Report on TARASA25 Policy Dialogue Pre-Event

TARASA25

TRANSITIONING TOWARDS AGROECOLOGY AND REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE:

A CONTRIBUTION TO FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATIONS

Location: DoubleTree by Hilton, Vientiane, Lao PDR

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ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Full Form
ACF	Alliance of Champions for Food System Transformation
AE	Agroecology
AFA	Asian Farmers' Association
AFD	Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)
AIPA	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
ALiSEA	Agroecology Learning Alliance in South East Asia
AMAF	ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry
AMIA	Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture
APA	Agriculture Adaptation Project
ASDP	Agricultural Strategic Development Plan (2024-2028)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASSET	Agroecology and Food System Transitions in South-East Asia
ASWGC	ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Crops
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CAB	Convergence Action Blueprint
CAPRI	Consortium for Agricultural Policy Research Initiatives
CASIC	Conservation Agriculture & Sustainable Intensification Consortium
CIRAD	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRN	Climate Resilience Network (ASEAN-CRN)
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	Department of Agriculture
DAEC	Department of Agricultural Extension and Cooperatives
DLAM	Department of Land Administration and Management
DOA	Department of Agriculture
EAC	East African Community
EALA	East African Legislative Assembly
EALA-ATRN	EALA Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FO	Farmer Organization
FYDP	Five-Year Development Plan
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HAPAG	Halina't Magtanim ng Prutas at Gulay (Let's Plant Fruits/Veg)
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IRD	French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development
ISPAE	Institute of Strategy & Policy on Agriculture and Environment
LAAD	Leaders in Asian Agriculture and Development
LICA	Lao Facilitated Initiative on Agroecology for ASEAN
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MBG	Makan Bergizi Gratis (Free Nutritious Meals Program)
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
myGAP	Malaysian Good Agricultural Practices
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAP 2.0	National Agrofood Policy 2.0
NAP-FST	National Action Plan on Food Systems Transformation
NBSAP	Nat. Biodiversity Strategies & Action Plans
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NTFP-EP	Non-Timber Forest Products – Exchange Programme
NUPAP	National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program
OECM	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
P2B	Pekarangan Pangan Bergizi (Nutritious Food Yard Program)
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PhilGAP	Philippine Good Agricultural Practices
RA	Regenerative Agriculture
RAI	Responsible Investment in Food, Ag & Forestry

SAAD	Special Area for Agricultural Development
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEARCA	SE Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study & Research in Ag.
TAPE	Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation
TARASA	Transitioning Towards Agroecology and Regenerative Agriculture: A Contribution to Food Systems Transformation
TOGA	Tanaman Obat Keluarga (Traditional Medicinal Plants)
TPP	Transformative Partnership Platform
TrAInS	Transformational Agricultural Innovation Systems
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and objectives of the pre-event

ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions. These Guidelines, developed under the Lao Facilitated Initiative on Agroecology for ASEAN (LICA), and with support from the ASSET project, offer voluntary support to ASEAN member states and bodies, particularly the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Crops (ASWGC) and 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) Project. The overall objective of the ASSET Project, completed by the end of December 2025, was 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 supported since 2021 extensive participatory action research processes at scale in Flagship areas in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam as well as the strengthening and enlargement of the Agroecology Learning alliance in South East Asia (ALiSEA) network, and policy dialogues on Agroecology at multiple levels (from local to regional). TARASA25 has been a major opportunity to share project achievements and lessons learnt.

TARASA as key milestones in multistakeholder processes towards ASEAN level policy transformations. 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 TARASA23 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 on 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.

Recognizing the need for inclusive multi-stakeholders' engagement and long-term collaboration, the second edition of TARASA event (TARASA25), organized in Lao PDR in November 2025, brought together a broad diversity of stakeholders. This included a Policy Dialogue pre-event aiming at moving forward the implementation of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions.

More specifically, the concrete purposes of this pre-event were to:

- 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 maps and visions.
- Explore how best the Guidelines can be adapted to and improve national policy frameworks and action plans in the different countries in the region towards sustainable food systems.

1.2. Participants

The event has been attended by about 135 participants (refer to *Annex 1.3 Participant list*), mainly from different countries of Asia and the Pacific. Participants included 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.

1.3. Welcoming and opening remarks

By Dr. Thatheva Saphangthong, Deputy Director General, the Department of Land Administration and Management (DLAM), Lao PDR; LICA Regional Coordinator; AE Coalition Steering Committee Member

Dr. Thatheva Saphangthong started by emphasizing the high attendance and importance of the pre-event as preparation for TARASA25. He also:

- Highlighted the necessity of regional collaboration to advance agroecology and regenerative agriculture.
- Used Lao sayings to underscore unity and shared responsibility for land, farmers, youth, and ecosystems.
- Reviewed progress, noting the adoption of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions and the newly adopted LICA Action Plan 2026–2030.
- Framed agroecology as crucial for building climate-resilient, safe, and secure food systems.
- Stated key discussion areas of the dialogue:
    - Reflect on achievements and set the direction for future cooperation.
    - Deepen understanding of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions.
    - Share experiences of successes and challenges from ASEAN countries and global partners.
    - Reflect on ways to strengthen the LICA platform to support ASEAN cooperation and connect regional to global efforts (e.g., Agroecology Coalition).
    - Identify practical recommendations for the main TARASA program.
- Stressed that the dialogue was held to ensure that the voices of all contributors (ministries, farmers, researchers, etc.) are heard.
- Reiterated Lao PDR's pride in facilitating regional cooperation on agroecology through LICA since 2012, reflecting the belief that small initiatives contribute to regional wisdom.
- Shared the Lao idiom: "Even small streams, if they flow continuously, can form a great river," symbolizing the cumulative effect of steady efforts.
- Expressed sincere thanks to FAO, ESCAP, CIRAD, GRET, other ASSET partners, ALiSEA, and development partners (AFD, EU, French government) for their support.
- Thanked ASEAN colleagues, especially LICA focal points, for their trust and collaboration.
- Wished for new understanding, partnerships, and renewed commitment to resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems.
- Officially declared the TARASA 2025 Pre-event Policy Dialogue open.

By H.E Yeou Asikin, Undersecretary of State, Cambodia Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)

- Acknowledged the honor of participating and discussing the implementation of ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions.

- Drew on the experience of CASIC to assert that successful sustainable food systems require collaborative and coordinated action, seamlessly integrating policy, research, marketing, and service delivery.
- Referenced a recent policy dialogue in Cambodia that promoted a bottom-up approach for Conservation Agriculture (CA) and produced four key policy reform recommendations:
    - Reduce the cost of inputs by developing supply chains for CA machinery.
    - Explore high-value markets for CA crops.
    - Mainstream CA by integrating agroecology into research, extension, and education.
    - Increase collaboration by strengthening organization among farmers and stakeholders.
- Suggested focusing on three critical, interconnected priorities to realize the full potential of the Guidelines across ASEAN:
    - Broadening the regional coalition and awareness:
        - Expand multi-stakeholder coalitions (e.g., institutionalizing the TARASA platform).
        - Increase visibility to non-traditional partners like climate funds and commercial banks.
        - Educate financiers on the benefits to unlock private and climate financing.
    - Aligning and strengthening public and private initiatives:
        - Use the Guidelines to align public policy with private sector action.
        - Encourage the establishment of integrated national coordination mechanisms (like Cambodia's CASIC) across ASEAN to act as a single point of contact.
        - Ensure that public policy stimulates market demand for private innovations (like CA machinery) to create economic incentives for farmers.
    - Adapting the Guidelines to national policy frameworks:
        - Use the Guidelines as a blueprint to review and revise national policies that favor input-heavy practices.
        - Prioritize budget allocation for on-the-ground support, such as access to CA machinery and developing local service delivery practices, making the transition affordable for smallholder farmers.
        - Ensure that national action plans implement measurable, time-bound targets derived from the Guidelines.

By Dr. Estelle Biénabe, ASSET Coordinator, CIRAD

- Valued the ample participation constituted of both long-term committed stakeholders and newly engaging organizations, which confirms the very broad interest and enthusiasm manifested over the last period after the release of the ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions.
- Emphasized that the approval of the Guidelines is only a starting point in a process to policy transformations across scales in the ASEAN and beyond, hence the importance of discussing next steps.

She stressed key areas for the discussion during the workshop aiming to:

- Assist ASEAN Member States in formulating and implementing National and Local Action Plans that are informed by the recently approved ASEAN Guidelines.
- Strengthen, expand, and amplify the multi-stakeholder process by engaging new organizations with diverse backgrounds to broaden the "coalition of the willing."

- Develop participatory metrics and research frameworks to create a common understanding of where we stand and where are the needs and opportunities for change, to support collective adaptive learning, and to enrich policy frameworks with diverse ground-level experiences about how to operate changes across scales and develop policies to accompany and foster these.
- Identify concrete steps to populate the LICA and use LICA as a vehicle to advance policy reforms and the agroecological transition in the region.

