

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

TRANSITIONING TOWARDS AGROECOLOGY AND REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE: A CONTRIBUTION TO FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATIONS (TARASA25)

Vientiane, Lao PDR, 24–27 November 2025

1. Background

Food Systems Transformations in Asia and the Pacific. Current food systems are at a crossroads, facing environmental, climate and health challenges, while still needing to respond to food security, poverty alleviation, social inequalities, and nutrition concerns, among others. The Asia Pacific region faces particularly unprecedented food security challenges due to climate-induced disasters and ecosystem degradation. The region exhibits the highest number of people facing acute food insecurity worldwide. Moreover, a large proportion of farmers in the region are resource-poor smallholders who still suffer from limited access to knowledge, advanced technologies, affordable inputs and adequate machinery services. These multiple interlinked crises and challenges, while putting additional strain to the current food system present both an urgency and an opportunity to bring together diverse forces and sectors towards more sustainable, resilient and equitable food systems.

Agroecology (AE) and Regenerative Agriculture (RA). Discussions about food systems transformations go together with discussions about pathways and approaches to more sustainable food systems. These include agroecology and regenerative agriculture. Agroecology is an integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management of food and agricultural systems to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment while taking into account the social aspects that must be addressed for a sustainable and equitable food system (FAO, 2018¹). It embodies an alliance of science with practice and a social movement, calling for a profound rethinking of food systems to provide health and livelihood to both rural and urban communities, as well as environmental benefits. Regenerative agriculture is an alternative means of producing food with the objective to lower—or even get net positive—environmental and/or social impacts (Newton et al, 2020²). There are different definitions and descriptions of regenerative agriculture which are either based on processes (e.g., use of cover crops, the integration of livestock, and reducing or eliminating tillage), outcomes (e.g., to improve soil health, to sequester carbon, and to increase biodiversity), or combinations of the two.

Biodiversity. Biodiversity in Asia and the Pacific is among the richest and most diverse in the world. The region spans vast and varied ecosystems, from tropical rainforests and coral reefs to high-altitude mountains and dry deserts. This incredible diversity supports countless species, many of which are

¹ <https://www.fao.org/agroecology/home/en/>

²

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sustainable-food-systems/articles/10.3389/fsufs.2020.577723/full?ref=rewildingmag.com>

endemic (found nowhere else on Earth). Despite its richness, biodiversity in Asia and the Pacific is under severe threat due to deforestation, climate change, illegal wildlife trade, pollution, and invasive species. Agroecology, regenerative agriculture, and biodiversity are closely interconnected concepts that play a significant role in sustainable agricultural practices, ecosystem resilience, and environmental conservation. AE and RA practices promote biodiversity conservation by diversifying crop rotations and intercropping to enhance species richness and soil fertility; creating habitat diversity through agroforestry, hedgerows, and cover crops to support pollinators, beneficial insects, and wildlife; minimizing chemical inputs and promoting natural pest control mechanisms to maintain ecological balance; protecting and restoring riparian zones, wetlands, and natural areas within agricultural landscapes to preserve biodiversity hotspots. Synergies between AE, RA and biodiversity conservation are crucial for promoting food security, environmental sustainability, and resilience in a changing climate.

TARASA23³. Building on the various efforts of different institutions in the region and globally, the Cambodian Conservation Agriculture and Sustainable Intensification Consortium (CASIC) successfully organized the TARASA 2023 event in Cambodia in October 2023. It brought together more than 200 participants from 16 different countries to share experiences and discuss transitioning pathways towards agroecology and regenerative agriculture as a contribution to food systems transformations in Asia and the Pacific. The event and national consultation in the Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia were a key milestone in the design of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines for Agroecology transitions that was approved by the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture during the 46th ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) Summit in October 2024.

ASEAN Policy Guidelines for Agroecology Transitions⁴. These guidelines offer voluntary support to ASEAN member states and bodies, particularly the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Crops (ASWGC) and the Lao Facilitated Initiative on Agroecology for ASEAN (LICA), to scale up agroecology. It identifies seven key leverage points: (1) planning, (2) working with farmers, (3) markets and value chains, (4) capacity building and knowledge sharing, (5) multi-stakeholder engagement, (6) research, and (7) financing. Guidelines under these entry points provide orientations and concrete ways based on which countries can set policy interventions adapted to their national contexts and priorities.

