



SAARC AGRINEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter of SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)

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Regional cooperation in Agriculture gets new momentum

The SAARC Agriculture Ministers in their 3rd Meeting have agreed on a number of issues in agricultural Research and Development to give a fresh impetus in regional cooperation for ensuring food and nutritional security in the South Asian region. The Meeting was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh during 03-07 April 2016.

H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Honorable Prime Minister of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh inaugurated the Meeting. She mentioned that poverty as a "common enemy" of the region and believed there was no alternative to joint initiatives by the countries of the region to eradicate poverty and hunger. H.E. Prime Minister described about Bangladesh's remarkable success in agriculture sector. Sheikh Hasina spelled out her Government's various pragmatic steps for the development of agriculture, establishment of SAARC food and seed banks.

"Our integrated efforts including research in agriculture sector have turned Bangladesh into a





H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Agricultural Ministers from SAARC member states in the inaugural session

food-surplus nation". Sheikh Hasina also illustrated her Government's steps for socio-economic uplift of the people. "Despite enormous increasing of salary and allowances of the Government staff, we have been able to keep the inflation under control," she mentioned. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also calls for functioning of SAARC food and seed banks.

Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, raised some pertinent issues and urged for intervention as follows:

1. Ensuring improved seeds at reasonable price
2. Proper water management in agriculture reducing dependence on underground water and increasing use of surface water
3. Introducing organic farming reducing use of chemical fertilizer
4. Reduction of insecticides and expansion of IPM
5. Ensuring fair prices of agricultural produces at farmer level
6. Strengthening agricultural marketing
7. Introducing improved management and disease – preventing measures for cattle-herd, poultry birds and fishes

Further, she emphasized the need to revamp SAARC Food Bank and SAARC Seed Bank in order to address the issue of food and nutritional security.

Mr. Radha Mohan Singh, Honorable Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of India addressed in the 3rd SAARC Agriculture Minister's inaugural ceremony and called upon SAARC countries to make farming attractive of the youth so that they take it up as an occupation. He said that need to address the concerns of economic inequality and instability being faced by farming community. Mr. Singh mentioned that small holdings cultivation results in low productivity and low farm incomes, as a

result, the rise in per capita income in agriculture sector also remains below the non-agriculture sector," he added that cooperation is the "key" to common development. "Agriculture in our SAARC countries has evolved along with our civilisations and culture and therefore, besides being a source of food and livelihood security, it remains integral to our social customs as well. "We must continuously endeavour to make agriculture robust and a main instrument of economic prosperity," Singh added. H.E. SAARC Secretary General Arjun Bahadur Thapa and Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Bangladesh also spoke in the program.

Lyonpo Yeshey Dorji, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan; Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare ; Mr. Haribol Prasad Gajurel, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Development, Nepal; and Sikandar Hayat Khan Bosan, Hon'ble Federal Minister For National Food Security & Research, Pakistan. Agriculture Ministers joined the Meeting while the other countries were represented by their senior officials. Renamed personnel of Bangladesh attended the inaugural session on 7 April 2016.

Bangladesh Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, in the technical session told that the Council of Ministers for Agriculture of SAARC countries adopted the "Dhaka Statement" on agriculture and rural development. She informs that "Dhaka Statement" would be the beginning of a "new momentum" of Regional cooperation and it will serve as a "vision document" for a sustainable agriculture system in South Asia. "We adopted this unanimously, and all countries are now committed to holding regular meetings," Ms. Chowdhury said. Matia Chowdhury also said international and multi-national organizations were also showing interest to work with SAARC in the agriculture sector.