Linkage with TARASA25:

- While TARASA23 focused on developing a common vision and identifying pathways, the current gathering focuses on scaling, deepening the vision, and moving toward concrete implementation.
- The conference serves as a critical moment to create new linkages across different sectors, scales, and stakeholders to enhance policy coherence.
- The event provides a platform to synergize efforts and engage in joint action planning, moving beyond theoretical frameworks to discuss innovative approaches that trigger change at scale.

She highlighted key features of the agenda:

- How countries are advancing after the adoption of the Guidelines.
- Learn from parliamentarians and see how to work with them as a new policy leverage and in bringing new allies.
- Converging and synergizing with other regional processes in the ASEAN and at different scales with global agendas on food systems transformation, biodiversity, and climate change.
- "World café": allows to move all together and gives opportunity to all to discuss how to possibly contribute.
- And then, perspectives from key stakeholders which are part of the institutional ecosystem of support, in identifying ways forward.

Note: For more detailed information, refer to Annex 1. Pre-event agenda & world cafe instructions

2. Session 1: ASEAN Guidelines and national policy frameworks and actions.

2.1. ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions

Dr. Thatheva Saphangthong, Deputy Director General, DLAM, Lao PDR; LICA Regional Coordinator; AE Coalition Steering Committee Member

Note: For more detailed information, refer to Annex 2.1. ASEAN Policy Guidelines and National Policy Framework and Actions

Executive Summary

Dr. Thatheva Saphangthong presented the ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions, a comprehensive framework officially adopted at the 46th AMAF meeting on October 24, 2024. Designed to address the region's climate vulnerability and overreliance on conventional agricultural production, these voluntary guidelines align with the ASEAN Economic and Socio-Cultural Community Blueprints. While the

Guidelines have been adopted and launched, the focus has now shifted to implementation. The Guidelines serve as a "toolbox" for Member States to navigate the transition through 2030 and beyond.

Takeaway Messages

A Holistic, Not Just Technical, Approach

The Guidelines represent a philosophical shift for the region. They move beyond simple technical fixes to address the entire food system to integrate ecological, economic, and social dimensions, driven by the urgent need for resilience in a region that produces approximately 24% of the global milled-rice output.

The 7 Leverage Points for Transitions

As outlined in the Guidelines, ASEAN member states must utilize seven specific leverage points to scale up agroecology:

1. Planning for agroecology transitions (Landscape & Territorial approaches).
2. Working with farmers (Strengthening organizations & legal protection).
3. Promoting transitions across agrifood value chains.
4. Capacity building and knowledge sharing.
5. Multistakeholder engagement (Ensuring inclusiveness and actual participation, and institutionalizing platforms).
6. Developing a research agenda (Participatory Action Research, and Farm to Food System scales).
7. Financing agroecology transitions (Repurposing finance, reforming regulations & adapting innovative financial arrangements to AET).

A Phased Roadmap for Action (2025–2030)

The presentation outlines a clear implementation timeline:

- 2025 (Quick Wins): Establish inter-ministerial task forces and pilot agroecology zones.
- 2027 (Scale-up): Reform extension services and roll out green-credit programs.
- 2030 (Consolidate): Mainstream ecological procurement and embed indicators into SDG monitoring.

Blueprint for National Policy

The guidelines are explicitly designed to be used as a toolbox for member states. Countries are encouraged to review existing policies and design national strategies, as demonstrated by Lao PDR, where these principles are integrated into the National Socio-Economic Development Plan.

2.2. Vietnam's policy actions on Agroecology

Dr. Mai Huong Nguyen, ISPAE, Viet Nam; LICA focal point

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 2.2 Vietnam's policy actions on Agroecology

Executive Summary

In her presentation, Ms. Nguyen Mai Huong from the Institute of Strategy and Policy on Agriculture and Environment (ISPAE) detailed Vietnam's comprehensive, multi-layered policy architecture designed to support AET. She explained that over the past decade, Vietnam has constructed a strategic "umbrella" rooted in Communist Party resolutions and the National Green Growth Strategy (Vision 2050), which dictates specific

sector regulations such as the 2024 Land Law and Environmental Protection Law, and tangible action plans like the National Action Plan on Food Systems Transformation (NAP-FST).

She highlighted pioneering initiatives, specifically the 1-million hectare low-emission rice project in the Mekong Delta, which positions Vietnam as a regional leader in sustainable agriculture. However, she pointed to a critical "implementation deficit," noting that while the policy framework is abundant and progressive, enforcement remains weak, coordination fragmented - overrelying on "top-down" approaches that often exclude the farmer's voice. To resolve this, she proposed leveraging the ASEAN Guidelines as a benchmarking roadmap and utilizing for example emerging carbon market infrastructures (including MRV systems) to value economically ecosystem services and incentivize the transition.

Takeaway Messages

- Robust policy architecture: Vietnam has successfully established a coherent framework that flows from high-level political commitments down to specific laws and action plans, integrating agroecology into the national development agenda.
- Flagship initiatives: The 1-million hectare low-emission rice project and the NAP-FST demonstrate Vietnam's move from theory to large-scale action, serving as testing grounds for green growth and carbon markets.
- Critical gaps: Despite legal progress, the country still faces significant challenges in enforcement and policy coherence, alongside a need to shift from productivity-centric models to holistic agroecological systems.
- Strategic direction: The path forward relies on scaling lessons, such as from the Mekong Delta rice project, specifically using its Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system as a foundation for broader ecosystem service valuation.
- Whole-of-society approach: Success requires institutionalizing a multi-stakeholder approach that actively engages farmers, cooperatives, the private sector, and civil society to ensure policies are practical and inclusive.

2.3.Malaysia's Concrete Policy Actions Supporting Agroecology Transitions

Mr. Mohamad Sofian Oma, Department of Agriculture, Malaysia

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 2.3 Malaysia's Concrete Policy Actions Supporting Agroecology Transitions

Executive Summary

Representing the Department of Agriculture of Malaysia, Mr. Mohamad Sofian Oma presented Malaysia's strategic framework for transitioning toward a sustainable and resilient food system. He emphasized that Malaysia's national direction is closely aligned with the ASEAN Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions, specifically in promoting climate resilience, efficient resource use, and smallholder inclusion.

The presentation detailed how Malaysia is operationalizing these concepts through three core initiatives:

1. National Agrofood Policy 2.0 (NAP 2.0): A high-level strategy focusing on modernization and smart agriculture to reduce chemical use and enhance productivity.
2. myGAP (Malaysian Good Agricultural Practices): A national certification scheme that institutionalizes environmentally responsible practices like Integrated Pest Management.

3. mySoilDoctor Programme: A practical, ground-level initiative supported by FAO-GSP that empowers farmers to manage soil health through peer-to-peer advisory models.

Mr. Sofian concluded by addressing current challenges, such as unstructured inter-agency coordination and limited market recognition for agroecological products, while identifying the ASEAN Guidelines as a key tool to bridge these gaps and foster regional collaboration.

Key Takeaway Messages

- Three pillars of action: Malaysia's agroecology strategy is built on three distinct levels of intervention: high-level policy (NAP 2.0), quality assurance and certification (myGAP), and technical on-ground support (mySoilDoctor).
- Modernization for sustainability: Under NAP 2.0, "Smart Agriculture" is not just about yield; it is used as a tool for agroecology. Technologies like precision agriculture and digital monitoring are employed to reduce chemical dependency and protect soil biodiversity.
- Certification drivers: The myGAP certification serves as a market enabler for agroecology, requiring farmers to adopt specific ecological practices such as using biological control agents and maintaining natural vegetation buffers to achieve certification.
- Farmer-centric soil management: The mySoilDoctor programme utilizes a "Champion Farmer Model," training farmers to act as soil advisors for their communities. This decentralized approach ensures site-specific nutrient management, preventing fertilizer overuse and reducing costs.
- Gaps and opportunities: While technical solutions are advancing, systemic gaps remain in inter-agency coordination and domestic market demand. Malaysia aims to use the ASEAN Guidelines to align these national efforts and adapt programs to local landscape contexts.

2.4. Sharing innovative approach for Agroecology transition in Cambodia

Mr. Phy Chhin, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 2. 4 Sharing innovative approach for Agroecology transition in Cambodia

Executive Summary

Cambodia is actively advancing its AET by anchoring it within the government's high-level "Pentagonal Strategy", a 25-year national socio-economic policy agenda. This strategy, which prioritizes human capital, food, water, electricity, and technology, serves as the foundation for the Agricultural Strategic Development Plan (ASDP) 2024–2028. The ASDP focuses on four key pillars: food security, economic growth (at both household and national levels), accessibility, and sustainability.

