

TERMS OF REFERENCE

AGRO-ECOLOGY LEARNING ALLIANCE IN SOUTH EAST ASIA (ALISEA) SITUATION REVIEW AND STAKEHOLDER MAPPING IN VIETNAM

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The French Government through the Agence Française pour le Développement (AFD) has committed to funding the project “Accompagner la Transition Agroécologique dans la région Mékong” (Toward Agroecology Transition in the Mekong Region), ACTAE in short, in four Mekong region countries over an initial period of 3 years, with the preparatory steps starting in March 2015.

This project follows up a feasibility study commissioned in 2013 by AFD in Laos addressing the promotion of agro-ecological principles and practices in the Great Mekong Sub-region-GMS- countries: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan-China.

The study was coordinated by Gret and relied on a 3 phases approach:

- Taking stock of practices, actors, experiments (e.g. success stories, constraints to adoption) related to agro-ecology in the Mekong countries
- Lessons learned from Mekong networks
- Scenarios for a regional agroecology network

The feasibility study used a combination of literature review with country-based consultation workshops (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) and expert surveys (Thailand, Yunnan-China). Presentation and discussion of preliminary results (initial desk studies) were carried out with key stakeholders of agro-ecology in each country. It led to the identification of potential partners (118 NGOs, research organizations, government agencies, private companies in the 6 target countries) who can enrich the future network with a diversity of experiences (conservation agriculture, agro-forestry, SRI, IPM, organic agriculture...). Attention was given to incorporate expectations from the main players in the

agro-ecology arena vis-à-vis a new regional agro-ecological network in the exploration of governance scenarios for a vibrant regional network.

The agro-ecology regional project is expected to provide institutional and operational backstopping to the Conservation Agriculture Network for South-East Asia (CANSEA) while enlarging its scope to cover the whole field of agro-ecology, conservation agriculture being one component of the diversity of practices found under the term agro-ecology. The Project will assist the actors of agro-ecology in the region in increasing their visibility and impacts by supporting the development of synergies between all operators in the sector: farmers, development agencies, private companies, etc.

The project is being implemented by Cirad and GRET. The Project has been designed as a 10 year project (organized in different phases). Cirad is the lead contractor for the first 3 year phase of the project that will be funded by AFD.

Country Focus: Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam.

The Regional Coordination Project Teams from Cirad and GRET are located in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the project is to **build durable and effective mechanisms to facilitate synergies among initiatives contributing to an agro-ecological transition in South East Asia.**

Agro-ecology is a polysemic concept and can be understood in many different ways according to the people background and experiences. Thus, agro-ecology here is understood as a unifying concept of a wide “agro-ecology movement”. All agro-ecology initiatives represent a high social capital in terms of scientific knowledge, experience and knowledge.

Five historical principles defined for agro-ecology by M. Altieri (2005) and applying mainly to farming system and agro-ecosystem levels constitute the most commonly acknowledged reference

1. Enhanced recycling of biomass, optimizing nutrient availability and balancing nutrient flows.

2. Securing favourable soil conditions for plant growth, particularly by managing organic matter and enhancing soil biotic activity.
3. Minimizing losses due to flows of solar radiation, air and water by way of microclimate management, water harvesting and soil management through increased soil cover.
4. Species and genetic diversification of the agro-ecosystem in time and space.
5. Enhanced beneficial biological interactions and synergisms among agro-biodiversity components thus resulting in the promotion of key ecological processes and services.

Agro-ecology approaches are seen as convincing and evidence-based alternatives to the current agrifood system. They clearly aim at strengthening innovation capacity of family farms, as well as the recognition of their contribution to food sovereignty in the region. They cover technical, economic, societal and policy dimensions of the agrifood system, including all stakeholders involved in the value chains. The project will increase the credibility and visibility of agro-ecology practices towards small-holder farmers, consumers and policy makers.

6 main agro-ecology practices have been identified in Southeast Asia

Two specific objectives are proposed that correspond to two components of the ACTAE Project:

- **Component 1** (implemented by **Cirad**): Strengthen and institutionalize the existing conservation agriculture network in South East Asia - **CANSEA** - in its function of promoting Conservation Agriculture effective adoption, notably through involving a wider spectrum of stakeholders, building alliances with agro-ecological movement, and diversifying funding sources.
- **Component 2** (implemented by **Gret**): Promote the emergence of a new regional agro-ecological learning alliance in South East Asia - **ALiSEA** - aiming at strengthening knowledge and experience sharing among agro-ecological initiatives and actors, at increasing the visibility and the credibility of agro-ecological movement towards policy makers and consumers, and at scaling up the development and adoption of agro-ecological practice among farmers.