The Dhaka Statement on Agriculture and Rural Development

1. Cooperation among SAARC Member States in Agriculture and Rural Development to be further strengthened and sustained.
2. Time-befitting rural development projects are to be undertaken with financing from the SAARC Development Fund and if additionally required, from other multi-lateral financial institutions. In relevant cases, co-financing options are to be explored to implement projects that generate mass employment in rural areas. The barriers to agriculture trade at the regional level are to be identified and addressed.
3. A joint consultative meeting between SAFTA Committee of Experts and Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (TCARD) is to ascertain and recommend what agricultural items currently on the SAFTA sensitive list could be delisted.
4. The non-tariff barriers in agricultural trade are to be properly looked into. Capacity of the South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) to be enhanced so that it can fast resolve any standard related issues in agricultural trade.
5. The ongoing partnership of SAARC with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) on livestock matters is to continue. The activities of the Regional Support Unit and Regional Epidemiology Centre (REC) on livestock are to be sustained.
6. Partnership with UN specialized agencies, regional and international institutions to continue and further strengthened.
7. The Member States to provide all possible support to turn the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) into a 'Centre of excellence' so that it can contribute to making important scientific breakthrough in agriculture and rural development. The SAC is to carry out need based training and capacity of SAARC Agriculture Centre.
8. More action research to be implemented by the SAARC Agriculture Centre and a consortium of agricultural scientists in the Member States. The outcome of the action research to be spread across the region.
9. Considering South Asia's vast plant and animal genetic resources, the SAARC Seed Bank and Livestock Gene Bank (as directed by the 18th Summit) to facilitate the exchange of high quality germplasm among the Member States.
10. Barriers hindering the operationalization of SAARC Food Bank are to be address on a priority basis. With support from international specialized bodies such as UNESCAP a comprehensive guideline is to be developed covering issues such as pricing, transportation, threshold, grain quality, storage facility and location.
11. SAARC Secretariat to partner with relevant regional and international specialized bodies and organizations and harness expertise and capacities available in the region to commission studies on the scope of agro-processing in South Asia and potential markets both within and beyond.
12. With contributions from the SAARC Member States, SAC to facilitate exchange at the levels of scientists, farmers and extension workers in the SAARC region.

The SAARC member states and the SAARC Secretariat are to ensure the needful to the effect of implementing this statement. Begum Matia Chowdhury, Minister of Agriculture, Bangladesh selected as the President of Council of SAARC Agriculture Ministers for next two years.

Senior Agriculture Officials meeting was held on 6 April 2016 in Dhaka. During Meeting they have taken decisions /initiatives for regional cooperation in agriculture that to be strengthened and sustained. Secretary of the Agriculture ministry from SAARC member states, Head of the Research and extension organizations and Focal points were presented in the Meeting.



Senior Agriculture Officials meeting

Also Eighth meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural development (TCARD) was held during 4-5 April 2016 in Dhaka.



Eighth meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural development (TCARD)

Focal points of the TCARD from member states were present in the Meeting. Multi-Stakeholders meeting on pulse Research and Development in SAARC Countries also organized on 4 April 2016 (First half) in Dhaka.



Multi Stakeholders Dialogue

The four important meeting were arranged by SAARC Secretariat, Nepal; Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh during 04-07 April 2016 at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka, Bangladesh.



SAC arranged a display of SAC Publications at the Pan Pacific Shonargaon Hotel, Dhaka during 4-7 April 2016

Regional Experts Consultation Workshop on “Status on varietal improvement, propagation techniques, cultural management of fruits in South Asia- Strategy for future need”



Director, SAC in the inaugural session

A three-day Regional Expert Consultation workshop on Status on varietal improvement, propagation techniques, and cultural management of fruits in South Asia- Strategy for future need was held at Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) Campus, Mymensingh. The consultation workshop was jointly organized by SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh; Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Gazipur and BAU-Germplasm Centre, BAU, Mymensingh during 3-5 May 2016.

Objectives of the workshop

- Sharing of successful technologies for fruits improvement specially improved varieties, off-season, year round, region specific and lean season production technologies of important fruits in SAARC member countries and conduct adaptive trial on tropical and subtropical important fruit crops in SAARC member countries
- Development of technologies to combat the changing climatic variability, resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses, protective, hydroponic, urban and peri-urban areas cultivation technologies
- To review present strategy, identify constraints of fruits research and develop future strategy of important fruits cultivation in SAARC member countries and human resource development



Closing session chaired by Prof. Dr. Md. Afzal Hossain, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, BAU, Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Executive Chairman, BARC present as Chief Guest, Mr. S. M. Abu Zaar Dulal, Director (Horticulture), DAE as Guests of Honor, Dr. Md. Rafiqul Islam Mondal, DG, BARI presided the recommendation session

Mr. Mohammad Nazmul Islam, Additional Secretary (PPC), Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was present as Chief Guest in the inaugural occasion and delivered inaugural speech. Mr. S.M. Anisul Haque, Director-General (SAARC & BIMSTEC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh also was present as Guest of Honour. The inaugural session was blessed by Professor Dr. Md. Jashimuddin Khan, Acting Vice Chancellor, BAU as Chief Patron.