To move from "guidelines to action," Cambodia utilizes CASIC as a central coordination platform. This innovative mechanism breaks down institutional silos by uniting six different ministries (Agriculture, Environment, Women's Affairs, Interior, Water Resources, and Education) along with research institutes and development partners. While strong institutional frameworks and higher education curricula are now in place, the country still faces challenges in securing private sector engagement, developing financial incentives, and generating sufficient economic evidence to fully convince policymakers and farmers to scale up adoption.

Takeaway Messages

- Strategic policy alignment

    - The pentagonal strategy: Agroecology is not a standalone project but is embedded in the national 25-year development agenda, specifically under the sustainable management of natural resources (soil health, erosion control, and productivity).
    - ASDP 2024-2028: The national agricultural plan explicitly targets sustainability alongside economic growth, ensuring that environmental concerns are balanced with food security needs.
- The CASIC coordination model
    - Cross-sectoral unity: The speaker highlighted CASIC as a critical enabling factor because it coordinates efforts across six different ministries. This ensures that agroecology is treated as a multi-dimensional issue involving water, education, and rural development, not just agriculture.
    - Partnerships: Success relies heavily on collaboration with development partners (AFD, EU, FAO), regional networks (ALiSEA), and research bodies (CIRAD, IRD).
- Institutionalizing education
    - Cambodia is actively integrating agroecology into the formal education system.
    - Specific degree programs (Master's in Agroecology and Bachelor's in Sustainable Agriculture) have been established at the Royal University of Agriculture and the National University of Battambang to build the next generation of experts.
- Current challenges to transition
    - Economic evidence gap: There is a lack of widespread promotion regarding the *economic* benefits of agroecology. The speaker noted that scientific and economic evidence is required to convince policymakers and farmers that these methods are profitable.
    - Financial mechanisms: There is a need for better financial incentives, such as agricultural insurance, subsidies, and preferential loan rates from banks/microfinance institutions for farmers adopting sustainable practices.
    - Private sector engagement: There is currently limited visibility and funding from the private sector to speed up adoption through supply chains.
- Future roadmap & ASEAN Guidelines
    - Cambodia intends to revise the CASIC roadmap to integrate the new ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions.
    - A national research agenda is being developed to scale up innovations and measure impact (accumulating field evidence).
    - Future plans include introducing agroecological products into public procurement systems and developing contract farming laws to secure markets for farmers.

2.5. Agroecology actions in Philippines

Dr. Carl Vincent D. Gapasin, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry, Philippines

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 2.5 Agroecology in Action Philippines

Executive Summary

The Philippine's agriculture sector is facing a storm of challenges that necessitate a shift toward agroecology and sustainable practices:

- Climate crisis**:** The Philippines ranks number one on the World Risk Index (2022). Between 2012–2022, climate change caused an annual agricultural loss of USD 475 million.

- Demographic crisis**:** The average age of Filipino farmers is 50, and youth engagement is low due to poor income prospects.
- Urbanization: 54% of Filipinos live in urban areas, creating a disconnect between food production and consumption, and leaving urban populations vulnerable to food insecurity.
- Smallholder dominance**:** 90% of food comes from small family farms, yet many lack knowledge of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).
- Strategic framework: the scaling approach
  The Department of Agriculture (DA) is addressing these issues not through a single program, but through a multi-dimensional scaling strategy:
    - Scaling deep**:** Changing values and behaviors at the community level to ensure local ownership and sustainability.
    - Scaling out**:** Replicating successful models (like the "Makatabo Farm" showcase) to other barangays, schools, and cities.
    - Scaling up**:** Institutionalizing these practices into national policies, budgets, and city planning to create systemic change.
- Key pillars & legislative enablers

The presentation highlights several specific acts and programs designed to bridge the gap between farmers and consumers:

- Food safety & quality (RA 10611): The enforcement of the Food Safety Act through PhilGAP ensures that smallholder produce is safe, traceable, and market-ready.
- Market access (Sagip Saka Act - RA 11321): A crucial law that allows government agencies to buy directly from farmers and fisherfolk, bypassing middlemen and increasing farmer income.
- Urban & peri-urban agriculture (NUPAP): A program specifically targeting the 54% urban population to ensure food security within cities, reduce logistics costs, and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Zero kilometer food project: An initiative to map local supply and demand to keep food within the community. This reduces "food miles" (carbon footprint), improves nutrition (freshness), and boosts local economies.

- Resilience & climate-action projects
    - AMIA (Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture): The establishment of 226 climate-resilient villages across 71 provinces to transform farmers into agri-preneurs using climate-smart technologies.
    - APA project: A massive initiative (USD 39.3M value) aiming to cut down 4.4 million tons of emissions and benefit 1.25 million farmers directly by 2031.
    - SAAD program: Targeted specifically at the poorest provinces to put "food on the table" for marginalized communities through livelihood interventions.
    - HAPAG project: A community engagement push (Halina’t Magtanim ng Prutas at Gulay) that has already reached over 4,400 communities with seed packets and planting materials.

Key Takeaways

- Transition from production to systems: The Department of Agriculture is moving beyond just "growing crops" to managing food systems. This includes shortening supply chains (Zero KM Project), securing the market (Sagip Saka), and integrating farming into city planning (Urban Agriculture).
- Localization is the strategy for resilience: Whether it is the AMIA villages adapting to climate change or the Zero Kilometer Project reducing food miles, the focus is on hyper-local solutions to combat national-level risks like typhoons and logistical breakdowns.
- Institutionalizing Agroecology: While there is no single "Agroecology Department," the principles are being embedded (Scaled Up) into existing frameworks which include urban planning, disaster risk reduction, and procurement laws. This is to ensure they survive beyond individual political terms.

2.6. Nutrition food for yard programme (P2B) to promote local food in Indonesia.

Mr. Eryk Barlianto, Directorate General of Horticulture, Indonesia

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 2.6 Nutrition food for yard programme (P2B) to promote local food in Indonesia.

Exclusive Summary

The Nutritious Food Yard Program (P2B) is the Indonesian Ministry of Agriculture's strategic initiative to combat rising food prices and nutrition insecurity. P2B optimizes household yards and community spaces for the production of diverse, nutritious foods (vegetables, fruits, and herbs) to support household resilience and income.

Crucially, the program serves as a foundational supply pillar for President Prabowo Subianto's national Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) program, directly addressing stunting. For 2025, the government aims to mobilize 13,500 community groups across Indonesia, equipping them with production facilities (polybags, seeds, tools) and agroecological knowledge to create a sustainable, inclusive, and locally rooted food system.

Takeaway Messages

- The P2B program is aligned with national priorities, specifically supporting the MBG. By utilizing yard land for horticultural cultivation, the program ensures a decentralized supply of healthy food needed to reduce stunting and improve public health standards across the country.
- The program targets 13,500 groups in 2025 using a specific support structure tailored to regional agro-climates:
    - Household level: Distribution of "Yard Packages" consisting of vegetable and banana polybags.
    - Group level: "Demonstration Plot Packages" containing seeds, pest control tools, and production facilities.
    - Note: To improve efficiency in harvesting and marketing, banana plants are primarily planted collectively in a single group plot rather than individually dispersed.
- P2B moves beyond traditional gardening by integrating specific agroecological practices to ensure environmental sustainability:
    - Techniques: Vertical gardens, simple aquaponics systems, and home composting.
    - Crop mix: Emphasis on diverse crops including traditional medicinal plants (TOGA) and nutritious vegetables.

- The program relies on community participation, explicitly empowering women and youth as key drivers of the local food system. It encourages resilience through activities like seed exchanges and local market circulation, helping households withstand economic and climate shocks.

2.7. Thailand's Policy Actions on Agroecology.

Ms. Phatthicha Plianphanich, Planning and Technical Division, DOA Thailand

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 2. 7 Thailand's Policy Actions on Agroecology

Executive Summary

Thailand's approach to agroecology is anchored in the Organic Agriculture Action Plan (2023–2027), a national roadmap developed by the Office of Agricultural Economics. This plan treats agroecology not just as a farming method but as a holistic value chain strategy, covering research, supply chain management, standardization, and market expansion.

To translate policy into practice, Thailand promotes the "Khok Nong Na" model, an integrated farming system inspired by the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. This model re-engineer's farmland into hills, ponds, and paddy fields to ensure water availability and biodiversity. Furthermore, Thailand is actively using the ASEAN Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions as a strategic tool to bridge policy gaps specifically regarding social inclusion for smallholders and to harmonize efforts between the Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce, and Environment.

