic Plan, and established three Working Groups. It was further agreed that to ensure impartiality/good governance and clear oversight by the Secretariat, each Working Group will be led by a member of the Secretariat, as follows:

No	Working Group	Lead
1	Communication, outreach and resource mobilization	Lea Las Pinas
2	Public sector engagement	James Lomax
3	Farmer support, performance measurement and assurance	Peter Sprang

- 9.3. Each Working Group will be expected to present an implementation plan and budget to the next Advisory Committee meeting, and to be accountable thereafter to the Advisory Committee for delivery.

7. Plenary events 2017-2018

- 9.4. It was agreed that the future Plenary events will be upscaled using a professional conference organizer, to appeal to a wider stakeholder caucus and recover costs through registration fees and corporate sponsorship.
- 9.5. The 2017 event will be convened as a major global rice sustainability conference, in the run-up to COP23 (Bonn, 6-23 November 2017). Individuals interested in participating as members of the **Conference Steering Committee** are invited to contact the Secretariat.
- 9.6. HE Dr Ty Sokhun (Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia) invited the Sustainable Rice Platform to hold its 2017 event in Siem Reap, Cambodia, while Dr Bruce Tolentino (Deputy Director General, IRRI) proposed that the 2018 Plenary be co-located and organized in parallel with the International Rice Congress 2018 in late October 2018.

8. Assurance and Performance Assessment

- 9.7. Two options were presented for managing the Standard and implementing an industry-wide assurance and performance management scheme, as follows:
- 9.8. **UTZ** presented a proposal with a budget of Euro 876,368 (US\$ 934,646) over 2 years, to manage the Sustainable Rice Platform Standard, as well as develop and implement a private sector assurance programme, performance assessment system and training programme targeting both public and private sectors, offering three tiers of verification. The budget would require an increase in membership dues to cover a budget shortfall of approximately US\$ 200k p.a.
- 9.9. **GLOBALG.A.P. and FSC22000** offers a no-cost option to support standard development/management, a global assurance and training programme, both at field level (GLOBALG.A.P.) and at downstream processing level via FSSC 22000 (Food Safety System Certification, which provides a framework for managing organizational food safety responsibilities). GLOBALG.A.P. is interested to explore co-branding via adoption of the SRP Standard as the GLOBALG.A.P. standard for rice, and the use of its certification infrastructure, accreditation and auditing processes.
- 9.10. The UTZ proposal was provisionally approved by the Advisory Committee, subject to clarifications on a number of questions, particularly relating to (a) inclusivity for other partners, and (b) budget, timeline and deliverables.
- 9.11. However, the meeting also acknowledged on the need to assess available opportunities on merit, and to investigate the possibilities for collaboration (e.g. among UTZ and GLOBALG.A.P). To this end, an exploratory meeting will be convened with potential collaborators and participants.

Annexes

Programme

Participant List