The consultation workshop was revered by the august presence of renowned professors of BAU, focal points experts from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Keynote Speaker Prof. Dr. Abdur Rahim, Director, BAU-Germplasm Centre presented paper on Fruits in Nutrition and Economy. Experts from NARS,

Extension department, Agricultural University attended the inaugural session.

Dr. S.M. Bokhtiar, Director, SAC, Dhaka welcomed all the participants. Around 35 experts from the National Agricultural Research, Education and Extension Systems from member of SAARC countries participated in the consultation including the regional resource focal point experts. The inaugural session of the consultation workshop was presided by Prof. Dr. Md. Afzal Hossain, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, BAU. During concluding session, Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Executive Chairman, BARC was present as Chief Guest and Mr. S. M. Abu Zaar Dulal, Director (Horticulture), Department of Agricultural Extension as Guests of Honor. Dr. Md. Rafiqul Islam Mondal, Director-General, BARI presided over the recommendation session. The experts of the workshop visited BARI; Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA); Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (BFRI) and BAU-Germplasm Centre.

During three days consultation meeting, ten (10) technical papers were presented in the three technical sessions. All the resource persons from SAARC member countries and others participants of the consultation discussed in the two groups on the following issues:

1. Research issues
2. Policy and future directions

Recommendations

At the end of the Consultative workshop, following recommendations were adopted considering the above issues as follows:

Research Issues

- Study of existing genetic recourses of fruit through germplasm collection, characterization, evaluation & documentation, maintenance and conservation of fruit species - SAC Initiative
- Varietal improvement by intensive breeding program by emphasizing bio-technological tools - MS initiative
- Development of stress tolerant variety (abiotic & biotic) and management technology to combat climate change for unfavourable ecosystem - MS initiative
- Quality planting material of different fruit must be ensured for commercial production system- MS initiative
- Reducing postharvest losses of fruits by developing appropriate technologies for value addition and agri-business - MS initiative

- Development of location specific technologies to combat adverse climate - MS initiative
- Development of environment friendly integrated pest and diseases management technologies - MS initiative
- Development of technologies for organic fruit production - MS initiative
- Development of nutrient enriched varieties for year round and minor fruits especially for lean period. - MS initiative
- Community based variety and germplasm conservation must be initiated in the region

Policy and future directions

- Exchange of fruit genetic resources among the SAARC member countries-SAC Initiative
- Sharing of promising technologies on fruit production, post harvest and processing among the SAARC member countries-SAC Initiative
- Capacity development for the stakeholders in term of skill development for GAP through training and workshops- MS and SAC Initiative
- Initiation of networking project involving all MS on "on-farm conservation" of indigenous FTS – SAC initiative
- Compilation of fruits atlas/directory including minor fruits and diversity of fruits of SAARC member countries-SAC initiative

SAC will perform a Centre of Excellence in agricultural research and development

A two-day inception meeting on SAARC-FAO Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) "Strengthening the capacity of SAARC in the development, coordination and monitoring of a regional food security and nutrition framework, strategies and programmes" was held during 19-20 April 2016 at SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh. SAC and FAO jointly organized the meeting.



Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah, Honorable Secretary, (MoA), Bangladesh, Mr. S.M. Anisul Haque, Director-General (SAARC & BIMSTEC) and Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Executive Chairman, BARC in the stage during inaugural session

Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah, Honorable Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was grace as the chief Guest and Mr. S.M. Anisul Haque, Director-General (SAARC & BIMSTEC) was present as the Guest of Honor.

Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) presided over the program. Dr. S. M .Bokhtiar, Director of SAC delivered the welcome address. Mr. MJH Javed, Director, SAARC; Dr. Sumiter Singh Broca, Lead Technical Officer, FAO-RAP, Bangkok and Dr. Sushil Pandey, Consultant, FAO among others were speaking on the occasion.

Participants from SAARC member states- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and participants from different research organizations, universities of Bangladesh were present at session. Representatives from development organizations and partners in Bangladesh were present at the session.

Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah, Secretary, MoA said in his Chief Guest address that agriculture plays fundamental role in creating jobs in rural areas, providing food and nutrition and supplying raw materials for industries. He mentioned that according to the latest statistics of FAO, 276.4 million people out of 1.72 billion in South Asia suffer from malnutrition. The Secretary trust that this important initiatives of SAARC and FAO on the issue of institutional capacity of SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Agriculture Centre in promoting food and nutrition security in the region.

The Secretary, MoA of Bangladesh highly satisfied of the activities of SAC, its progress and success. He mentioned here that SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) since its creation in 2007 has gradually picked up the pace in addressing the issue of agriculture, food security and climate change. He said that SAC has proven to be an important regional institution that can foster efficient collaborative programs on agriculture and food security. He appreciated SAC and SAARC for their efforts and commitment in initiating such programs and fostering regional cooperation.

Mr. Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah extended his sincere appreciation and commendation to FAO for generously supporting the SAARC Region in addressing the issues. He hoped that FAO's timely intervention through this TCP will go a long way to help SAARC in attainment of sustainable food and nutrition security and economic development.

Objectives of the project:

-  Institutional mechanisms and capacity of SAARC
-  Regional agriculture-based food security and nutrition framework
-  Regional strategies and action plans for food security and nutrition
-  Human resource capacity for program and project development, implementation and monitoring

The Agriculture Secretary also inform to the audience that the Agriculture Ministers of all SAARC member countries at the 3rd Meeting of the SAARC Agriculture Ministers collectively agreed to strengthen the cooperation among the SAARC member countries for agriculture and rural development. The Dhaka Statement has clearly drawn several actions to develop



Dr. Sumiter Singh Broca, Lead Technical Officer of the project delivering speech

agriculture in the region and directed SAARC Agriculture Centre to take the issue through strategic actions. It is also the vision of the SAARC leaders to see SAC develop into a Centre of Excellence in agriculture research and development.

Mr. S.M. Anisul Haque, Director-General (SAARC & BIMSTEC) told in his Guest of Honor's address that in view of the need to heighten food security and nutrition, the SAARC Agricultural Centre, SAC is in a unique position to demonstrate its regional role in promoting food security and improving nutrition. The efficient and responsible production, distribution and use of agricultural commodity, if promoted effectively by the SAC region-wide, can play a vital role in achieving food security as well as sustainable development within the SAARC countries.

Dr. S.M. Bokhtiar, Director of SAC welcome to all delegates at the workshop and inform that SAC is working on Crops, Livestock, Fisheries, Natural Resource Management etc; just to Provide support to R&D as well as technology initiative for sustainable agriculture and poverty alleviation . Dr. Bokhtiar also mention that SAC



Group Picture during inaugural session

Flood-tolerant BINA Dhan 11 impresses rice farmers in Odisha



The more than 200 farmers from different blocks participated in an event, Performance of BINA Dhan 11 under mechanical transplanting in Odisha to observe the growth and characteristics of the variety that can survive prolonged flooding.

For the performance evaluation, BINA Dhan 11 from Odisha, a widely grown traditional variety, were grown in demonstration fields using mechanical transplanting. Samples were taken from two randomly selected places. In spite of frequent storms and rainfall, BINA Dhan 11 did not lodge while Lalat exhibited 90–100% lodging. The farmers noticed this big difference between the two varieties. In addition, the average yield of BINA Dhan 11 was 6.94 tons per hectare while Lalat was 6.15 tons per hectare. "BINA Dhan 11 is a wonderful variety," said Sanjay a young farmer. He compared the variety to Odisha cement because it did not lodge at all. Farmers in Bhadrak and Balasore Districts have also similar reactions.

Held on 13 May, the event was organized by the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA), Odisha for the farmers, and different stakeholders with support from the state's Department of Agriculture (DoA) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)-Stress-Tolerant Rice for Africa and South Asia project. Dr. Ashok Kumar and Vivek Kumar, IRRI scientists based in India, and the CSISA-Bhadrak team led the program, which included a mass crop harvesting, field visits, interaction with farmers, knowledge backstopping, and farm machine exhibit. The participants were briefed on the future scope of stress-tolerant rice varieties, direct-seeded rice, mechanical

transplanting, laser land levelling, alternate wetting and drying technology, Rice Crop Manager, weed management, among other technologies.