Takeaway Messages

- Holistic policy framework (2023–2027)

  Thailand is advancing agroecology through a structured National Action Plan that targets four key areas of development. It prioritizes the creation of a comprehensive organic agriculture database to strengthen research and innovation, improves supply chain capacity across all stages of production, upgrades standards and certification systems to reinforce consumer trust, and promotes greater domestic and international demand for organic products through enhanced market awareness.
- "Khok Nong Na" as applied agroecology. The "Khok Nong Na" model serves as the practical application of the New Theory Agriculture. It focuses on landscape management to maximize resilience:
  - Hill **(**Khok**):** For planting diverse trees and herbs.
  - Pond **(**Nong**):** For water storage and aquaculture.
  - Paddy field **(**Na**):** For staple food production.
  - House area**:** For life activities integration and connectivity.
- Strategic use of ASEAN Guidelines
  - Thailand utilizes the regional ASEAN guidelines for two specific policy improvements:
  - Gap analysis**:** Identifying weaknesses in current national policies, particularly regarding socio-economic inclusion for small farmers.
  - Policy coherence**:** Breaking down silos to ensure better coordination between relevant ministries (Agriculture, Environment, and Commerce).
- Addressing critical challenges

Despite a strong framework, the transition faces hurdles in scaling up (moving from pilots to national adoption) and market access (ensuring small-scale farmers receive fair prices). Thailand aims to resolve these through continued policy coherence and regional collaboration.

Post-presentation Q&A Session:

Comment from Dr. Dao The Anh, ALiSEA:

- Reported that ALiSEA is facilitating multi-stakeholder policy dialogues across Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia to link grassroots initiatives with policy.
- Noted that current policies are fragmented; recommended establishing a holistic Monitoring and Evaluation system to unify stakeholder understanding of agroecology principles.
- Highlighted the necessity of market incentives, specifically consumer awareness campaigns (Laos) and robust certification standards (Vietnam).
- Observed a lag in public research; urged stronger linkages between research findings and extension systems, potentially utilizing digital tools for dissemination.
- Called for diversified financial resources, including green credits, carbon markets (citing Vietnam's low-carbon rice), and the integration of agroecology into public procurement. Emphasized the need to simplify administrative processes for smallholders.

Comment from Irish Baguilat, Asian Farmers' Association (AFA):

- Viewed the ASEAN Guidelines as strategic entry points; AFA is currently adapting them into simplified tools to help farmers' organizations engage with government agencies.
- Argued that financing existing policies (e.g., the Sagip Saka Act in the Philippines) is often more effective than creating new legislation.
- Welcomed the transparency regarding gaps in farmer consultation and offered AFA resources to facilitate local and national dialogues.
- Identified youth and women's engagement as key leverage points. Recommended developing concrete action plans for public food procurement alongside soil rehabilitation.

Comment from Dr. Fergus Sinclair, ICRAF, AE TPP: The Southeast Asian region is leading the world in agroecological transitions through coherent regional frameworks. Moving forward, he outlined the following five key observations and recommendations:

- Reconfiguration of knowledge systems: while there is a common regional vision, agroecology remains context-specific. There is a need to reconfigure research, education, and rural advisory systems to place farmers at the center of the innovation process, using a simultaneous "top-down" and "bottom-up" approach.
- Monitoring and implementation: There is a critical need to track policy implementation to measure impact and scale; and hence, to develop robust indicators to assess how initiatives (such as those in Vietnam) affect livelihoods.
- Policy coherence: Challenges regarding policy coherence remain particularly concerning, especially in the case of conflicting government incentives (e.g., subsidies for industrial fertilizers versus promotion of biological nitrogen fixation). Mr. Sinclair highlighted a significant gap in the discussions regarding water management, noting that soil health initiatives must be paired with water resource management to ensure food security.

- Scaling national models: He cited the Khok Nong Na model in Thailand as a positive example that requires expansion from pilot projects to a national scale.
- Sustainable finance: the economic case for national investment in agroecology is clear. Mr. Sinclair identified two primary mechanisms for financing:
    - Payment for ecosystem services **(**PES**):** Rewarding farmers for carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and water yield management.
    - Market chain upgrading**:** capturing greater value closer to the farm gate to reward producers.

3. Session 2: Parliamentary insights and pathways forward for agroecological Transitions

Mr. Pierre Ferrand, FAO

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 3.1 Parliamentary insights and pathways forward for AET.

The session was called to order by Mr. Pierre Ferrand. He referenced the opening remarks regarding the necessity of broadening the "coalition of the willing" to include legislative bodies.

He noted that while a panel of parliamentarians had been invited, they were unable to attend in person, notably due to concurrent National Assembly sessions taking place across the region. Consequently, the session pivoted to a presentation of FAO strategies followed by video statements from three major regional parliamentary bodies.

1. Plenary Engagement: Current Experiences with Parliamentarians

The floor was opened to assess the participants' existing experiences in engaging with legislative bodies. Two significant interventions provided the practical context for the session:

- Participant from Nepal
    - Mr. Paudel emphasized that engagement in Nepal is not framed as traditional political lobbying, but rather as education.
    - The core objective is to help parliamentarians distinguish between agriculture for profit and agriculture for food/subsistence.
    - Sustainable food systems depend on decision-makers understanding the nutritional and survival value of agriculture, not just the economic output.
- Participant from Philippines
    - The representative shared a case study on Organic Agriculture Law.
    - Civil society successfully lobbied to amend the law to recognize the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). This was a critical victory, as previous legislation only recognized expensive third-party certification, which marginalized smallholder farmers.
    - The intervention highlighted a major systemic failure: despite the existence of the Organic Agriculture Law, the Department of Agriculture continues to aggressively promote and fund GMOs. This contradiction underscores the need for continuous oversight to ensure the executive branch aligns with legislative intent.

2. Introductory Presentation: The Strategic Role of Parliamentarians

Mr. Ferrand presented the FAO framework (referencing the IPU-FAO Handbook) on why parliamentarians are indispensable to the AET. He outlined four pillars of parliamentary action:

- Representation:
    - Engaging with practitioners to understand ground-level issues.
    - Staying alert to "greenwashing" and conflicts of interest.
    - Advocating for food system transformation at the highest levels.
- Legislation:
    - Defining legislative benchmarks and identifying gaps.
    - Drafting coherent laws that institutionalize agroecology and reflect local specificities.
- Budget:
    - Ensuring resources are allocated across all relevant sectors (beyond just agriculture).
    - Negotiating budgets to support policy implementation.
- Oversight:
    - Holding governments accountable through budget hearings.
    - Monitoring the long-term impacts of laws via independent research

3. Regional Interventions (Video Statements)

The session featured recorded interventions from three regions, illustrating different legislative entry points.

A. Latin America & The Caribbean: The Model Law

- Speaker: Hon. Rolando González Patricio, President of Parlatino, sharing the development of the Model Law on Agroecology
- Key Achievement**:** The Model Law for the Promotion of Agroecology.
- Timeline:
    - Dec 2021: Publication of legislative guidelines.
    - 2022-2024: Three public consultations (South America, Mesoamerica, Caribbean).
    - July 2024: Draft approved by the Agriculture, Livestock & Fisheries Committee.
    - Dec 2024: Official adoption of the Model Law at the General Plenary.
- Significance: This law serves as a regional reference, establishing governance structures and financing mechanisms that national parliaments can adapt.

Note: Full video, please refer to Annex 3.2 PARLATINO

B. East Africa: Legally Binding Motions

- Speaker**:** Hon. Gideon Gatpan Thoar, Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism & Natural Resources (EALA-ATRN), Advancing agroecology across the region through legislative action.
- Key Achievement**:** A legally binding motion for the 8 EAC Partner States.
- Timeline :
    - Oct 2024: Capacity building workshop held for members of the Commission.
    - July 2025: Motion adopted by EALA urging the EAC Council of Ministers to promote agroecology.

- Significance**:** The motion is designed to strengthen food sovereignty "My food is African" and food security, making the recommendations binding for member states.

Note: Full video, please refer to Annex 3.3 Hon.Gideon_EALA

C. Southeast Asia (ASEAN): Responsible Investment

- Speaker**:** H.E. Siti Rozaimeriyanty Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, Secretary-General of AIPA, Advancing the implementation of the ASEAN RAI Parliamentary Implementation Framework: Turning regional policy commitments into actions at the national level
- Key achievement**:** Implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (ASEAN RAI).
- Focus areas:
    - Integrating RAI principles into national policies and legislation.
    - Facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues to align investments with sustainability.
    - Providing technical guidance to help MPs assess risks and prevent harm.
    - Building capacity for parliamentary committees to monitor agricultural investments.

Note: Full video, please refer to Annex 3.4 [Final] AIPA Secretary General Video Remarks - TARASA25 - FAO

4. Key Takeaways

- Legislation is the only mechanism that ensures agroecological transitions survive changes in government administration.
- Policy coherence is critical: as seen in the Philippines, passing a law is not enough; parliamentarians must use their oversight function to ensure government agencies do not fund contradictory programs (e.g., GMOs vs. Organic).
- There is no "one size fits all."
- Effective engagement requires educating MPs on the fundamental difference between agriculture for profit and agriculture for food security.

4. Session 3: Synergizing agroecology with regional and global processes

4.1. ASEAN guidelines for recognition of customary tenure in forested landscape

Ms. Femy Pinto, Non-Timber Forest Products – Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP) Asia

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 4.1 ASEAN guidelines for recognition of customary tenure in forested landscape

Executive Summary

In Southeast Asia, over 140 million people depend on forests and natural resource ecosystems for their livelihoods. To address the security of these communities, the ASEAN Guidelines on Recognition of Customary Tenure in Forested Landscapes were formally adopted by the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry in October 2022. This framework serves as a critical regional standard to complement national policies, aiming to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

The presentation emphasizes that a meaningful transition to agroecology is impossible without addressing the status of the land and customary tenure systems. The guidelines provide a gender-responsive and socially inclusive approach to recognizing not just land plots, but entire bundles of rights and complex management systems (including shifting cultivation, spiritual sites, and water bodies). Now that the policy is officially in place, the current priority is cascading these guidelines from the regional level down to national and sub-national implementation. This involves capacity building, creating safe spaces for dialogue between governments and communities, and legal reforms that integrate traditional ecological knowledge to ensure food security, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development.

Takeaway Messages

- The strategic link between land tenure and agroecology

Recognition of customary tenure is the foundation for a successful agroecological transition. The speaker highlighted that the lives of Indigenous Peoples are intertwined with nature. Therefore, recognizing their tenure rights effectively protects natural capital and biodiversity. Legal recognition safeguards traditional livelihoods (farming, fishing, grazing) and the associated traditional ecological knowledge required to manage these forested landscapes sustainably.

- Broad scope of customary tenure

The guidelines move beyond simple land ownership. They recognize Customary Tenure Systems, which include:

  - A bundle of rights**:** Rules governing allocation, use, access, exclusion, and transfer of resources.
  - Diverse landscapes**:** Recognition extends to forests, shifting cultivation/rotational farming areas, pastures, orchards, water bodies, and burial/worship sites.
  - Governance**:** It acknowledges collective, communal, and individual tenure systems often characterized by overlapping land management.

- Official status and global momentum

The guidelines are not merely theoretical; they are an official ASEAN policy framework endorsed in 2022. This regional move aligns with global momentum, including recent commitments (referenced from COP30) to recognize land tenure rights for Indigenous people globally by 2030. The guidelines encourage ASEAN member states to strengthen their legal frameworks to match these regional and international principles.

- Principles of inclusivity and governance

The framework is built on 10 guiding principles, with a heavy emphasis on:

  - Gender equality: Ensuring women and youth are included in tenure governance.
  - Participatory processes: Governments are encouraged to establish dedicated offices or access points for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to communicate their needs (social, cultural, economic, and political).
  - Conflict resolution: providing mechanisms to resolve land disputes.

- The challenge of implementation

The primary lesson learned, and the current challenge is putting policy into practice. Success requires:

  - Translating the regional guidelines into actionable references at the country level.
  - Educating stakeholders at regional, national, and community levels to accurately understand the complexity of customary tenure systems.
  - Engaging key reform actors to co-develop initiatives that adapt the guidelines to specific national circumstances.

4.2. ASEAN guidelines on promoting responsible investment in food agriculture and forestry (RAI)

Mr. Souvanthong Namvong, Department of Agriculture Extension and Cooperatives (DAEC), Laos

Executive Summary

The Lao government is actively rolling out a new decree approved in July to formalize and regulate contract farming. The initiative aims to protect farmers by clearly distinguishing contract farming partnerships from land concessions, ensuring farmers retain their land rights. The new legal framework mandates a specific division of labor and investment: farmers provide land and labor, while investors must provide capital, inputs, and market access. To support this, the government is launching a nationwide educational campaign, enforcing strict inter-ministerial oversight, and applying rigorous environmental safety standards, including a ban on specific hazardous chemicals.

Takeaway Messages

- Land rights protection: The decree explicitly differentiates contract farming from land concessions, ensuring farmers understand they do not need to surrender land rights to enter a contract.
- The "shared investment" rule: For a contract to be valid, the investor *must* provide tangible inputs (funds, seeds, tech) and market access; passive buying is not sufficient.
- Strict environmental compliance: Investors are legally bound to adhere to safety regulations, with a specific emphasis on the prohibition of 55 banned pesticides.
- Focus on education: The immediate priority is closing the knowledge gap at the district and provincial levels to ensure local compliance and understanding.

4.3. ASEAN Climate Resilient Network (CRN) and guidelines

Ms. Imelda (Dada) Bacudo, FAO, ASEAN CRN

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 4.3 Agroecology & ASEAN -CRN - from guidelines to action

Executive Summary

Ms. Dada Bacudo (FAO and ASEAN-CRN) presented a strategic roadmap for transitioning agroecology from theoretical guidelines to concrete action within Southeast Asia. The ASEAN Climate Resilience Network (ASEAN-CRN) is a mature, decade-old platform that has successfully bridged the gap between technical knowledge exchange and high-level policy formulation.

She emphasized two significant milestones: the creation of the ASEAN Negotiating Group for Agriculture which allows member states to influence global climate policy collectively and the successful procurement of a pioneering multi-country grant from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Moving forward, the strategy focuses on overcoming the primary blockage to scaling: finance. Ms. Bacudo advocates for making agroecology bankable by translating its co-benefits into metrics that climate funds accept, integrating these principles into national budgets (NDCs and NAPs), and ensuring farmers' organizations are equal partners in co-designing solutions. The ultimate goal is to harmonize various sustainable agriculture approaches and leverage ASEAN's negotiating power to embed these principles into global UNFCCC agreements.

Takeaway Messages

- Moving from guidelines to implementation

While ASEAN has established robust guidelines on soil health, biodiversity, and drought resilience, these documents must not gather dust on shelves. They must be integrated into national legislative frameworks, specifically National Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), to ensure they receive public investment and budget allocation.

- Making agroecology 'bankable'

The biggest hurdle to scaling agroecology is access to finance. To unlock funds from major donors like the Green Climate Fund:

  - Agroecological co-benefits (social inclusion, biodiversity) must be translated into financial and risk indicators that global funds understand.
  - Smallholder initiatives must be aggregated into investment-ready pipelines.
  - Trust-based, simplified access to finance is required for farmer cooperatives.
  - "Brand agnostic" approach to sustainability: Ms. Bacudo emphasized that the terminology, whether it is called Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), Regenerative Agriculture, Nature-Positive, or Agroecology is secondary. What matters is ensuring that stakeholders follow shared end goals: resilience, low emissions, and productivity.

- The Power of regional negotiation

A major achievement of the ASEAN-CRN is the formation of the ASEAN Negotiating Group for Agriculture. Stakeholders are urged to use this mechanism to elevate regional issues to the global stage (COP/UNFCCC). By collaborating with their national negotiators, the community can push for policies that reflect the reality of Southeast Asian agriculture in international agreements and concretely advocate for AET.

- Justice and farmer-centric design

Agroecology is fundamentally about justice. Since farmers are the ones absorbing the shocks of climate change (droughts, floods, heatwaves), they cannot be treated merely as beneficiaries. Farmers' organizations must be positioned as partners in co-design, provided with the capacity to speak the language of finance, and included in the creation of investment pipelines from the very start.

4.4. Insights from the regional initiatives spearheaded by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA)

Dr. Mercedita Sombilla, Director, SEARCA

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 4.4 SEARCA

Executive Summary

SEARCA presented its strategic roadmap for transitioning Southeast Asian food systems from conventional modern agriculture which has boosted production but caused soil degradation and biodiversity loss toward Regenerative Agriculture.

Guided by its newly approved 12th Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP), themed *"SUSTAIN Southeast Asia,"* SEARCA aims to fast-track agricultural transformation through a Science-Policy-Practice Interface. This approach ensures that scientific research directly informs policy recommendations and is subsequently implemented through farmer training and community practice. The center is actively operationalizing this vision

through three main pillars: Capacity Building (scholarships and leadership training), On-the-Ground Innovation (grants for nature-based solutions and circular economy projects), and Policy Advocacy (launching a new consortium to analyze agricultural trends). SEARCA explicitly calls for collaboration with regional partners and universities to scale these initiatives and restore the region's agricultural ecosystems.

