



**ASIA-PACIFIC CONSORTIUM ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY
(APCoAB)**

**XVIII STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Taichung City, Taiwan
31 October 2016**

PROCEEDINGS

The XVIII Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology (APCoAB) was held on 31 October 2016 at National Hotel, Taichung, Taiwan. The meeting was attended by 13 participants, comprising SC members, their representatives, special invitees and observers (Annex I). APAARI Chairman, Mr. Suwit Chaikiattiyos, Director General (DG), Department of Agriculture, Thailand (DOA) was represented by Dr. Waraporn Prompoj, DDG, DOA, while Dr. Chun-yen Chen, DG, International Affairs, Council of Agriculture, Taiwan (COA) was represented by Ms. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, DDG, Department of International Affairs, COA.



APCoAB VIII Steering Committee meeting Participants

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introduction:

Before taking up the Agenda, Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary, APAARI conveyed the sad news about the passing away of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand on

13 October 2016. The participants observed one minute silence in the honour of the late king following which Dr. Ghodake introduced the Chair, Vice-Chair, other members and participants to the SC meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Opening Remarks

Dr. Waraporn Prompoj, DDG, DOA speaking on behalf of Dr. Suwit Chaikiattiyos, Chairman, APAARI, welcomed the participants and gave a brief background about APCoAB and its mandate. She highlighted the necessity of capacity building and public awareness in biotechnology and the efforts carried out by APCoAB towards these objectives. Dr. Prompoj put on record APAARI's appreciation of COA and ACIAR for their support to APCoAB, the former being the major funding source for APCoAB.

Agenda Item 3: Remarks by COA

Ms. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, Council of Agriculture, Taiwan (COA), expressed happiness over her participation in the SC meeting. She mentioned that COA has been providing uninterrupted funding support to APCoAB since 2008 and will continue to support its efforts towards facilitating cooperation in agricultural biotechnology research and adoption among Asia-Pacific countries. COA appreciates APAARI's efforts on re-strategizing APCoAB program to make it consistent with long-term APAARI vision and medium term Strategic Plan.

Agenda Item 4: Approval of Agenda for XVIII SC meeting and Final Approval of Minutes of XVII SC Meeting

The Agenda for XVIII SC meeting was approved unanimously (Annexure II). Participants were informed that Proceedings of the XVII Steering Committee held on 10 December 2015 in Bangkok (Annexure III) had been circulated to all the SC members and other participants of the meeting on which no comments were received. The proceedings were placed before the Steering Committee for final approval and the same was granted.

Agenda Item 5: APCoAB Program - Background and Status

Dr. Jawahir Karihaloo, Sr. Consultant, APAARI made a brief presentation on the mandate, program, progress and current status of APCoAB (Annex IV). He mentioned about the genesis of APCoAB in 2003 which was founded in response to the need expressed in APAARI and FAO meetings for a regional initiative to promote adoption of agricultural biotechnology for the benefit of the Asia-Pacific NARS and the farming community. The program has been funded, besides APAARI, by COA, ACIAR and other public and private organizations while COA has been the major supporter of APCoAB since 2008.

APCoAB, in collaboration with APAARI member organizations, carries out expert meetings in the areas of policy, technological advances, benefits and concerns related to agricultural biotechnology in its broad sense. It also organizes training programs on a diverse range of agricultural biotechnology related topics. Up to three training programs per year have been conducted in the past. APCoAB has brought out a large number of publications, including proceedings of expert meetings, success stories and status reports of technology adoption and

regulation. APCoAB website (www.apcoab.org) provides up-to-date information about the program and its activities, and global developments in agricultural biotechnology.

Agenda Item 6: APCoAB Program – Current Work Plan and Progress

Dr. Karihaloo presented the progress on work plan for the period September to December 2016 developed earlier in consultation with COA (Annex V). During the period under report, Expert Consultation on Best Practices in Agri-food Innovations in Asia and the Pacific was organized jointly with COA, ACIAR, the World Vegetable Center (WorldVeg), Taiwan; and the Asian Farmers Association (AFA) in Taichung, Taiwan from 1-3 November 2016. APAARI also co-organized and participated in 1st International Agrobiodiversity Congress held from 6 to 9 November 2016 in New Delhi, India.