The performance trial for BINA Dhan 11 Mr. M.P. Ratho, Dhamnagar District agriculture officer; Mr. Ganesh Majhi, assistant agriculture officer in Bhandaripokhari block; Mr. Manash Kumar, block training manager, Agricultural Training Management Agency; and other DoA extension workers and village agricultural workers. Staff from the Reliance Foundation, NGO partners, and service providers also participated in the event.

Source:

<http://news.irri.org/2016/06/flood-tolerant-bina-dhan-11-impresses.html?spref=fb>

Date: 2 June 2016

The Nineteenth SAARC Summit in Pakistan during 9-10 November 2016

Members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) decided that the 19th SAARC Summit to be held in Pakistan during 9- 10 November 2016.

The SAARC member states-Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka –also agreed the proposal of Pakistan to host the 38th session of the SAARC Council of Ministers meeting in Pakistan on 8 November 2016. The decision was taken in the 37th session of the SAARC Council of Ministers meeting was held in Nepal on March 17, 2016.

"The meeting decided to host the SAARC Summits in November in every two years," Nepal's Deputy Prime Minister Kamal Thapa, who is also in-charge of foreign affairs, told media after the meeting. The regional body's 18th SAARC Summit was held in Nepal in November 2014. The SAARC Council of Ministers meeting has also decided to recommend the upcoming SAARC Summit to locate the SAARC Disaster Management Centre in New Delhi. The meeting also decided to merge the SAARC Environment Center with the existing SAARC Energy Centre located in the Pakistani Capital Islamabad.

The Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz handed over formal invitation letters from the Prime Minister of Pakistan, addressed to the Head of States/Governments of the SAARC Member States for the 19th SAARC Summit to be held during 9-10 November 2016 in Islamabad.

Inception Meeting to Develop a SAARC Regional Coordinated Programme on Agroforestry



Mr. Uttam K. Bhattarai, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Development,
Govt. of Nepal inaugurating the Meeting

An inception meeting was held to Develop of SAARC Regional Coordinated Program on Agroforestry during 1-3 June 2016 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The meeting was jointly organized by the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC); Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) of Nepal; Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bio-resources (ANSAB), Nepal, and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

Mr. Uttam K. Bhattarai, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Development, Government of Nepal was inaugurating the Meeting. He said “Agroforestry is fundamental to all round development of South Asia region which is home to largest population of small land holders”. Mr. Bhattarai reiterated multiple benefits of agroforestry and their relevance to small holder farmers, and a strong need to promote and mainstream agroforestry in the region.

An agroforestry specialist each represented from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka were present the meeting. SAARC Agriculture Centre was represented by its Senior Programme Specialist (NRM). Scientists and senior policy makers from the Ministries of Agricultural Development, Forests and Soil Conservation, and Livestock Development Nepal; Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC); ICIMOD; and ANSAB participated in the

deliberations. In addition, agroforestry experts from Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and from the Central Agroforestry Research Institute (CAFRI), India; and Senior Advisor and the Regional Director of ICRAF’s South Asia Program also attended and contributed to the meeting.

Technical Session 2 focussed on country presentations. The presentations indicated that integration of trees into agricultural and social landscapes is a well-accepted practice and has been ingrained in the socio-ecological fabric of South Asian farming communities. The session recognized a need to build upon the on-going work and existing knowledge by introducing scientifically designed suitable agroforestry systems.

Technical Session 3 was a participatory working session on ICRAF’s Methodology of Diagnosis and Design (D&D). It was moderated by Dr. O.P. Chaturvedi, Director, ICAR-CAFRI, Jhansi, India.

In Technical Session 4 a brief presentation on “Thinking of today’s youth” was made by Ms. Ananya Bhaduria, a Master’s Student of University of Edinburgh. She reflected on understanding of youth on various environment related issues, including on agroforestry. This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Peter Gilruth, Senior Advisor, ICRAF, detailing SARCOPA. He elaborated on the four pillars of the

Programme, its elements and theory of change, and agroforestry adoption pathways. Dr. Bhishma Prasad Subedi, Executive Director, ANSAB also made a presentation on “Forestry for livelihood and sustainable development in South Asia” during the fifth session.

Representatives from the SAARC countries agreed to take forward the recommendations made at the following previous events;

- SAARC Regional Expert Consultation Meeting on Agroforestry held in 2015 at CAFRI, Jhansi, India; and
- SAARC Regional Training on Smart Practices for Climate Resilient Agriculture held in 2015 at New Delhi, India

The meeting then deliberated on fostering collaboration and partnership among SAARC Member States through developing a SAARC Regional Coordinated Programme on Agroforestry (SARCOPA) with facilitation and technical support from ICRAF and SAC. The programme will employ a two-phase timeframe, with a first six years phase to establish the mechanism and delivery systems for agroforestry benefits to reach the target communities, and a second six years phase to up- and out scale the benefits to a much wider community of beneficiaries. The first phase will focus on the following four pillars encompassing country-specific involvement and activities:

- Creating awareness and developing guidelines, codes of conduct, and/or policy, and databases of available information on agroforestry and agroforesters,

- Building capacity both at institutional and individual levels targeting various players and stakeholders,

- Identifying and re-designing (where necessary) of location-specific agroforestry systems,

- Demonstration/dissemination of the identified successful agroforestry systems

ICRAF, in close collaboration with SAC, SAARC countries, ANSAB, and other partners will lead the process of developing SARCOPA, and will provide overall coordination to mobilize resources and finalize and implement the programme.



Delegates from SAARC Member States



Closing session graced by Mr. Uday C. Thakur, Secretary, Ministry of Forest & Soil Conservation (MFSC), Govt. of Nepal and Joint Secretary, Agriculture; and SAC-GB Member from Nepal



Photo with the Secretary, Agriculture and Senior Officials from Government of Nepal



Call for Papers

SAARC Journal of Agriculture

SAARC Agriculture Centre invites research and review papers to be published in the SAARC Journal of Agriculture (SJA). It is half yearly journal, i.e. two issues in a year, first issue in June and second in December of each year.

Aims and Scope of the Journal

SAARC Journal of Agriculture is a half yearly peer-reviewed and open access online journal that publishes original research articles, review papers and short communications in the fields of agriculture, animal sciences, fisheries, natural resources management and allied disciplines. It is an official journal of SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC). The scientists and researchers from SAARC countries are encouraged to submit their research and review papers for publishing in this journal.

Mode of Submission

Authors are requested to submit their manuscript to managing editor through electronic submission process via email- saarcjournal@yahoo.com. Author guidelines and other relevant information are available in the web link of <http://www.banglajol.info/index.php/SJA/index>.

Contribute to



SAARC AgriNews is a widely circulated Newsletter devoted for disseminating agricultural research and development findings as well as information on applied technology for the farmers of South Asian countries.

Please send your articles, success stories and news on applied research, extension activities, proceedings or recommendations of seminars, symposium, consultations and workshops in the field of agriculture with relevant photographs by post or through **E-mail: director@sac.org.bd**. Please note that unaccepted articles are not returned to the authors.

5th Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) and 1st PPR Roadmap Meetings



SAC News

Diversity of Veterinary Education Systems in SAARC Countries

5th CVOs meeting with back to back to 1st PPR Roadmap meeting was held in Nagarkot, Nepal from 11-14 April 2016. Dr. Md. Nure Alam Siddiky, Senior Program Officer from SAC participated in both the important meetings. Dr. Siddiky was made two presentations on “SAC initiatives for Livestock R & D in SAARC Region and Diversity of Veterinary Education Systems in SAARC Countries”. Both meetings were more interactive and participatory.

Poster Presentation in OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education

4th OIE global conference on veterinary education to be held in Bangkok, Thailand from 22-24 June 2016. The paper on “Diversity of Veterinary Education System in SAARC Countries” has been accepted and selected for poster presentation in the global conference. The OIE only accepted worldwide 15 worthy and informative papers for poster presentation.

New Professional of SAC



Dr. Shiba Giri, the Senior Program Specialist (Fisheries) of SAC joined on 19 May 2016. Before here, he was the Head of Fish Nutrition and Physiology Division, Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Bhubaneswar,



Odisha, India. He earned his PhD in Animal Nutrition and Post Doc. in Fasting metabolism of Rainbow Trout and LC-PUFA biosynthesis in Salmon, *Salmo salar*.