Takeaway Messages

- The shift from conventional to regenerative agriculture
  While acknowledging that conventional agriculture increased food production, SEARCA highlights the severe environmental consequences, such as yield instability, soil degradation, and climate change. The center is pivoting its focus to Regenerative Agriculture, which prioritizes:
    - Restoring ecosystem relationships.
    - Prioritizing soil health over extraction.
    - Reducing reliance on synthetic inputs (chemicals/fertilizers).
- Strategic vision: "SUSTAIN Southeast Asia", SEARCA's 12th Five-Year Development Plan focuses on four key outcomes, referred to as the 4 Ps:
    - Pocket: Sustained increases in farmers' income.
    - Plate: Improved food and nutrition security.
    - Place: Resilience of agricultural systems (Climate Change adaptation).
    - People: Empowerment of farmers and institutions.
- The operational model: Science-Policy-Practice Interface, SEARCA creates impact through a triangular approach:
    - Science: Generating evidence through research (e.g., climate-smart agriculture).
    - Policy: Translating research into policy briefs and working with government ministries.
    - Practice: Disseminating technologies to farmers through training and workshops.
- Building knowledge & skills (education)

To support this transition, SEARCA provides high-level educational opportunities:

    - Including a Joint Master's Degree in Food Security and Climate Change.
    - A new program offering stackable, bite-sized online modules for upskilling, set to roll out in February or March 2026.
    - Flagship programs like Leaders in Asian Agriculture and Development (LAAD) and TrAInS (Transformational Agricultural Innovation Systems) to equip stakeholders with strategic thinking skills.

- Funding innovation and circular economy projects

SEARCA provides grants (GRAINS and SAFE funds) to scale regenerative technologies and startups. Specific success stories include:

    - Rice straw biogas hub: Converting waste straw into biochar, compost, and clean energy.
    - Insiklo: Using black soldier flies to turn market waste into fertilizer and animal feed.
    - Katuparan Producers Cooperative: Creating sustainable pet food using local crops.

- The Consortium for Agricultural Policy Research Initiatives (CAPRI)

A major focus of the presentation was the establishment of CAPRI, a regional consortium aimed at linking research institutions to policy development. Key initiatives under this umbrella include:

- The SEA Agricultural Outlook Series: A mixed-method approach to analyzing regional trends and predicting future scenarios to guide policy.
- Collaboration call: Dr. Sombilla actively invited other research centers and universities to join the consortium to help identify research gaps and formulate regional solutions.

4.5. Agroecology: Connecting people, land, climate, biodiversity, and nutrition

Mr. Oliver Oliveros, AE coalition

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 4.5 Connecting people, land, climate, biodiversity, and nutrition

Executive Summary

Confronted with current global food systems unsustainability, driving climate change, biodiversity loss, and malnutrition, agroecology provides necessary solutions not merely as a farming technique, but as a holistic pathway combining science, practice, and social movements.

Agroecology has moved beyond theoretical discussion to proven economic viability, including large-scale success in India and Egypt. Strategically, there is a growing political momentum for agroecology within the three UN Rio Conventions (Biodiversity, Climate, and Desertification). The focus is now on leveraging upcoming global summits, particularly COP30 in Brazil and the Paris Nutrition for Growth Summit, to translate international recognition into national policy and implementation.

Takeaway Messages

- The case for transformation is clear:
  - System failure: Current food systems generate 1/3 of greenhouse gases and drive 80% of biodiversity loss, yet fail to address malnutrition and social inequity.
  - Holistic solution: Agroecology is an integrated approach applying ecological and social principles to optimize interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment.
- Proven economic viability: Agroecology is no longer just a concept; it has growing evidence of success: e.g., Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming initiative (India), where 1 million farmers saw an 11% yield increase and a 49% net income increase while reducing chemical inputs.
- Integration into global policy (The Rio Conventions): Agroecology is increasingly embedded in the three major environmental frameworks:
  - Biodiversity: Explicitly recognized in the Global Biodiversity Framework (Target 10).
  - Climate (UNFCCC): Gaining ground in National Adaptation Plans and NDCs, despite historical resistance to the terminology.
  - Land (UNCCD): Recognized as a tool for sustainable land management and soil restoration.
- The nutrition nexus: the conversation is expanding to link soil health directly to human health. The Nutrition for Growth summit (Paris 2025) highlighted that sustainable, diverse diets are impossible without healthy agroecological systems.
- The road to COP30: with Brazil hosting COP30, there is a strategic opportunity to cement agroecology in global climate mandates. The focus is shifting from "recognition" to implementation, pushing for fossil fuel phase-outs in agriculture and "Just Transition" mechanisms for farmers.

4.6. Agroecology and biodiversity

Dr. Soukvilay Vilavong, Department of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Lao PDR

Executive Summary

Lao-updated NBSAP (Nat. Biodiversity Strategies & Action Plan) for the period 2026–2030 is near finalization. Biodiversity is viewed as the primary engine for achieving Lao PDR's Net Zero Carbon Emissions goal by 2050, acknowledging that nature is currently the most effective tool for carbon absorption.

The update process was described as rigorously consultative, involving 22 workshops over two years to ensure a whole-of-society approach. The new plan integrates biodiversity across sectors, specifically climate change, agriculture, and forestry. It includes ambitious targets for land restoration (over 20%) and protection (30%), while mainstreaming "One Health," gender equality, and local community rights into conservation governance.

Takeaway Messages

- The updated NBSAP (2026–2030) is almost complete and is fully aligned with the 23 targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Specific conservation targets (By 2030)
    - Restoration (Target 2): Degraded forests, agricultural lands, and inland waters will be mapped, with a commitment to restore more than 20% of these areas to improve connectivity.
    - Protection (Target 3): At least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas will be identified and protected. This includes the mainstreaming of Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs).
- Inclusive & consultative process
    - The government conducted 22 consultation workshops over two years to gather input.
    - Whole-of-society approach: The plan moves beyond government silos, mainstreaming gender responsiveness and local community involvement. New guidelines are currently being developed to formalize this "whole of society" and gender-responsive approach.
- Sectoral mainstreaming
    - The NBSAP integrates biodiversity goals directly into Agriculture and Forestry sectors.
    - It explicitly adopts the One Health approach, recognizing the interconnection between human, animal, and environmental health.

4.7. Agroecology and climate change

Dr. Dao The Anh, ALiSEA representative

Executive Summary

Vietnam has set strategic commitments to transforming its food systems through agroecology to combat the severe impacts of climate change in Southeast Asia. Recognizing the vulnerability of the region's intensive agriculture, Vietnam has integrated agroecology into its "Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy to 2030" and its National Action Plan for food system transformation.

To operationalize this, the Vietnamese Prime Minister established a Food System Partnership in 2024, a cross-ministerial body coordinating Agriculture, Health, Trade, Environment, and Science/Technology; andVietnam is moving from fragmented projects to a coordinated national approach, notably aiming for Net Zero emissions by

2050. The country has also solidified its international commitment by officially joining the Alliance of Champions for Food System Transformation (ACF).

Takeaway Messages

- Agroecology is the core strategy for resilience: Vietnam views agroecology not just as a farming method, but as an "inevitable pathway" for self-reliance, economic development, and climate change adaptation. It is central to ensuring food security and increasing the resilience of the agricultural sector against climate shocks.
- Institutionalization via multi-ministry coordination through partnership: The transformation is driven by a high-level Food System Partnership that breaks down silos by coordinating multiple ministries and includes five working groups, one of which dedicated to Agroecology. A major goal of the new partnership is to coordinate project efforts to share results and scale impact effectively.
- To lower emissions (CO2) and improve sustainability, Vietnam is promoting specific integrated systems, including:
    - Rice-shrimp and rice-fish farming.
    - Agroforestry.
    - Crop-livestock integration.
    - Landscape approaches.
- Global commitments and Net Zero:Vietnam is aligning its domestic actions with global goals. The country aims to achieve Net Zero by 2050. Furthermore, Vietnam has officially joined ACF alongside countries like Brazil, Norway, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda—to push for systemic change leading up to COP30.
- Reforming research and extension: There is a strong emphasis on connecting research universities with stakeholders and Civil Society Organizations (such as ALiSEA). A critical next step is reforming the agricultural extension system to better respond to the demands of smallholder farmers and bridge the gap between technical knowledge and on-the-ground application.

4.8. Agroecology, land degradation and UNFCCC COP agenda: Insights from Mongolia

Mr. Bayarsaikhan Dangaasuren, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia

Executive Summary

Recognizing the diverse landscapes of Asia, ranging from rice production to Mongolia's livestock-heavy context, agroecology is not just an agricultural method but a critical policy tool and the most effective framework for achieving sustainable food systems. Mongolia is actively integrating agroecological approaches into its national climate strategies, including its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans.

As the host of the upcoming UNCCD COP (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), Mongolia is calling for stronger regional cooperation to connect the ASEAN guidelines with global climate, biodiversity, and land restoration frameworks. The government seeks to combine policy efforts with access to climate finance and technical support to drive environmental sustainability and community development alongside partners in the ASEAN region and civil society organizations.