A Training Course on Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS): Advanced Course for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Agri-food Industry was held jointly with COA and Asia Productivity Organization (APO) from 3 to 7 October, 2016 in Taipei. Six participants from five countries; Nepal, Philippines, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Thailand were sponsored by APAARI. Commenting on the training course, all the participants felt that the lectures, group activities and discussions were successful in making the participants realize and understand the implementation processes involved in the modern FSMS.

APCoAB website has been revitalized with updated information on organization, work plans, activities, publications and news and events. A publication entitled *Development of Communication Strategies for Adoption of Agri-Biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific: A Framework for Engagement with Key Stakeholders about Agri-Biotechnology – A Paradigm Shift*, was brought out during the period under report.

Agenda Item 7: APCoAB Future Plan

Dr. Karihaloo presented a road-map for rejuvenation of APCoAB activities involving appointment of full-time Coordinator, development of other in-house capacity and enhancement of its activities (Annex VI). APAARI-COA collaborative program on biotechnology has been in operation since 2008 with the current funding support of USD 50,000 per annum from COA. In view of the substantial success of this program, it is proposed to request its further extension of four years with higher funding to support increased number of activities, and longer duration of trainings programs for the greater benefit of participants from member organizations. It is also proposed to collaborate with ACIAR in implementing its project on ACIAR-FAO regional biotechnology consultation meetings during the period 2017-18, presently under discussion.

Agenda Item 8: General Discussion

Prof. Andrew Campbell, Dr. Waraporn Prompoj and Ms. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, made important observations/suggestions on APCoAB program, progress and future plan. Based on these discussions, the following decisions were taken.

1. The outputs of APCoAB workshop on communication strategies to be utilized by APCoAB and APAARI member organizations to develop future strategies for public engagement and debate on agricultural biotechnology.
2. Appointment of new APCoAB Coordinator to be taken up on priority. Notification to be sent to all member organizations so that they could nominate candidates for the post.
3. APCoAB Progress Report for 2016 to be submitted to COA by the end of December 2016.
4. COA has agreed to continue funding support to APCoAB. New Proposal for the next phase of APAARI-COA (2017-2020) collaborative program based on newly developed APAARI Strategic Plan to be submitted soon. Decision on the requested enhancement of funding support shall be taken by COA after a review of the proposal.
5. The proposed APAARI-COA Program for the next phase was modified to read as:
 - a. ***High Level Policy Dialogues/Expert Consultations to promote use of agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region***
One meeting to be organized each year.
 - b. ***Symposia/trainings/workshops for scientists/researchers from APAARI member institutions***
Short to medium duration symposia/trainings/workshops to be organized at COA and other member research institutes.
6. Activities for 2017 to be initiated soon after the joining of new Coordinator. It is expected that larger number of activities shall be taken up during this year since there would be some additional savings available due to absence of Coordinator during 2015.
7. ACIAR-FAO project on regional consultation meetings on biotechnology is presently under discussion and APCoAB will also be involved in its implementation.

Agenda Item 9: Any other Matters

No other matter was raised.

Agenda Item 10: Concluding Remarks

Dr. Prompoj in her closing remarks emphasized the need to accelerate the pace of APCoAB activities following the brief gap during this year. APCoAB should actively engage in the much needed awareness generation and sharing public information about biotechnology in all its dimensions. Appropriate strategies need to be developed to communicate effectively with policy makers and the public.

Agenda Item 11: Vote of Thanks

Dr. Jawahir Karihaloo presented vote of thanks to the Chair, members and the other participants of the Steering Committee meeting.

Annex I

XVIII APCoAB STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Taichung City, Taiwan