These two regional networks are different and complementary. The existing CANSEA is a regional thematic network, specialized on conservation agriculture, and the objective of the Project is to strengthen and institutionalize it. On the other hand, ALiSEA is a regional agro-ecology learning alliance to be established and shaped, facilitating synergies and visibility of all innovative practices contributing the agro-ecological transition in South East Asia

The development of ALiSEA will contribute to strengthen the CANSEA and the conservation agriculture practices, through a wider visibility and higher influence on public policies on one side, through better adoption by farmers due to a wider offer of innovations on the other side.

The experience of CANSEA should also contribute to promote and shape the ALiSEA, particularly through its scientific approach and capacities, needed for ensuring credibility of the innovative practices for all stakeholders

CONSULTANCY ASSIGNMENT

This consultancy is part of the inception phase of the project and can be considered as a sort of baseline for the project.

It aims at further mapping agro-ecological initiatives at local and national level with a three folded objectives:

- To review the overall agriculture development policy framework
- To scope *allies* and *champions* for the promotion of agro ecology across the Mekong Region, as well as existing networks
- To feed the national and regional data base that will be hosted by an upcoming Mekong Region Agro Ecology Web portal through the elaboration of factsheets in order to provide broader visibility to each initiative

As mentioned in the introduction, Gret has already conducted a stock taking of practices, actors, experiments (e.g. success stories, constraints to adoption) related to agro-ecology in the Mekong countries in 2013 in the framework of the feasibility study of this project.

However, this initial work has been mostly conducted through consultation workshops in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam in a rather short period of time. It provided a rather good general overview but did not allow to go in-depth and to collect quantitative data. In addition, most of the consultations took place at capital city level, leaving aside initiatives that are taking place at local level (provinces / districts).

This consultancy is therefore seen as a continuation of the initial consultation process and should build upon it in order to provide a more detailed and accurate account of ongoing initiatives promoting agro ecology across the region. In this regards, the consultant will be provided with background information already collected as well as preliminary list of stakeholders.

Major issues to be addressed by the consultancy can be summarized as below:

A review of the agriculture development policy framework at country level or sub-country level that give attention more especially at

- ➔ Existing laws / decrees and regulations addressing promotion/support of the 6 different schools of agroecology (SRI, CA, IPM, Integrated farming/VAC, Agroforestry, Organic Agriculture)
- ➔ Existing laws / decrees and regulations supporting small scale farming, food security and sustainable agriculture,
- ➔ Existing national plan addressing poverty reduction
- ➔ Existing law /decrees and regulations addressing GI, Organic Certification, PGS, GAP
- ➔ Existing law/decrees and regulations addressing climate friendly agriculture or climate smart agriculture and green growth
- ➔ Existing law and regulations on protecting biodiversity Law and regulation on rural/agricultural tourism

Stakeholders mapping that would focus more especially at

- ➔ Who / What / Where:

- Identify main stakeholders active in the field of agroecology
 - Provide detailed account on their field of expertise / competence
 - Whenever possible, identify whether stakeholders have specific action addressing usage / valorization / preservation of a large plant biodiversity. Such biodiversity can range from annual food crops, mulching / cover crops up to trees used for community reforestation.
 - Geo-localize their field interventions
 - Identify experimentation sites / outstanding demonstration sites with potential for supporting future exchange visits / study tours
 - Identify farmer leaders, CSO leaders, researchers... that are really active in the dissemination of agro ecology practices' dissemination and that are acknowledged for that (local, national or regional level)
 - Assess level of integration of the stakeholders in local, national or regional networks
 - As many as possible, collect the literature/reports nationally or internationally produced relating to the local practices of the above 6 schools in either soft or hard copies whichever form available.
- ➔ Collect quantitative data related to ongoing agro ecology initiatives (farmers supported, acreage under agro ecology practices, volume produced...). These quantitative data should be collected and consolidated as much as possible for each of the 6 different "agroecology schools" (SRI, IPM, Organic Agriculture...). In order to enable consolidation at agroecology school level, consultant(s) will identify what are the existing farming practices under each school.
- ➔ Fill up factsheets about each stakeholder initiatives (cf. template provided by Gret)

Network identification

- ➔ Review all existing networks addressing agro ecology at local and national level and provide a short account of their current work / achievement as well as their level of activity

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURING OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The study will begin after the signature of the contract, in September 2015. It is estimated about **20 to 25 man days** (or more depending on the daily consultancy fees) that can be carried out by **one individual** or by a **consultant's team**. In the case of a team of

consultants, one expert will be appointed as team leader and will represent the team for the inception workshop.

It is anticipated that 4 consultancies will take place at the same time, one in each country of the project (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam).

An **inception workshop**, gathering the 4 consultants (or consultant team leaders) and the ALiSEA team, will be held at **Vientiane, Lao PDR**, ahead of the consultancy to fine tune the methodology and share the different template that should be used (AE initiative fact sheet for instance). This will guarantee coherence between the data collection and enable a consolidation at regional level.

