



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

SANREM CRSP
Office of International Research, Education and Development
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (0378)
526 Price's Fork Road, Room 211
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Phone: (540) 231-1230
Fax: (540) 231-1402
sanrem@vt.edu
www.oired.vt.edu/sanremcrsp

Trip Report: Vietnam June 2007

Manual R. Reyes, Gudigopuram B. Reddy, and Charles W. Raczkowski
North Carolina A&T State University

Delia Catacutan and Caroline Duque
ICRAP-Philippines

Anas Susila
Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia

Purpose of Trip:

- To conduct a Soil Quality Workshop
- To attend a Soil Quality Workshop
- To conduct a meeting with host country coordinators from Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines
- To conduct second annual meeting of TMPEGS-Vietnam
- To visit experimental site and meet with farmers participating in this research
- To conduct a drip irrigation training with farmers

Sites Visited:

- Nong Lam University, Ho Chi Minh City
- Nhgia Trung Commune, Budang District, Binh Phuoc Province

Description of Activities/Observations:

Soil Quality Workshop:

Drs. Raczkowski and Reddy conducted the soil quality workshop. The workshop lasted for three days. It was a combination of lectures and hands-on training. The topics discussed were well organized and provided a good overview of the soil quality test kit (SQTk). The discussions also provided opportunities for clarifications and suggestions to better implement soil quality assessment with the farmers, and provide useful and effective land management options. The hands-on training enabled the participants to familiarize with the SQTk, and practice the steps on how to assess some soil chemical, physical and biological properties. The SQTk will be very

useful in providing immediate results for comparing management systems, and monitoring changes in soil quality overtime. It can be easily conducted on the farm by the field staff, allowing the active participation of landowner in assessing soil quality and discussing management options. However, it is not affordable for smallholder farmers at 600 USD per kit. In general, the workshop was productive and useful to the research, particularly to the Technology component to the project. This is very timely to conduct prior to the establishment of the on-farm experiments.

Host Country Coordinators Meeting:

Dr. Reyes met with Drs. Catacutan (Philippines), Ha (Vietnam) and Susila (Indonesia) to assess the progress of the project. The set-up on submission of annual and quarterly reports was thoroughly discussed and changed. It was agreed that all host country scientists will email their reports to their theme coordinators and country coordinators and copy furnish Reyes. The theme coordinators will prepare a consolidated theme report and submit it to Reyes. The host country coordinators will do a consolidated report on the country activities and submit it to Reyes as well. This has the advantage of: i) consolidating themes for all sites with the theme coordinator summarizing the cross-cutting discoveries from the 3 countries, and ii) opening up communication between theme coordinator and the scientists involved in each theme. The case of a replacement for Dr. Ali as marketing theme coordinator was also discussed. It was agreed that compensation be provided to the new marketing coordinator (Miriam Nguyen). The impending budget cuts and how to handle its impact was also discussed. No concrete decisions were made on this difficult issue. The web-site and how to improve it was also tackled. We agreed that the web-site can be improved if it can have interactive reporting, a picture library, and general TMPEGS information and schedule. Lastly, for scaling up it was suggested that each country find a model farm. A video will be prepared for the model 'Binahon Agroforestry' farm in the Philippines. A teleconference meeting with Dr. Robin Marsh, (UC-Berkeley) was held and socio-economic feedback mechanism design was recommended for implementation in the three countries.

Second Annual TMPEGS-Vietnam Meeting

Progress reports were presented on the six themes. For technology it was agreed that screening of appropriate cover crops that will grow under cashew, screening of vegetables for home garden, vegetables for home garden drip kit studies, and Mars vegetable screening study are most probable experiments that Vietnam team can conduct. Furthermore, it was evident that drip irrigating cacao growing in between cashew trees has potential for increasing income and protecting cashew farms from soil erosion. Marketing presentation showed that it will be difficult for Ngia Trung farmers to compete in the vegetable market. Hence, commercial vegetable production does not have a potential in the site. In policy theme, it was presented that in Vietnam both national and local policies influence small scale farmers both women and men. Focus is on industrialized perennial crops like cashew and substitution of new perennials as market conditions dictate. Cacao was promoted by the local government as a new crop for diversification and income improvement with vegetable production receiving very little attention. Progress on environmental and socio-economic theme centered on preliminary results that savings in water and increase in cashew yield may augment the cost of drip irrigation in 'cacao-cashew' systems. Progress in SWAT modeling was also discussed.

Visit with farmers in Nghia Trung and drip irrigation training

Drip irrigation training was conducted by Reyes with the help of Nong Lam University scientist, Mr. Le Van Du. The farmers were excited and their response was very positive. Mr. Du also conducted some soil quality training. A visit to Mars site was done in the afternoon. It was concluded that no study can be done at the Mars agroforestry site. There were water problems that significantly delayed the experiment in the site. A vegetable screening study, however, is a potential work that can be done at the Mars site. Two visits were done with a collaborating farmer. Unfortunately he was not there. The cacao-cashew dripped system was growing well and the indigenous vegetable grown in the farm looked promising as well. Some other sights were visited which were predominantly planted with rubber.

Training Activities Conducted:

Program type (workshop, seminar, field day, short course, etc.)	Date	Audience	Number of Participants		Training Provider (US university, host country institution, etc.)	Training Objective
			Men	Women		
Soil quality workshop	June 4-6, 2007	VIP researchers	19	5	North Carolina A&T State University Nong Lam University	To introduce concepts and methods in soil quality measurement and management and practice soil quality test kits to VIP researchers
Farmers' training on soil quality and vegetable drip irrigation	June 7, 2007	Local farmers	18	3	North Carolina A&T State University Nong Lam University	To introduce methods in soil quality measurement and management and practice soil quality test kits to collaborating farmers

Suggestions, Recommendations, and/or Follow-up Items:

- Conduct soil quality assessment in the three countries
- Maintain contacts with the SQTk users and the resource persons to compare results and complement research works related to soil quality assessments in the three countries
- Implement change in reporting procedure agreed in the host country coordinators meeting
- Conduct vegetable-tree studies in small gardens
- Implement 'feedback' socio-economic model

List of Contacts Made:

Name	Title/Organization	Contact Info
Dr. Gudigopuram Reddy	NCAT	reddyg@ncat.edu
Dr. Charles Raczkowski	NCAT	raczkowc@ncat.edu
Dr. Anas Susila	Bogor Institute	anas@ipb.ac.id
Mr. Le Phat Quoi	Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity	quoi.mwbp@plainoffreesppo.org
Dr. Dang Thanh Ha	Nong Lam University	d.thanh.ha@hcm.vnn.vn
Asst Prof Le Quang Hung	Nong Lam University	lqlqhung@yahoo.com
Mr. Hiyuh Thanh Hien	Nong Lam University	hthanhhien@yahoo.com
Mr. Nguyen Thanh Binh	Nong Lam University	binhnguyen0804@gmail.com
Ms. Nguyen Thi My Nguyet	Nong Lam University	nguyenmynguyet@yahoo.com