31 October 2016

List of Participants

#	Name	Email	Representation
1	Dr. Waraporn Prompoj, Deputy Director General, Department of Agriculture, Phaholyothin Road, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10900 Thailand	drwpoffice@gmail.com	Representing Director General, Department of Agriculture, Thailand and Chairman, APAARI
2	Ms. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, Deputy Director General, Department of International Affairs, Council of Agriculture Taiwan	chong@mail.coa.gov.tw	Representing Director General, International Affairs, Council of Agriculture, Taiwan and Vice-Chair, APAARI
3	Dr. Reynaldo V. Ebor, Acting Executive Director, Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines	r.ebor@pcaarrd.dost.gov.ph	Member
4	Prof. Andrew Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), PO Box 1571, Canberra ACT 2601 Australia	andrew.campbell@aciarc.gov.au	Member
5	Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary, Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), 4th Floor, FAO Annex Building, 202/1 Larn Luang Road, Bangkok 10100 Thailand	raghunath.ghodake@apaari.org	Member
6	Dr. J. L. Karihaloo, Senior Consultant, Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Institutions (APAARI), NASC Complex, DPS Marg, Pusa, New Delhi -110012 India	jlkarihaloo@apaari.org	Sr. Consultant, APAARI and representing Secretary, APCoAB SC
7	Ms. Jintawee Thaingam, Director, International Agricultural Affairs Group, Department of Agriculture, 50 Phaholyothin Road, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10900, Thailand	jintawee@hotmail.com	Special invitee
8	Dr. Syed Ghazanfar Abbas, Consultatnt APAARI, House No. 136, Street No. 82, Sector E-11/2 FECHS, Islamabad, Pakistan	guzniabbas@gmail.com	Consultant, APAARI
9	Ms. Tracy, Shwu-Hwa Tarng, Senior Specialist and Chief, Department of International Affairs, Council of Agriculture, Taiwan	tracyt@mail.coa.gov.tw	Observer
10	Mr. Andy, Wei-Hsuan Chang, Officer, Agriculture, Fisheries and Economic Organization Section, Department of International Organizations,	whchang@mofa.gov.tw	Observer

	Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Taiwan		
11	Mr. James, Chin-Sheng Lee, Counsellor on Home Assignment, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Taiwan	cslee@mofa.gov.tw	Observer
12	Ms. Celilu Bitong, Knowledge Management Officer, Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), 4th Floor, FAO Annex Building, 202/1, Larn Luang Road, Pomprab Sattrupai District, Bangkok 10100 Thailand	c.bitong@apaari.org	Observer
13	Ms. Siao-huei Jiang, Associate Technical Specialist, International Organizations Section, Department of International Affairs, Council of Agriculture, 37 Nan Hai Road, Taipei 100 Taiwan	ssjiang@mail.coa.gov.tw	Observer

Annex II



ASIA-PACIFIC CONSORTIUM ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY (APCoAB)

XVIII STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

31 October 2016 (08:30-10:00 hrs)

Taichung City, Taiwan

AGENDA

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introduction

Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary, APAARI will welcome the members, special invitees and other participants of the Steering Committee meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Opening Remarks

Dr. Waraporn Prompoj, DDG, DOA on behalf of Dr. Suwit Chaikiattiyos, Chairman, APAARI and DG, DOA, Thailand will deliver opening remarks highlighting the APCoAB program and key issues to be addressed.

Agenda Item 3: Remarks by COA

Dr Chun-yen Chen, Vice Chair, APAARI and Director General, International Cooperation, Council of Agriculture, Taiwan will give remarks on achievements and COA's expectations from APCoAB, being its major funding source.

Agenda Item 4: Final Approval of Minutes of XVII SC Meeting

Proceedings of the XVII Steering Committee held on 10 December 2015 in Bangkok were circulated to all the SC members and other participants of the meeting. No comments were received.

The proceedings will be placed before the Steering Committee for formal approval.

Agenda Item 5: APCoAB Program - Background and Status

Dr. Jawahir Karihaloo, Sr. Consultant, APAARI will make a brief presentation on the mandate, program and progress of APCoAB. He will also elaborate on its current status.

Agenda Item 6: APCoAB Program – Current Work Plan and Progress

Sr. Consultant, APAARI will present the work plan for the period September to December 2016 developed in consultation with COA and progress made to date.

Agenda Item 7: APCoAB Future Plan

Keeping in view the past achievements of APCoAB and the high priority accorded by APAARI member NARS to biotechnology, it is felt necessary to revitalize APCoAB program. Sr. Consultant, APAARI will present an outline of the project proposed to be funded by COA for the next 4 years. Also, activities to be carried out with the support of ACIAR will be identified.

Agenda Item 8: General Discussion

Discussion on progress made, future priorities and program of APCoAB, including APAARI-COA collaborative program, will be held. Members are welcome to suggest new initiatives.

Agenda Item 9: Any other Matters

Any other point of discussion shall be taken up with the permission of the Chair.

Agenda Item 10: Concluding Remarks

The Chairman will deliver his closing remarks to the members of the Steering Committee based on the discussions and deliberations held on APCoAB's progress and future plans.

Agenda Item 11: Vote of Thanks

Dr. Jawahir Karihaloo will present a vote of thanks to the members of the Steering Committee meeting for their participation.

Annex III



ASIA-PACIFIC CONSORTIUM ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY (APCoAB)

XVII STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand 10th December 2015

PROCEEDINGS

The XVII Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology (APCoAB) was held at the Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok on the 10th of December 2015. The meeting began with brief introductory remarks by APAARI Chairman, Mr. Somchai Charnarongkul, Director General (DG), Department of Agriculture, Thailand after which he handed the Chairmanship to his Deputy Director General (DDG), Dr. Surmsuk Salakpetch. It was attended by 8 members comprising SC members or their representatives and 1 invitee and 4 observers (Annex 1). Dr. Rose, Dong-chong Hsiou, DDG, Department of International Affairs, Council of Agriculture, Taiwan (COA) was represented by Dr. Junne-Jih Chen, DG of Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute, COA and Dr. Abdul Kalam Azad, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC) was represented by Mr. Md. Abdul Awal, Chief Scientific Officer, BARC.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introduction

Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary, APAARI welcomed all the participants and expressed appreciation of their continued support to the biotechnology activities of APAARI. APCoAB is an important program of APAARI and with the funding support of COA and ACIAR, it has been making significant contributions on agricultural biotechnology.

Agenda Item 2: Opening Remarks by Chairman

Mr. Somchai Charnnarongkul welcomed all the members to the SC meeting. In his brief opening remarks, he announced that Thailand was in the process of getting their Biosafety Law to be presented to Parliament after Cabinet approval. He further went on to say that it is a milestone in Agriculture Biotechnology for Thailand. Mr. Somchai stressed the importance of biotechnology as a tool for the improvement of agriculture productivity although there are various challenges of adopting biotechnology in agriculture. He then handed the chairmanship to his DDG as he had another meeting to attend.

Dr. Surmsuk Salakpetch, DDG of DOA, Thailand, welcomed again all the members to the meeting and reiterated the importance of biotechnology to agriculture in the Asia-Pacific

region. She stated that agricultural biotechnology enhances breeders' ability to make improvements in crops and livestock that are not possible with traditional crossing of related species alone. As biotechnology continues to evolve, public awareness and effective communication is essential for its wider adoption and acceptance.

Developing countries in the Asia-pacific region can benefit tremendously by adopting agricultural biotechnology to enhance their socio economic development. Thus the role of APAARI together with APCoAB is very important to assist the Asia Pacific region in achieving sustainably agricultural developmental goals through the implementation of activities for knowledge enhancement, capacity building, collaboration, cooperation and technology adoption.

She called upon all the members present today to give their comments and suggestions for the improvement of this program to achieve its mandate.

Agenda Item 3: Final Approval of Minutes of XVI SC Meeting

The committee was informed that the Proceedings of the XVI Steering Committee held on 22 April 2014 were circulated to all the members and no comments were received. The minutes were presented for final approval. Then the chairman presented the agenda (Annex II) which was then adopted.

Agenda Item 4: APCoAB Progress Report: May 2014- November 2015

Dr. Vilasini Pillai, Coordinator, APCoAB presented the APCoAB Progress Report: May 2014- November 2015 covering the period under Dr. JL Karihaloo (May 2014-December 2014) as well as the period under Dr. Vilasini Pillai (April 2015- November 2015).