Generally, it has been observed that veterinary education systems in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries; namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, follow a similar pedagogical principle, although there is a vast diversity and disparity. There are 75 veterinary academic institutions that are offering veterinary education in the SAARC region. A regional study was conducted to identify the disparities and gaps in the existing veterinary education system of SAARC countries. The purpose of the study was to propose a harmonized veterinary education system in the SAARC countries considering the guidelines of OIE to harness more benefits nationally as well as regionally. The veterinary education program varies from one SAARC country to another and even in the different universities within a country. This study focuses on the differences in veterinary education among the SAARC countries with special emphasis on veterinary academic institutions, degrees and curricula. It is evident that 3 veterinary academic institutions of Afghanistan, 9 of Bangladesh and 12 of Pakistan offer the DVM (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) degree, and 44 veterinary academic institutions (public & private) of India and 3 of Nepal offer the BVSc & AH (Bachelor of Veterinary Science & Animal Husbandry) degree, whereas only one faculty of Sri Lanka offers the BVSc (Bachelor of Veterinary Science) degree. In addition, two academic institutions of Bangladesh and one of Pakistan offer the BSc AH degree (Bachelor of Science in Animal Husbandry). The differences of degrees (DVM, BSc AH, BVSc, BVSc & AH), curricula and credit hours are discussed. The total credit hours of veterinary courses also varied from 177 to 221. Duration of education varied from 5 to 5.5 years and duration of internship varied from 6-12 months. Great differences were observed in numbers of academic departments within institutions; 3-19. It also appeared that the major role of the veterinary profession remains primarily related to food animals in SAARC countries rather than companion animals.

Keywords: course-curricula – degrees – diversity – education – veterinary – OIE

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Nepalese Minister visited SAC

Mr. Haribol Prasad Gajurel, Minister for Agriculture Development, Nepal visited SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) on Friday, 8 April 2016.

Director of SAC Dr. S.M. Bokhtiar welcomed H.E. at SAC. Later, a view exchange meeting was organized at the conference room of SAC where SPS, SPO & staffs were present. Dr. Bokhtiar presented SAC's present and future activities at a glance. Nepal's Agriculture minister expressed his satisfaction on SAC activities, progress and success. Minister said, exchange of germplasms; regional adaptive trials for vegetables, pulse and oil seed are very good initiatives. and asks for more action to development of the region.

Delegates from Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) visited SAC

A team consists of 11 member's scientists and technical personnel from Nepal Agricultural Research Council visited Bangladesh from 27-31 March 2016. SAC facilitated the visit and during their stay in Bangladesh. They visited Bangladesh Agricultural University, Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council and SAARC Agriculture Centre to observe the success of livestock R & D in Bangladesh. The team visited SAC on 28 March and had a presentation followed by interactive discussion.



The Visitor's Book



SAARC Secretary- General Visited SAC "SAC is the real SAARC" -SAARC Secretary-General

H. E. Mr. Arjun B. Thapa, Secretary-General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) paid courtesy visit to SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) on Friday, 8 April 2016. During his visit to Bangladesh in connection with the third Meeting of SAARC Ministers' of Agriculture held during 4-7 April 2016.

In an exchanged views meeting with SAC personnel's, H. E. the Secretary-General expressed his deep appreciation to the SAC for its activities, progress and success and playing a vital role in contributing towards the objectives of SAARC since its establishment in 1988. He mentioned that for first-class works, need good planning, best networking and better management. In the meeting, he also discussed on the limited resources and staff with low salary structure for SAC and calls for it's up gradation.

H. E. Mr. Arjun B. Thapa, expressed SAARC's unflinching commitment to provide all possible support to turn the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) into a 'centre of excellence' so that it can contribute to making important scientific breakthrough in agriculture and rural development. He also mentioned that SAC is one of the best centre of SAARC and you are the real SAARC.

Before that, Director of SAC Dr. S.M. Bokhtiar offered warm welcome reception to the H.E. Secretary-General of SAARC. He also presented SAC's present and future activities and urged for all support. Mr. MJH Javed, Director (ARD), SAARC Secretariat, Nepal also present with the Secretary General.