Takeaway Messages

- Agroecology as a primary policy framework: Rather than treating agroecology as a niche practice, the government is embedding these principles directly into major national policies, specifically their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) regarding climate change and adaptation plans.
- Integration of regional and global standards: There is a strong push to align regional guidelines with broader global frameworks. Mr. Dangaasuren highlighted the need to connect regional efforts with global targets for:
    - Climate change mitigation.
    - Biodiversity conservation.
    - Land restoration.
    - The need for finance and technical support: Political will must be supported by practical resources, including improved access to climate finance and joint investment pipelines for technical support and technology transfer.
- Practical hardware for sustainability: agroecology is the practical hardware for environmental sustainability and community development. It is viewed as a tangible solution to advance life and sustainable action on the ground, moving beyond theoretical discussions.
- Commitment to collaboration: Mongolia is looking forward to working closely with ASEAN nations, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and other partners. This collaboration is intended to strengthen the scientific basis for agroecology and enhance regional biodiversity conservation efforts.

4.9. Agroecology and climate change - Convergence Action Blueprint (CAB): Convergence Initiative in Lao PDR and across the region

Dr. Rathana Peou Norbert-Munns, FAO, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub Representative

Executive Summary

True synergy cannot exist without acknowledging trade-offs and conflicting interests (both public and private), and critical assessment of the current state of agroecology and food system transformation in the Asia-Pacific region needs to address this.

Further, there is a significant disconnect between policy and demographics: while the majority of Indigenous Groups reside in the Asia-Pacific region, only about half of the countries' submitted National Food System Pathways explicitly prioritize agroecology. Communities must stop pretending agroecology is "easy," and address the overwhelming saturation of documentation that no one reads, shifting focus toward generating practical, usable knowledge for frontline implementers rather than just policy makers.

Takeaway Messages

- The complexity of the last 11 years of agroecology work stems from a lack of convergence in interests. These interests are not just public (political) but deeply private (economic), and they often block collaboration.
- Stakeholders, including the speaker, admit they do not have time to read these lengthy documents, often resorting to AI for summaries.
- To move forward, dialogues must focus on "what makes us uncomfortable." Avoiding these difficult topics prevents the convergence of interests required for genuine transformation.

5. Session 4: LICA Strategy Action Plan

Dr. Thatheva Saphangthong, Deputy Director General, DLAM, Lao PDR; LICA Regional Coordinator; AE Coalition Steering Committee Member

Note: For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 5.1 LICA Strategy Action Plan

Executive Summary

The LICA ASEAN Strategy Action Plan (2026–2030) intends to address a critical "misconnection" between high-level policy and on-the-ground implementation regarding agroecology in Southeast Asia. Endorsed by AMAF and positioned under the ASEAN Sector Working Group on Crops, this plan serves as a roadmap to operationalize the ASEAN Policy Guidelines on Agroecology Transitions.

An overarching goal is to transition from regional vision to national action. The strategy prioritizes localization and adaptability, acknowledging that each Member State has unique institutional capacities, resources, and agricultural contexts. The plan is structured 5 strategic pillars: 1. transforming policy guidelines into national roadmaps, 2. empowering LICA as a formal regional coordination hub, 3. facilitating South-South knowledge exchange, 4. mobilizing sustainable financing (targeting $50M), and 5. establishing robust monitoring and governance frameworks.

Takeaway Messages

- This Action Plan is designed specifically to bridge the gap between endorsing policy guidelines and actual implementation, moving beyond theory into tangible operational steps for the 2026–2030 period.
- A generic approach is rejected in favor of localization. Member States are encouraged to translate regional actions into their own National Action Plans based on their specific:
    - National policy contexts.
    - Institutional capacities.
    - Available resources.
    - Local needs for agroecological practices.
- To achieve its goals, the plan focuses on five key areas:
    - Policy to action: Helping Member States develop national roadmaps and landscape approaches (e.g., Participatory Land Use Planning).
    - Institutional empowerment: Formalizing LICA with a Secretariat and an operational governance to act as the ASEAN coordination hub.
    - Knowledge exchange: Developing a regional "Knowledge Hub," fostering peer-to-peer learning, and structured South-South cooperation on innovative policy developments (referencing models like the Andhra Pradesh Community-managed Natural Farming).
    - Resource mobilization: Developing an investment framework with a target of mobilizing $50 million, engaging donors (IFAD, GCF), and utilizing the ASEAN Trust Fund.
    - Governance & Monitoring: Establishing a participatory M&E framework ensuring the inclusion of youth, women, and indigenous peoples.
- Strategic alignment and endorsement: The plan is not a standalone initiative; it is embedded within the ASEAN Strategic Planning for Food, Agriculture and Forestry (2026-2030). It has already gone through

consultation (in Indonesia) and received endorsement from the AMAF, giving it the necessary political legitimacy to proceed.

- Clear success metrics: The plan is results-oriented, with specific milestones set for 2030, including:
    - 80% of participating ASEAN Member States (AMS) having Agroecology plans.
    - Agroecology being budgeted for in at least 5 participating AMS.
    - Implementation of at least 20 pilot projects.
    - Establishment of a functional web-based knowledge platform by 2026.

5.1. Group Discussion feedback on Turning Policy Guidelines into National Action Plans

The discussion revolved around the proposal for establishing robust national-level multi-stakeholder platforms formally recognized by the government. The objective is to move beyond simple policy dialogue and vision-setting towards an institutional framework that connects diverse voices, including civil society organizations, farmer organizations, and program focal points. By road-mapping processes together, the aim is to ensure that stakeholders are not just discussing ideas, but are actively co-creating and driving tangible policy changes.

Takeaway Messages

- Multi-stakeholder engagement must not be ad-hoc; it needs to be embedded within platforms currently recognized by the government to ensure it is legitimate.
- Specific mechanisms must be created to ensure diverse stakeholders (specifically Civil Society Organizations and Farmer Organizations) are incorporated and have an active voice.
- The process connects dialogue to accountability by ensuring that "road-mapping" is done collaboratively.
- The ultimate goal is to shift the focus from simply discussing "visions" to managing the actual processes of policy change.

5.2. Group Discussion feedback: Knowledge Exchange Between Countries

The discussion focused on leveraging existing resources to enhance agroecological knowledge exchange across borders. The group proposed two primary initiatives: firstly, the development of a centralized online knowledge hub that aggregates a diverse range of information from technical data and market access to traditional farmer wisdom. Secondly, the group emphasized the importance of utilizing existing training curriculums, with a specific recommendation to expand educational targeting beyond farmers and youth to include future leaders and policymakers, ensuring high-level support for agroecology.

Takeaway Messages

- Create a diverse online Knowledge Hub: incorporating a wide variety of information sources, including technical scientific data, traditional knowledge from farmers, production site details, and market access information.
- Adapt training programs and curricula resources to specifically target future leaders and policymakers to drive systemic change.
- Knowledge exchange must not be top-down; it is essential to include and respect the traditional knowledge held by farmers alongside technical academic data.
- Connecting and utilizing the diversity of knowledge platforms and training curriculums that already exist.

5.3. Group Discussion feedback on Resource Mobilization for Agroecology

Discussions focused on paradigm shift from relying on external aid to maximizing domestic potential: "starting where we are" by auditing current resources, repurposing existing funding streams, and tapping into local public and private sectors. While acknowledging global funding mechanisms, true financial sustainability lies in self-reliance and the power of authentic storytelling to attract investment. To ensure long-term stability, especially given the risk of volatility of external donors, organizations must prioritize funding themselves.

Key Takeaway Messages

- Look in "your own backyard" First: Start by identifying the resources, practices, and funds that already exist within the country and assess how they can be repurposed or rechanneled toward agroecological goals.
- Tap into domestic & local funds: Before navigating complex global mechanisms (like the GCF or GEF), prioritize accessing available local funds and investments from both the public and private sectors.
- The power of storytelling: Technical proposals alone are not enough. Mobilizing resources requires packaging data with specific, authentic personal stories ("our own stories") to make proposals resonate and "click" with potential funders.
- Reduce reliance on external aid: sustainable resource mobilization requires developing mechanisms to fund one's own initiatives to survive shifts in the global aid landscape.

5.4. Group Discussion feedback on Resource Mobilization for Agroecology

The discussion focused on diverse strategies for Resource Mobilization to support sustainability and agricultural initiatives, and highlighted the need for a hybrid funding approach, moving beyond traditional institutional donors to include significant engagement with the private sector:banking industry, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and global supply chain mechanisms. Additionally, carbon finance was identified as a critical, albeit complex, emerging opportunity for generating funds.

Takeaway Messages

- Access to institutional funding: Traditional institutional funding remains a core pillar of resource mobilization, with specific opportunities identified through organizations like IFAD and the Green Climate Fund.
- Private sector & banking engagement: Engage the banking sector to identify green opportunities, specifically looking for low-interest rate options regarding sustainable investments.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Companies play a vital role in funding through CSR activities, specifically by working directly with farmers to support their activities on the ground.
- Leveraging global supply chains: Buyers within the global supply chain can act as financiers for sustainability. This includes paying premiums for sustainable products.
- Carbon Finance Potential: while inherent difficulties are acknowledged in this market, they present significant opportunities for future funding.

5.5. Group Discussion feedback on Monitoring, Learning, and Governance

Discussion raised three fundamental structural questions to establish a regional Monitoring, Learning, and Governance system: defining the specific purpose and beneficiaries of the system ("what for?"), determining the

governing body responsible for data collection (e.g., an ASEAN institution, a regional platform, or the FAO), and shifting the scope from local to regional data aggregation.

Takeaway Messages

- Define the "Why" and the "Who": Before implementation, it is critical to clarify the system's ultimate goal, specifically identifying who will benefit from the data and who will utilize the knowledge produced.
- Clarify governance and ownership: There is an immediate need to determine the specific institution responsible for governance and data collection.
- Aggregate at the regional level: While many monitoring systems currently exist at local and national levels, the gap and the opportunity lie in aggregating this data to create a comprehensive regional overview.
- Focus on three core indicators: The group recommended three primary metrics to start tracking regional progress over time:
    - Chemical flux: The trade and exchange of agrochemicals between countries within the region.
    - Haze and burning: The quantity and frequency of haze occurrences and burning practices.
    - Sustainable certification volume: The total volume of agricultural products that fall under "sustainable agriculture" certifications.

6. Session 5: Moving forward: Reforming policies aligning with the ecosystems of support from the private sector, CSOs, FOs actions at scale

6.1. Perspectives from regional networks on how to strengthen the regional multistakeholder process? How to better align across different stakeholders' initiatives? How to ensure accountability?

Mr. Pat Sovann, ALiSEA

- Strengthening the process: ALiSEA is an open coalition designed to build a community of stakeholders to address challenges and define solutions jointly. Fostering knowledge exchange and capacity building are at the heart of the network's functioning.
- Alignment: network as a mechanism to bridge the gap between field experiences/practices and national policy platforms. The goal is to empower stakeholders to document their lessons learned and bring that evidence to decision-makers.
- Accountability: creation of a safe space for stakeholder dialogue. Accountability is driven by an optimistic focus on inclusion, shared goals, and bringing knowledge into policy to move the AET forward.

Ms. Irish Baguilat, AFA

- Strengthening the process: looking at Asia as a whole region (rather than just sub-regions) to create momentum, and using existing global multistakeholder mechanisms, specifically the Agroecology

Coalition and the Agroecology Transformative Partnership Platform (AE TPP) to play a role within the Asian region.

- Alignment: strive for the big picture approach where Agroecology is a mainstream platform, into which other thematic areas (land, women, youth) are integrated. Conversely, agroecology can be mainstreamed into other existing platforms to ensure all actors are connected.

Ms. Marlene Ramirez, Asia DHRRA

- Strengthening the process: Linkage with the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, and need to correlate work done on the ground with national-level work and ASEAN-level engagement.
- Alignment under implementing the ASEAN agricultural, forestry and fisheries strategic action plan (2026–2030). Alignment is achieved by bringing the results of national processes up to the regional level via specific ASEAN bodies, such as the Senior Officials Meeting for Rural Development and Poverty Eradication and the Senior Officials Meeting for Agriculture and Forestry.
- Accountability: leadership to remain committed now that guidelines are approved. Multistakeholder process as a way to mobilize contribution toward implementing national action plans.

Ms. Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP, Non-Timber Forest Products – Exchange Programme

- Strengthening the process: hard work requiring patience, coordination, and communication. It requires a deliberate, proactive attempt to synergize with other regional players and connect different issues (forests, people, products).
- Alignment: using creative platforms in support of storytelling to make information exchange less onerous/demanding than standard reporting. Concurring with Irish Baguilat on using flexible frameworks: using Agroecology as a "mother framework" to invite themes like Tenure, or using Tenure as the main frame to invite Agroecology.
- Accountability: value of ASEAN voluntary guidelines: even though they are voluntary, reporting progress allows countries and bodies to be proud of their achievements, which drives further action.

6.2.Perspectives from global networks and research partners

Mr. Oliver Oliveros, AE Coalition

- Urgency and Responsibility: time for agroecology is now; having waited too long, the success of the movement now depends entirely on the actions of its members.
- Leveraging Diversity: The coalition consists of 50 countries and nearly 400 members (including civil society and indigenous peoples). The goal is to build on the different strengths and comparative advantages of each member.
- The Power of Humility: Oliveros argued that effective coalition building requires humility. No single entity has a monopoly on knowledge. Organizations must be willing to ask for help, acknowledge when others can do things better, and be willing to step back and be coordinated rather than always trying to lead.
- Trust: Progress can only happen at the speed of trust.

Mr. Fergus Sinclair, ICRAF, AE TPP

- While the movement seeks to be inclusive, terms like Climate Smart, Regenerative, and Organic mean different things. For example, one can be climate-smart without addressing biodiversity, or regenerative without being equitable.
- Organic farming is often defined by prescribed practices and external certification whileAgroecology is defined by universal principles applied through local co-creation, resulting in diverse, context-specific practices verified by participatory guarantee systems.
- Regenerative agriculture covers only about half of the agroecological principles. Agroecology is all-embracing, including governance, social connectivity, and agency.
- While the 13 principles of agroecology are vital, they can be too complex for policymakers. Other frameworks such as the 5 imperatives developed from the DeSIRA program might be a more effective communication tool to engage policymakers without losing the essence of the 13 principles.

Mr. Denis Gautier, CIRAD, AE TPP

- Major challenge in linking the food transition (health, education) with the agricultural transition (environment).
- Critical needs but also challenges of connecting territorial approaches with value chain approaches, which involves managing complex stakeholders with different agendas.
- Connecting partnership platforms emerging in Africa and South America via South-South cooperation allows for a better understanding of how to build systems across scales.
- Science-policy interface is not just about scientists providing evidence to politicians; it requires the co-construction of solutions at multiple scales (local, national, and regional).

6.3.Perspectives from development partners

Mr. Pierre Ferrand, FAO

Outlined four key areas where engagement needs to be strengthened to advance the agroecology transition:

- With agroecology being knowledge-intensive, there is a need for better documentation, consolidation, and dissemination of evidence, especially through South-South cooperation (learning from programs in India, Africa, and Latin America) and platforms like the Agroecology Knowledge Hub.
- Need for robust evidence to support decision-making: TAPE tool (Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation) relevance to generate data on the multi-dimensional sustainability of farming systems.
- Policy processes: deepen collaboration with parliamentarians (notably the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly) to support legislative transitions.
- Resource mobilization: crafting the right narratives to access climate finance (such as the Green Climate Fund and GEF) for national and regional programs.

Ms. Yi-Ann Chen, ESCAP

Focused on how agroecology fits into the broader regional economic and social framework, highlighting two keywords:

- Agroecology addresses the triple planetary crisis (climate, biodiversity, and pollution) while simultaneously tackling social and economic agendas.

- Unlike monocultures, agroecology embraces diversity, which strengthens resilience against climate hazards and trade disruptions by supporting local value chains.
- Echoing other speakers: political will is the primary driver for change. To generate this will, effective storytelling is essential, and with the different organizations active on this connecting with broader networks.

Mr. Patrik Olsson, SDC

Offered a Swiss perspective, challenging the idea that Switzerland is far ahead and instead praising the Mekong/ASEAN region's progress.

- Expressed admiration for regional platforms like ALiSEA and CASIC, noting that Switzerland lacks similar multi-stakeholder regional platforms that bring together government, civil society, and the private sector.
- Real progress comes from stable, long-term spaces for dialogue where actors meet regularly, not just during crises.
- Make the transition as easy as possible for farmers. Reforms must translate into daily advantages such as market incentives, lower risks, or payments for ecosystem services to maintain momentum.

Mr. Robert Cole, WWF

Focused on the financial and business aspects of the transition:

- Beyond carbon markets, there is a critical need for the private sector to invest directly in agroecology. We must put numbers on the concept to prove it makes business sense.
- Industry counter-narratives - which claims that intensive commercial agriculture and commodity exports are the only path to food security and economic growth - needs to and can be countered.
- While acknowledging that a binary view (Agroecology vs. Industry) can be unhelpful, there is a need to redirect the billions of dollars currently invested in conventional agribusiness toward agroecology. The private sector and finance groups must be at the table to make this shift happen.

7. Closing Remark

By Dr. Thatheva Saphangthong, Deputy Director General, DLAM, Lao PDR; LICA Regional Coordinator; AE Coalition Steering Committee Member

- The central mission is linking agroecology with food systems to enable cross sectoral collaboration.
- The approach is fundamentally farmer centric, viewing farmers as the primary asset and ensuring their participation is central to sustainability.
- A major priority is developing sustainable financing schemes, such as carbon or green financing, to ensure the system survives beyond short term projects.
- Scaling the initiative involves strategic land management and zoning, targeting specific villages as a starting point to build critical mass.
- Success relies on strengthening connectivity between Asian nations and South South operations.
- The guidelines serve as a framework for action, with this event marking a key preparation time for the real work that follows.