

Progress report on IPM in the region by the Chairperson of the APPPC Standing Committee on IPM regional project

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Since the food crisis in 2008, countries in Asia and Pacific have undertaken efforts at intensifying food production to meet food needs of increasing populations. However, crop production intensification strategies have resulted in higher incidences of plant pests and diseases. Current plant pest and disease problems in Asia and Pacific have likewise been exacerbated by the entry of invasive plant pests and diseases, such as Golden Apple Snail, the Pink Mealy Bug and the Coconut Hispine Beetle.

Protecting agriculture from invasive pests and diseases is a crucial key concern among governments towards achieving food security goals. This challenge is being addressed through

- the development of ecological-based, environmental-friendly technologies and mechanisms, and
- quality farmer education to ensure the adoption of Integrated Pest Management or IPM.

APPPC member country initiatives in IPM

Over the last two years, APPPC member countries continue to implement IPM programs as part of the national food security agenda. Among them, the Ministry of Agriculture in China has launched a new initiative at upscaling Farmers Field School-based extension and farmer education programs in 800 counties. In Vietnam, the “One UN Plan 2” implemented capacity building and policy reforms towards pesticide risk reduction. Bangladesh initiated the development of FFS-based farming systems approaches to assist farmers in risk-prone areas to adapt to climate change. In Nepal, an EU-Food Facility Project conducted IPM-FFS training activities to boost agricultural production by up to 30% to address food insecurity.

In the ASEAN region, the ASEAN IPM Knowledge Network continues to assist government and non-government organizations improve the effectiveness of program implementation. The on-going Pest Profiles Project under the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group for Crops aims at developing a regional plant pest and disease early warning system.

FAO initiatives in IPM

During the last two years, FAO continued its assistance to APPPC member countries on IPM program development and pesticide policy reform, including support to national IPM Farmers Field School programs and capacity building for spread prevention and management of invasive crop pests and diseases.

Under FAO Trust Fund project *Pesticide Risk Reduction in Southeast Asia*, FAO continued work with the governments of Cambodia and Lao PDR on the development and field piloting of a pesticide licensing and inspection system. Under the IPM project component, FAO worked to strengthen curriculum development and farmer training on pesticide risk reduction in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Cambodia, China, Lao PDR and Vietnam) through structured learning exercises on pesticide risk reduction, and the development of innovative

multi-stakeholder initiatives and community awareness and mobilization approaches.

The FAO Regional IPM Programme also supported various in-country FAO and other donor-supported IPM-FFS projects in the APPPC member countries. Examples include technical support for the development of FFS-based farming systems work in Bangladesh, technical support for review of an IPM-FFS training component of the EU-Food Facility Project in Nepal. Support on development and application of biological control and other alternatives to chemicals for pest management was facilitated as a measure to reduce pesticide use in various countries in South (Bangladesh and Nepal) and Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Vietnam).

Various FAO TF and Regular Programme projects focus on capacity building of APPPC member countries on spread prevention and management of invasive crop pest and diseases, specifically on development of Bactrocera Fruit Fly Integrated Pest Management in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and on capacity building of spread prevention and management of the cassava pink mealybug in the GMS and the ASEAN region.

IRRI initiatives in IPM

RiceIPM provides a framework for integrating knowledge, skills and information on rice pest management in the tropics. This website was created from the CD-ROM version of RiceIPM.

The on-going ADB-IRRI Rice Planthopper Project aims to share knowledge and develop sustainable ways to manage BPH problems, specifically in China, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Project helps farmers manage pests in a sustainable way by developing pest-resistant rice varieties, IPM strategies, and ecological engineering approaches.

IPM CRSP initiatives

The South Asian Regional Program for Integrated Pest Management Collaborative Research Support Program (IPM CRSP) is a USAID-supported research, education/training, and information exchange collaborative partnership among US and developing country institutions in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. The Program focuses on participatory and collaborative IPM research and education programs for horticultural export crops and other food production systems. The Project has currently developed and field-tested IPM packages developed for tomato, eggplant, okra, onion, cauliflower, chili, cucurbits, bitter melon, cucumber, cabbage and country bean in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

Conclusion

Crop production intensification strategies to address soaring food prices and avert food insecurity will continue to result in higher incidences of plant pests and diseases in Asia and the Pacific. With significant pesticide usage from 2000-2010, scientists have warned that the unbridled manufacture and use of pesticides in Asia and Pacific are raising the specter of "pest storms" or big pest outbreaks devastating the region's farms and threatening food security.

Soaring food prices and food insecurity, serious pest outbreaks and indiscriminate and unregulated pesticide usage - these problems can be adequately addressed by the experiences of APPPC Member Countries and technological breakthroughs in IPM and political will to invest in quality farmer education in IPM.