Tentative schedule:

- ToR announcement: 31st of July 2015
- Consultant selection and contracting process between the 28th and the 1st of September 2015
- Inception workshop at Vientiane, Lao PDR on the 14th – 16th of September 2015 (to be confirmed)
- Consultancy implementation between 20th of September and 30th of October 2015

The consultant(s) will also start with in country briefing with the ALiSEA national focal person before the launching of the study.

All useful contacts will be given to the contractors.

During the study, the consultants will regularly report to ALiSEA team the progress of the activities.

In their technical offer, the candidates will detail the methodology, schedule and proposed team of experts (one or more consultants), as well as previous experiences relevant to this assignment.

Field missions to at least one rural province in each country will have to be planned in close collaboration with ALiSEA national focal point. Locations for field trips will be discussed with the consultants at the inception of the study.

D. DELIVERY AND PRODUCTS

The **expected products** of the study are:

- A **PowerPoint presentation of the main findings** of the study to the in country ALiSEA team at the end of the field mission.
- A **draft report**, released no later than 3 weeks after the completion of the mission, allowing 2 weeks for comments from the project teams

- A **finalised report** produced 10 days at the latest after receiving the comments by the project team.
- A **finalised PowerPoint presentation of the main findings** of the study that can be used later on by the ALiSEA team to present the study to other stakeholders
- **Factsheets** (based on ALiSEA project template) for all stakeholders / agroecology initiatives identified and reported about

E. FORMAT OF THE STUDY REPORT

The report should **not exceed 60 pages**, plus annexes and an executive summary of 5 pages maximum, focusing on the main key findings about stakeholders, networks and policy framework.

The report's format should respect the commonly accepted layout and should be in **English**.

F. QUALIFICATION REQUIRED FROM THE CONSULTANT(S)

To conduct the study, the following expertise is required:

- To be a consultant (or team of consultants) with perfect command of the national language (Vietnamese) and a good knowledge of the target country
- To have a specific background in agriculture and rural development, and more especially background in some of the different schools of agro ecology presented in introduction to the ToR (Organic Agriculture, IPM, SRI, Conservation Agriculture, Agroforestry, Integrated farming)
- To have a proven experience in conducting study and be experienced in working about stakeholder mapping, knowledge gathering
- Fluent in English language is compulsory (writing and speaking)
- Good command of computer software (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Publisher...)
- Ability to present study findings in both a synthetic and attractive way, especially the stakeholder mapping
- Autonomous, good aptitude for field work and travel to rural areas

G. PROJECT SUPPORT TO CONSULTANT

Consultant(s) will get administrative support from GRET.

Consultant(s) will be provided with the final workshop report (from the project feasibility study) together with all the individual reports/PowerPoint presentations of the individual organizations.

Transportation outside capital city will be facilitated as much as possible by GRET, and when not possible will have to be organized by the consultant(s) himself

Accommodation and meals will be supported by the consultant himself (to be included in the proposed budget for the consultancy)

The study is planned to take place in **September/October 2015**.

Interested candidates should send **technical** and **financial offer** in **electronic format** including proposed methodology, tentative planning, complete CV of the consultant(s), previous working/ consultancy experiences relevant to this assignment and detailed budget to:

Email: nguyen_huu_ninh@gret.org.vn – gretvn@gret.org.vn - ferrand@gret.org

Deadline for submission of application: **27th August 2015**

The assessment of the offers received will be carried out starting from the 28th of August 2015.

All offers must be complete and include all documents mentioned above, following the proposed template in Annex 1. In case, documents are missing, the offer could be rejected.

ANNEX 1 TECHNICAL OFFER TEMPLATE

The answer to the ToR for this consultancy shall be organized around the main following sections:

1.a..1. Introduction letter

1.a..2. Understanding of the ToR

This section aims at describing the understanding of the consultant of:

- the ToR
- the project background
- the project itself

1.a..3. Methodology and expected results

This section will describe:

- Proposed methodology for the study;
- Tentative workplan / chronogram;
- The expected results;

1.a..4. References / previous consultancy experiences relevant to the assignment

10 references maximum, if possible recent

1.a..5. Consultant(s) profile

This section will present

- In case of consultants team, presentation of the structure of the team

- Profile of the expert(s)
- If consultants team, complementarity between the different experts
- Strong point of the proposed team

1.a..6. **Annexes**

- CV of the expert(s)
- Detailed budget for the study

ANNEXE 2: TEMPLATE FOR DETAILED BUDGET

Name of the consultant / consultancy firm:

Registration number (if applicable):

Contact details / address:

Quotation n°:.....

Name of the study:

Expenses	Nb of unit	Unit cost	Total cost (USD)
International flights (upon invoice and boarding pass)			
Domestic flights (upon invoice and boarding pass)			
Per diem			

- consultant 1 :			
- consultant 2 :			
Daily consultancy fees			
- consultant 1 :			
- consultant 2 :			
Miscellaneous (Lump sum)			
-			
Total (all taxes included) USD			

Complementary observations: