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ESCAP looks to strengthen sustainable agriculture and trade capacity in South and South-East Asia

Bogor (UN ESCAP Strategic Communications and Advocacy Section) - Over 40 representatives from government, civil society and international organizations involved with the Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and South-East Asia (SATNET Asia) gathered in Bogor, Indonesia on 12 February 2013 to look at building capacity for sustainable agriculture and trade.

Convened by the Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA), a subsidiary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the day-long meeting looked at defining concrete training activities to promote the diffusion of sustainable agriculture technologies and trade facilitation measures for agro and food products in South and South-East Asia in the year ahead.

A wealth of knowledge exists on innovative technologies for sustainable agriculture and trade, often buried in various reports, research studies or heads of individuals and is not easily accessible, particularly to small farmers.

SATNET Asia is working to change this situation by making existing knowledge more readily available. But also by building capacity of change agents along domestic and regional value chains, national agricultural scientists, extension workers and policymakers to transfer knowledge more effectively to value chain actors (including farmers, intermediaries, retailers, importers and exporters).

The Network focuses its activities in 10 countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Indonesia.

During the meeting, Network partners discussed the results of analytical work conducted by SATNET Asia and the direction of capacity-building activities to be implemented in 2013. A particular emphasis was placed on ensuring synergies between activities of the organizations represented at the meeting. The implementation of training programmes on climate resilient agriculture technologies for smallholder farmers was identified as an important area of work in the upcoming year.

About SATNET

SATNET Asia is a three-year, 2.5 million Euro initiative funded by the European Union and implemented by CAPSA. The project was launched in 2012 to support innovation by strengthening South-South dialogue and intraregional learning on sustainable agriculture technologies and trade facilitation

Through a consultative process with SATNET Asia members, the Food Security Centre of the University of Hohenheim has led the development of an analytical framework to assess the sustainability of agricultural technologies. Examples of sustainable agricultural technologies are being collected for analysis. In addition, the Trade and Investment Division of ESCAP has guided the implementation of diagnostic studies on trade facilitation measures for agro and food products in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, India, Myanmar and Nepal.

The results of this research provide the foundation for SATNET Asia capacity-building activities, which are being managed by the World Vegetable Centre (AVRDC) and the

ESCAP regional institute, the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) in South-East and South Asia, respectively.

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About ESCAP

From its HQ in Bangkok, ESCAP provides a forum for its member States that promotes regional cooperation and collective action, assisting countries in building and sustaining shared economic growth and social equity.

ESCAP provides different forms of assistance to member States:

- *ESCAP promotes rigorous analysis and peer learning through our core work areas: macroeconomic policy and development, trade and investment, social development, transport, statistics, environment and development, information communications technology and disaster risk reduction;*
- *ESCAP translates these findings into policy dialogues and recommendations, and;*
- *ESCAP provides good development practices, knowledge sharing and technical assistance to member States in the implementation of these recommendations.*