The report covered the following items:

I. Expert Consultations/Symposia/Meetings/ Training Programs/Workshops

- APCoAB Steering Committee Meeting held in Bangkok on 22 April, 2014;
- Expert Consultation on Assuring Food Safety in Asia-Pacific at JIRCAS, Tsukuba on 4-5 August, 2014;
- International Conference on Avian Influenza Prevention and Control' on 18-19 November, 2014 at Animal Health Research Institute, New Taipei City;
- Analytical Techniques in Nutrition, Food Safety and Biosafety at ICRISAT, Patancheru, India on 1-14 September, 2014;
- Executive Committee Meeting, 12th May 2015, APCoAB work plan for 2015 was presented for endorsement and approval;
- Multicounty Observational Study Mission on Revitalizing Rural Economies for More Inclusive Development from the 14-18th September 2015 with COA in Taiwan;
- Workshop on Development of Communication Strategies for Adoption of Agri-Biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region, Dusit Island Resort, Chiang Rai, Thailand, 28-29th September 2015;

- International Symposium on Bio pesticides & Bio fertilizers for Sustainable Agriculture from the 13-15th October, 2015 in Taiwan; and
- International Conference on Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza from the 21-22nd October, 2015 in Taiwan.

II. Publications

- Biosafety Regulations for GM Crops in Asia-Pacific;
- Asia-Pacific Symposium on Molecular Breeding-Proceedings;
- Expert Consultation on Assuring Food Safety in Asia-Pacific – Proceedings and Recommendations; and
- Development of Communication Strategies for Adoption of Agri-Biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region- Proceedings and Recommendations.

III. APCoAB Website

- Regular update of News and Events on agricultural biotechnology developments in Asia-Pacific region.
- Regular update of other contents and databases.

(For details on all the above activities, please see Annex III)

The members accepted the progress report on no further comments. Dr. Junne-Jih Chen, Vice Chair of the SC reminded the APCoAB coordinator to send the progress report to COA before the year end.

Agenda Item 5: APCoAB Work Plan Jan-April 2016

Dr. Vilasini presented the Work Plan for January till April 2016 (Annex IV) as there will be another SC meeting in May 2016 where details of the other activities planned for the rest of the year will be presented.

Dr Vilasini presented the Bt Brinjal dialogue that will be held on the 23-25th February 2016, co-organised with BARC, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II (APSP II), International Services for the Acquisition of Agricultural Applications (ISAAA) and Malaysia Biotechnology Information Centre (MABIC). This was an activity approved in the last EC meeting but had to be deferred on the suggestion of our co-organisers.

Dr. Vilasini also touched on ways to get feedback from member countries on activities that they would like to see APCoAB carry out to develop their capacities in Biotechnology. One way suggested was using Facebook. She also suggested developing a strategic framework for long term planning and follow through of APCoAB plans and activities so that there will be continuity as well impact on the activities carried out.

Mr. Md Abdul Awal, representing the Executive Chairman of BARC offered his assistance on coordinating the Bt Brinjal Dialogue. He further said his organisation will be most willing to help out in whatever possible.

The idea of the Facebook was not approved as it was suggested that it might open up to abuse and invite negative comments that may prove to be more detrimental than a help. It was suggested by David Shearer, ACIAR that the Theory of Change be used to make changes to the overall APCoAB program instead of developing a Strategic Framework. Dr. Reynaldo Eborá, Acting Executive Director of Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) - Department of Science and Technology has agreed to co-organise an event with APCoAB to be held back to back with the Philippines Biotechnology Week in November. This way there will be cost saving as well taking advantage of the targeted audience that will be present at the Biotechnology week. The area of collaboration will be worked by April 2016. The Work Plan until April 2016 was approved by the Steering Committee. (Annex IV)

Agenda Item 6: Audited Financial Statements: January-October 2015

Dr. Vilasini presented the Audited Accounts of 2015 along with the audit certificate. A total amount of US\$ 94,943.99 was available on 1.1.2015 while the amount spent until the end of October 2015 was US\$ 85,041.70. The expenditure under all the items was within the budget. The Audited accounts statement was approved by the Steering Committee.

Agenda Item 7 & 8: General Discussion and any other matters

No further points were brought up by members of the SC.

Agenda Item 9: Concluding Remarks by Chairman

In her closing remarks, Dr. Surmsuk Salakpetch thanked all SC members present for their comments, participation and useful suggestions.

Agenda Item 10: Vote of Thanks

Dr. Vilasini proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair, Vice-Chair and all the other participants for their valuable advice.

Annex IV

APCoAB Program - Background and Status

Introduction: The Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology (APCoAB) was established in 2003 under the umbrella of APAARI. Its genesis is linked to three meetings organized by APAARI during 2002-2003 to discuss the status of agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region, and the need for a regional initiative to undertake and promote adoption of agricultural biotechnology for the benefit of NARS and the farming community. Besides APAARI, the program is funded by Council of Agriculture, Taiwan (COA), Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and from time to time by FAO, GFAR, Mahyco and others. Since 2008, COA has been major fund supporter of APCoAB.

Mission: APCoAB's mission is "To harness the benefits of agricultural biotechnology for human and animal welfare through the application of latest scientific technologies while safeguarding the environment for the advancement of society in the Asia- Pacific region".

Activities:

Policy Dialogues/Expert Consultations/Brain Storming Sessions: In collaboration with APAARI member organizations, APCoAB organizes expert meetings on contemporary issues of policy, technological advances, benefits and concerns related to agricultural biotechnology in its broad sense. Subjects covered so far include GM technology, biosafety, IPR, public-private partnership, molecular breeding, trans-boundary diseases, bioinformatics, food safety and regulatory issues.

Training Programs: APCoAB in collaboration with member organizations and other stakeholders organizes training program on a diverse range of agricultural biotechnology topics. Up to three training programs per year have been conducted in the past.

Publications: APCoAB has brought out a large number of publications, including proceedings of expert meetings, success stories and status reports of technology adoption and regulation.

APCoAB Website: Complete information about APCoAB and its activities is available at the website (www.apcoab.org). Besides, it hosts databases on Asia-Pacific agricultural biotechnology institutions and experts, and regulatory systems in the Asia-Pacific countries.

Current Status: Since the departure of its last Coordinator in January 2016, APCoAB activities are at low ebb. An interim program of activities for the period September – December 2016 has been developed which will be presented to the SC.

Annex V

APCoAB Program – Current Work Plan and Progress

Following activities for the period September – December 2016 identified in consultation with COA during APAARI Ex. Com. Meeting held on 8 September 2016 are being undertaken.

Expert Consultations/ Meetings /Conferences

- **APCoAB Steering Committee to be held on 31st October 2016.**
- **Expert Consultation on Best Practices in Agri-food Innovation in Asia and the Pacific.**

APAARI) jointly with COA, ACIAR, the World Vegetable Center (AVRDC), Taiwan; and the Asian Farmers Association (AFA), the Philippines is organizing an Expert Consultation on Successful Agri-food Innovations in Asia and the Pacific on 1-3 November 2016 to create awareness about successful agri-food innovations in the Asia-Pacific region and to develop a road map for up-scaling and out-scaling of the potential and successful agri-food innovations. The program comprises paper presentations, panel discussions and working group discussions on agri-food innovation models, success stories, policy and financial mechanisms for promoting agri-food innovations. The program will conclude with a visit to agricultural research and industry organizations of Taiwan.

Of the 85 confirmed participants, 39 from Australia, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, the Philippines, Iran, Vietnam, Samoa and Sri Lanka are funded by APAARI. Other participants are funded by COA and their own organizations.

- **1st Agro-biodiversity Congress**

The 1st International Agrobiodiversity Congress is being organized jointly by the Indian Society of Plant Genetic Resources and Bioversity International in collaboration with APAARI and other organization from November 6-9, 2016 in New Delhi, India. The Congress will bring together experts in genetic resources, genetics and breeding, biotechnology, human nutrition, ecology and environmental science, information management, law and policy analysis, economics and other social sciences to deliberate on system-wide approach for *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, use and sustainability of agrobiodiversity, including plants (crops, horticulture, agroforestry), animals, fish, insects and microbes. APAARI will be represented by Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Dr. Bhag Mal and Dr. Jawahir Karihaloo at the Congress.

Trainings/ Workshops

Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS): Advanced Course for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Agri-food Industry

APAARI jointly with COA and Asia Productivity Organization (APO) organized a Training Course on Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS): Advanced Course for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Agri-food Industry, on 3 to 7 October,

2016 in Taipei. Six participants from five countries; Nepal, Philippines, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Thailand were sponsored by APAARI.

Food safety that has become a global issue as contaminated food causes widespread health problems with serious implications for families as well as public healthcare systems. It also causes reduced workforce productivity. Both developed and developing countries share concerns over food safety as international food trade and cross-border movements of people increase.

The training course comprised lectures on overview of food safety regulation, various national food regulatory systems, approaches and project plans for FSMS, case studies and assessment of FSMS. Site visits to food manufacturing and processing facilities were also organized.

Commenting on the training course, all the participants felt that the lectures, group activities and discussion were successful in making the participants realize and understand the implementation processes involved in the modern FSMS.

Website/ Database Management

- **Updating of APCoAB website**

APCoAB website which had been dormant for some time has been revitalized with updated information on organization, work plans, activities, publication and news and events.

Publications/ Reporting

- **Development of Communication Strategies for Adoption of Agri-Biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific: A Framework for Engagement with Key Stakeholders About Agri-Biotechnology – A Paradigm Shift**

This publication details issues with public acceptance and adoption of GM technology and details recommendations of a workshop on communication strategies conducted by APAARI that could expedite the adoption of biotech crops to harness its benefits in the Asia-Pacific region. The workshop findings have been supplemented with recent research from science communication, risk communications, psychology, and social psychology.

- Other APAARI publications.

- APAARI progress report for 2016 to COA (*to be submitted in December 2016*).

- Proposal for re-activation and strengthening of APCoAB program. APCoAB project for the next phase of 4 year funding by COA will be developed by APAARI (*to be submitted in January 2017*).

APCoAB Future Plan

Rejuvenation of APCoAB activities involving:

- **Appointment of full-time Coordinator and development of other in-house capacity**

APCoAB carries out multifarious activities of organizing technical and management meetings, trainings and workshops, and brings out publications on meetings proceedings and success stories/status reports on applications of agricultural biotechnology processes and products. APCoAB also represents APAARI at international fora highlighting agricultural biotechnology accomplishments and needs of this region. Since the departure of last Coordinator in January 2016, action on a number of proposed activities is still pending. A full-time Coordinator is essentially required to carry out these activities competently and with a long-term perspective. Approval for appointment of Coordinator and other required support staff is requested.

- **Next phase of APAARI-COA collaborative program on biotechnology**

APAARI-COA collaborative program on biotechnology has been in operation since 2008. Initially approved for three years (2008-2010) with a funding support of USD 35,000 per annum, based on its performance, the program has been extended twice (2011-2013, 2014-2016) and funding raised to USD 50,000 per annum.

During the third phase of the project (2014-2016), the following activities are committed:

I. High Level Policy Dialogues/Expert Consultations to promote use of agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region

One meeting to be organized each year, and during the three year period of 2014-2016 one such program to be organized in collaboration with COA at one of its institutions.

II. Symposia/trainings/workshops for scientists from APAARI member institutions to be held at COA research centers

Short to medium duration symposia/trainings/workshops to be organized in collaboration with COA at its designated research centers.

III. Symposia/trainings/workshops on agricultural biotechnology topics to be held at other NARS centers

COA to be invited to nominate participants to the symposia/trainings/workshops organized every year by APAARI in collaboration with other member organizations in the Asia-Pacific region.

IV. Publication of status reports on biotechnology and strengthening of APCoAB website for knowledge sharing on agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region

APAARI/APCoAB has been publishing status reports on important achievements in agricultural R&D including biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region. The effort to continue, also inviting status reports/success stories from Taiwan. APCoAB to maintain and strengthen its website.

In view of the success of this APAARI-COA collaboration in terms of the number and range of activities conducted and capacity development benefits brought to APAARI member participants it is felt desirable to continue the program for another term.

APAARI proposes to submit the new project proposal for a period of four years with a funding requirement of USD 70,000 per annum. In addition to the above mentioned activities, it will be proposed to:

- Organize one expert consultation/policy dialogue every alternate year in collaboration with COA at its designated centres.
- Organize extended training programs of up to two weeks' duration.
- Initiate deputation of candidates from APAARI member organizations for conducting short and long term research in biotechnology at COA institutes.

Members are invited to give their suggestions on the proposed collaborative activities.

- **Collaboration with ACIAR**

APCoAB has received regular funding from ACIAR through its support to APAARI. There is now a proposal for APCoAB to participate in the organization of ACIAR-FAO regional consultation meetings on biotechnology for the period 2017-18 presently under discussion.