Agroecology and Food System Transitions in South-East Asia (ASSET) Project⁵. The overall objective of the ASSET Project is to transform food and agricultural systems in Southeast Asia into more sustainable, safer and inclusive systems, through harnessing the potential of Agroecology. Involving a large coalition of partners, the project has been supporting since 2021 the strengthening and enlargement of the Agroecology Learning alliance in South East Asia (ALiSEA⁶) network, action research and knowledge production in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam, and policy dialogues on Agroecology at multiple levels (from local to regional). The ASSET project will be completed by the end of December 2025. TARASA25 will be a major opportunity to share project achievements and lessons learnt.

Recognizing the need for inclusive multi-stakeholders' engagement and long-term collaboration, the second edition of TARASA event is being organized in Lao PDR in November 2025 and intends to bring together a broad diversity of stakeholders.

³ <https://www.casiccambodia.net/tarasa>

⁴ <https://www.aseanaetguidelines.org/>

⁵ <https://www.asset-project.org/>

⁶ <https://ali-sea.org/>

2. Objectives of the workshops

Combination of two intertwined events:

Policy dialogue pre-event: continue moving forward the implementation of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines for Agroecology Transitions

- *Broaden* the regional multistakeholder agroecology coalition and process *in support of raising* further awareness about the Guidelines and implementation of agroecological transitions,
- *Discuss* how the Guidelines can help better align and strengthen public and private initiatives, create road map and visions,
- *Explore* how best these guidelines can be adapted to and improve national policy frameworks and action plans in the different countries in the region towards sustainable food systems

The outputs from this pre-event will be presented during TARASA25 event

TARASA25 event

- *Share and learn* from various global, regional, and local initiatives in the region on agroecology, regenerative agriculture and other sustainable transformative approaches, and discuss how such efforts can further contribute towards agricultural and food systems transformations,
- *Raise* further awareness and *support implementation* of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines for Agroecology Transitions
- *Take stock* of progress, and *characterize* remaining knowledge and implementation gaps regarding the different leverage points identified in the ASEAN Policy Guidelines for Agroecology Transitions
- *Share and exchanges* on possible Public Private Partnership (PPP) road map in implementation of agroecology and agroecology financing scheme.
- *Explore* opportunities and discuss collectively the ways forwards for enhanced collaboration and partnership in the Asia Pacific region to promote food systems transformation through agroecology and regenerative agriculture

3. Workshops organization

As of June 2025, here are the organisations involved in or who collaborate to the organisation and funding of the event. This list may evolve slightly according during coming months:

Organizers:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)/Lao PDR
- The Lao-facilitated Initiative on Agroecology for ASEAN (DaLAM/ LICA)

Co-organizers:

- Cambodian Conservation Agriculture and Sustainable Intensification Consortium (CASIC)
- Agroecology and Safe Food System Transitions (ASSET) project
- CIRAD
- GRET
- Transformative Partnership Platform (TPP) on Agroecology
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

- Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP)
- Innovation for Sustainable Agriculture (ISA) project
- Swisscontact

In collaboration with:

- Agroecology Coalition
- UN Food System Hub
- AFA
- AsiaDHRRA
- APAARI

Funded by:

- Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
- European Union (EU)
- Fond Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM)

4. Tentative format

Policy dialogue pre-event: 1 day, on 24 November 2025

TARASA25 event: 3 days, from 25 to 27 November 2025

5. Participants

About 150-200 expected participants, mainly from different countries of Asia and the Pacific.

Different stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental organizations including policy makers, donors and funding institutions, public and private institutions working in the field of research, education, extension, farmers and farmers organizations, CSOs and other private sector representatives, as much as possible covering the broad spectrum between MSMEs and global corporate companies.

6. Tentative programme

Pre-event. Monday, 24 November 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy dialogue: moving forward with the implementation of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines for AE Transitions Welcome Dinner
Day 1. Tuesday, 25 November 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official opening & group photo Inauguration of the Innovation Fair Setting the scene (keynote speeches) Learning from global initiatives Learning from regional initiatives Learning from key events in 2025
Day 2. Wednesday, 26 November 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visits (optional) (Vientiane Organic Market) Session 1: Technologies, Innovations development, and Practices changes Session 2: Approaches to evaluation and metrics Session 3: Supporting skills development and knowledge sharing Session 4: Market and value chains
Day 3. Thursday, 27 November 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session 5: Financing (round table) Innovation fair awarding Launching of ALiSEA Knowledge Hub Session 6: Public policies (round table) Plenary discussion: opportunities and ways forwards for enhanced collaboration and partnership in the Asia Pacific region to promote food systems transformation through agroecology and regenerative agriculture Wrap-up and closing remarks

ORGANIZED BY:



CO-ORGANIZED BY:



IN COLLABORATION WITH:



FINANCED BY:

