



# **Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)**

## **PROCEEDINGS**

**APAARI – Towards IGO and Beyond**

**Growth Strategy - Planning Meeting**

**21-22 November 2024**

**Bangkok, Thailand.**

Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)  
FAO Annex Building, 182 Larn Luang Road  
Pomprab Sattrupai, Bangkok 101,00  
Thailand



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(APAARI)**

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**Day 1**

**Agenda 1: Welcome and purpose of the meeting**

In his opening remarks, Professor Lindsey Falvey expressed the significance of the meeting as a pivotal step in shaping the future of APAARI. He highlighted that the gathering marks the initiation of a new chapter, with the organization now guided by a recently ratified Constitution that offers flexibility to adapt and contribute meaningfully to global challenges.

He reflected on APAARI's evolution over 70 years, emphasizing its contributions to global food security and agricultural capacity building. With Asia hosting the majority of the world's agricultural scientists and representing the largest population, he envisioned APAARI not as a subordinate participant in international efforts but as a leadership organization capable of coordinating and leveraging regional strengths.

Prof. Falvey underscored the importance of transitioning from traditional hierarchical systems, such as reliance on CGIAR, toward a model where APAARI drives regional cooperation and innovation. He envisioned the organization expanding its project-based activities and fostering collaborations across member nations, moving beyond aid-driven models to more sustainable funding approaches.

Concluding, he encouraged participants to focus on both immediate actions and long-term objectives, urging the group to harness their collective expertise to establish APAARI as a transformative force in global agricultural and environmental challenges. The meeting, he noted, was a starting point for ongoing efforts to realize this ambitious vision.

**Agenda 2: Setting the Stage - Background on APAARI**

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal shared the comprehensive background of APAARI, detailing its evolution, current initiatives, and future aspirations. Established in 1990 based on recommendations from FAO and with sponsorship from Bangkok, APAARI initially operated as an Intergovernmental



Organization (IGO). Over time, its scope has expanded to include diverse stakeholders, such as CGIAR centers, universities, regional organizations, and even private sector entities.

**Key milestones highlighted include:**

1. **Constitutional Revisions:** APAARI's 10th Constitution, adopted recently, has been pivotal in addressing challenges like the "One China Policy" and redefining membership categories for greater inclusivity and operational flexibility.
2. **Legal Status and Growth Strategy:** APAARI is striving to regain its IGO status, which is expected to enhance its ability to operate at an international level. A detailed growth strategy, supported by KPMG, outlines its roadmap through phases of development.
3. **Membership and Collaboration:** With members from 22 countries and associate members from various sectors, APAARI functions as a multi-stakeholder platform. It emphasizes triangular cooperation among funders, innovators, and stakeholders to address regional agricultural and environmental challenges.
4. **Programs and Partnerships:** APAARI actively engages in capacity building, policy advocacy, and strategic interventions. It collaborates with organizations like FAO, CGIAR, WTO, EU, and numerous regional bodies to implement projects on topics such as biopesticides, digital transformation, agroecology, and genome editing.
5. **Focus on Capacity Building:** A major focus is blending technical and functional capacities at individual, institutional, and enabling environment levels. Notably, APAARI developed a policy position paper on genome editing, which has influenced policy in Thailand.
6. **Strategic Plan:** Developed through extensive consultations, the strategic plan revisits APAARI's vision and mission to align with comparative advantages and evolving needs. It emphasizes APAARI's role as a knowledge broker and advocate for sustainable agricultural innovation.

Dr. Khetarpal stressed the need to leverage APAARI's strengths to lead in agricultural innovation and sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region while continuing to foster collaborations and secure funding for impactful initiatives.

**Impressions of Participants:**

*Comment from Dr Margaret : Dr. Margaret highlighted the significant role APAARI can play in fostering collaboration within ASEAN and emphasized the need for concrete and comprehensive plans to strengthen this partnership. She recalled her efforts from 2–3 years ago to introduce APAARI into ASEAN through Thailand's initiative focused on expert dispatch and mobilizing human resources. Despite initial challenges and limited progress, the importance of this project was reaffirmed during the APW meeting in Singapore, where the chair urged Thailand to continue its efforts.*

*She underscored the value of establishing a roster of experts within ASEAN to address critical and relevant issues efficiently, suggesting that APAARI's expertise could be instrumental in achieving this. Dr. Margaret also mentioned similar initiatives by SEARCA in the Philippines,*

which sought to build linkages between research, public institutions, and academia. She identified this as another area where APAARI's contributions could be impactful.

Additionally, Dr. Margaret expressed her focus on scaling up agricultural innovations and actions. She critiqued the ongoing negotiations under the UNFCCC, noting a lack of tangible progress and implementation. She emphasized that APAARI's strengths and resources could be pivotal in moving from dialogue to actionable solutions. Her remarks reflected optimism about APAARI's potential to drive meaningful collaboration and outcomes in the ASEAN region.

**Comment from Dr. Shaun Coffey:** Dr. Shaun Coffey emphasized the need for APAARI to adapt its operations and strategies to align with the significantly changed global environment, particularly in terms of capacity and the evolving roles of APAARI and the CGIAR system. He suggested that the organization reflect on how to function effectively in this new context, considering adjustments in operational arrangements, strategic relationships, and partnership models.

He raised the importance of evaluating APAARI's engagement processes, specifically questioning whether stakeholders, such as ASEAN, are fully aware of the extensive and diverse group APAARI represents. Dr. Coffey pointed out the potential challenge of overcoming traditional mindsets and adapting to contemporary dynamics in collaborative frameworks.

Moreover, he encouraged APAARI to not only focus on what it can achieve but also consider how it should transform its methodologies and processes to remain effective and impactful. Acknowledging the complexities of engaging with large and sometimes inaccessible institutions like ASEAN, he urged the group to explore practical strategies for fostering meaningful collaborations and leveraging APAARI's strengths as a collective.

**Comment from Prof. Dr. Hildegard Lingnau:** Dr. Hildegard Lingnau expressed her appreciation for the progress APAARI has made in its strategic planning and acknowledged the efforts of its leadership and the government of Thailand. She commended Thailand for its consideration in granting APAARI independent legal status, describing it as a significant milestone. Drawing from her experience with GFAiR, she shared insights into navigating similar processes, highlighting that while GFAR opted not to pursue full independence to maintain access to critical funding, it found success through hosting arrangements with CGIAR in Montpellier and Rome.

Prof. Dr. Lingnau noted that such arrangements allow organizations to retain independence while avoiding administrative, financial, and legal complexities. She emphasized the importance of these decisions, congratulated APAARI on its achievements, and wished success for its upcoming meeting to finalize this critical step.

Additionally, she highlighted the strengthened cooperation between APAARI, GFAiR, and other regional fora, facilitated by signed Memoranda of Understanding. This enhanced collaboration enables a united effort among national agricultural research systems, sub-regional and regional organizations, and global fora. Prof. Dr. Lingnau emphasized that this

*collective approach not only strengthens knowledge-sharing and best practices but also increases opportunities for joint funding applications. She expressed optimism for continued progress and success in APAARI's future endeavors.*

**Comment from Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka:** *Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka expressed her appreciation for the unique and thoughtfully designed format of the meeting, commending Dr. Ravi Khetarpal for organizing a smaller, focused group to enable open, detailed, and innovative discussions. She highlighted the advantage of such a setup, allowing for brainstorming and the exchange of diverse ideas without the constraints of formalized structures.*

*She supported the vision shared by Professor Lindsey, emphasizing the shift away from traditional models, such as CGIAR's historic leadership, toward a new paradigm of self-leadership and coordinated collaboration. Dr. Kane-Potaka noted that this approach aligns with the evolving dynamics of the global agricultural environment and APAARI's role as a facilitator rather than a hierarchical leader. She described this shift as an exciting opportunity for APAARI to leverage the strengths of Asia and redefine its contributions in the current era.*

*Dr. Kane-Potaka encouraged the group to critically evaluate commonly used terms such as "capacity building," "policy advocacy," and "innovation platforms," urging them to delve deeper into their actual implications and outcomes. She stressed the importance of distinguishing APAARI's objectives and actions from generic approaches, advocating for specificity and clarity in defining goals and strategies.*

*In particular, she suggested revisiting APAARI's objectives, noting that broad aims like "agricultural production and productivity for sustainable farming systems" lack actionable specificity. Dr. Kane-Potaka called on the group to use this opportunity to refine their vision, objectives, and strategies to ensure APAARI's initiatives are meaningful and impactful.*

**Comment from Dr. Murat Sartas:** *Dr. Murat Sartas expressed his enthusiasm for APAARI's focus on scaling efforts in the region, noting that his independent work as a scaling expert aligns perfectly with APAARI's vision. He shared that his motivation to support scaling initiatives led him to establish a small office in Malaysia, with plans to increase his presence in Thailand to further contribute to these efforts.*

*Dr. Sartas highlighted the importance of capacity development, pointing out a critical gap in the global approach: the lack of focus on networks as a fourth layer, alongside individuals, organizations, and systems. He proposed that APAARI, as a regional network, has a unique competitive advantage in becoming a "network of networks," leveraging network intelligence to make significant contributions in this area.*

*He also emphasized the value of agility as a competitive advantage, reflecting on his experience designing and building innovation and scaling units for CGIAR centers, including his role in shaping IPSR in Italy. Dr. Sartas noted that many organizations lack the flexibility to rapidly deploy resources and adapt to evolving needs. He recommended that APAARI prioritize agility in its operations, which would enhance its ability to meet regional challenges*



*effectively.*

*In closing, Dr. Sartas commended APAARI's mission and strategic direction, emphasizing that agility and network-building should be central to its approach. He expressed eagerness to engage in further discussions to refine these ideas and contribute to APAARI's success.*

### **Agenda 3: Discussions on Comparative Advantages**

#### **Partnership and Membership & Way Forward:**

Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka emphasized the importance of articulating APAARI's unique value proposition to its partners, noting that partners often question the specific benefits they receive from collaboration. She pointed out that different partners, such as NARES and CGIAR, derive varying benefits from APAARI, and it is crucial to view these relationships from their respective perspectives.

Dr. Kane-Potaka suggested that APAARI should clearly distinguish itself by moving beyond general terms like "capacity building" and "policy advocacy" to deeper, more specific descriptions of its contributions. She advocated for reframing APAARI's role to foster partnerships rather than competition, emphasizing that semantics play a significant role in defining these relationships.

To refine APAARI's strategic direction, she proposed using a cyclical approach, iterating between vision, mission, and analysis of the competitive environment. This process would allow APAARI to reposition itself effectively, transforming competitors into collaborators. She highlighted the need to revisit and sharpen APAARI's core strengths, which include capacity building, collaboration, knowledge management, and policy advocacy.

Using CGIAR as an example, Dr. Kane-Potaka encouraged the group to define what APAARI offers that makes it indispensable to CGIAR and other organizations. She stressed that APAARI must demonstrate its ability to add value, whether by achieving results more effectively, cost-efficiently, or uniquely, in areas where others may not excel. By identifying and communicating these distinct advantages, APAARI can strengthen its partnerships and ensure alignment with its strategic vision.

Dr. Kane-Potaka concluded by inviting the group to engage in open, challenging discussions to refine APAARI's identity and role in the evolving global context, ensuring it is recognized as a valuable and indispensable partner.

**Comments from Ms. Mallika Kaewwises:** Ms. Mallika Kaewwises expressed the importance of branding and public awareness for APAARI, emphasizing the need for the organization to clearly define its identity in order to attract and engage partners and sponsors. She noted that in commercial terms, branding is crucial for distinguishing APAARI from others in the field. To achieve this, APAARI should focus on developing a clear, concise brand message that resonates with stakeholders.

She suggested that APAARI rebrand itself by identifying a few key words that represent its core strengths and make the organization easily recognizable. She recommended focusing on a simple and impactful message, using no more than three key words to define what APAARI stands for. By doing so, APAARI would enhance its visibility and recognition, which would help in building partnerships and securing funding.

Ms. Kaewwises stressed the importance of increasing public awareness through various channels, including social media platforms like Twitter and TikTok, to reach a wider audience. She advocated for APAARI to become a well-known and respected entity, similar to other popular academic institutions, where governments and stakeholders are clear on what APAARI offers and how it contributes to agricultural transformation. She concluded by urging APAARI to take the lead in its branding efforts to ensure its future success and impact.

**Comment from Dr. Murat Sartas:** Dr. Murat Sartas expressed the need for APAARI to refine its branding and messaging to emphasize its unique value proposition. He suggested that instead of focusing on terms like "research and innovation," APAARI should rebrand itself as an organization that excels in "accelerated transformation," highlighting its ability to deploy solutions quickly and effectively. He noted that while CGIAR's processes are slow and expensive due to their reliance on science-based solutions, APAARI could focus on scaling existing solutions in a more cost-effective and timely manner, rather than continuously developing new ones.

Dr. Sartas emphasized that impact does not always require a science-based solution, and in many cases, the challenge lies in scaling up solutions that are already available. He encouraged APAARI to move beyond piloting and development phases and instead focus on rapidly scaling up initiatives in a way that delivers tangible results.

Additionally, he highlighted the importance of local ownership, noting that APAARI's decentralized and grassroots approach is embedded in its DNA, which differentiates it from other organizations like CGIAR. He suggested that APAARI's federated and collaborative structure can complement and enhance the work of other international organizations.

Dr. Sartas concluded by emphasizing that while the "what" of APAARI's work is essential, the "how" is equally important. He believes that APAARI's ability to execute its initiatives in a more agile, impactful, and cost-effective manner could make a significant difference in the region.

Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka expressed her agreement with the examples of comparative advantage but raised a challenge regarding the focus on scaling. She pointed out that many centers, including CGIAR, are also focused on scaling, so simply claiming that APAARI can scale faster or more effectively isn't enough. She emphasized the need for APAARI to critically examine and define its own approach to scaling, rather than following the narrative of others who are already working in this area..

**Comment from Prof. Dr. Hildegard Lingnau:** *Dr. Hildegard Lingnau expressed her support for Dr. Murat and added her perspective on APAARI's role. She emphasized that APAARI, as a regional forum, complements global research efforts, particularly in research for development. While organizations like CGIAR focus on specific research topics or crops, APAARI bridges the gap by involving a wider range of stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, and universities. This multi-stakeholder, bottom-up approach allows APAARI to bring research into practice and help countries achieve sustainable development goals.*

*She highlighted that APAARI is not overlapping with CGIAR but rather complementing its work by ensuring that research is effectively implemented and scaled. Prof. Dr. Lingnau noted the importance of taking research results and using them to inspire future research, helping to shape the direction of new projects. She shared an example from a recent CGIAR-NARS leadership meeting, where national representatives expressed a desire to be more involved in shaping the CGIAR research agenda. She stressed that the key challenge is creating an interface where research and its real-world applications can meet, and APAARI holds a clear comparative advantage in facilitating this process.*

**Comment from Dr Margaret :** *Dr. Margaret emphasized the importance of financial incentives for scientists in research collaboration, focusing on the commercialization of research results to benefit end users financially. She highlighted the need for clear roles in public-private partnerships and the development of business models that are both feasible and appealing. She also stressed the importance of local ownership and involving end users to ensure the success of collaborations, noting that these actions will be key for APAARI's progress.*

**Comment from Manish Rai:** *Manish Rai expressed that APAARI's unique strength lies in its long-term support for its members, even after projects end. Unlike other organizations that disengage once a project finishes, APAARI continues to provide assistance and follow-up, ensuring sustained impact and addressing challenges that arise years later. This ongoing support sets APAARI apart from other organizations.*

Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka expressed that while the examples provided are great and show APAARI's comparative advantages, it is important for APAARI to establish clear standards when implementing them. She noted that, unlike CGIAR, which claims to work through partnerships but lacks consistent standards for how they manage them, APAARI should set gold





standards for its partnerships and projects. Dr. Kane-Potaka emphasized the importance of following defined methods and standards to ensure that APAARI truly leads the way in these areas.

**Comment from Prof. Dr. Hildegard Lingnau:** *Dr. Hildegard Lingnau expressed support for a principled approach to partnerships, highlighting the work done with the Global South and the resulting recommendations on partnership principles. She acknowledged that CGIAR has incorporated these principles into their engagement framework and emphasized the need to now implement them effectively.*

**Comment from Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong:** *Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong highlighted the need for APAARI to have a clear, shared vision and goal, emphasizing that its current focus on agriculture and research is too broad. She pointed out that the Pacific region is underrepresented and that for people to engage with APAARI, its purpose—whether it's commercialization, scaling, or innovation—needs to be more clearly defined.*

Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka emphasized that APAARI must continually challenge itself to be recognized as the key representative for agriculture in the Asia-Pacific region. She highlighted an example where a Singapore-based group held a COP meeting without collaborating with APAARI, suggesting that APAARI needs to strengthen its visibility and influence as the primary voice for the region in global discussions.

**Suggestion from Dr Margaret :** *Dr. Margaret suggested that APAARI could play a significant role in amplifying agriculture's voice across the Asia-Pacific region. While acknowledging the challenges in forming such a group, she emphasized that this could be a potential opportunity for APAARI to widen its impact, though no formal request had been made yet.*

**Comment from Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong:** *Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong highlighted the lack of engagement with East Asia in APAARI's activities and suggested that to represent the entire Asia-Pacific region, APAARI must offer something unique. She also noted the growing shift from agriculture to broader food systems, emphasizing the need for APAARI to adapt to this evolving focus.*

**Comment from Prof. Lindsay Falvey:** *Prof. Falvey expressed the importance of considering the Pacific region, which is often overlooked, despite its vast water resources. He emphasized that from Australia's perspective, the Pacific is politically significant, and there is unspent funding for the region, which requires more innovative approaches rather than traditional capacity development. Prof. Falvey also noted that the Australian government allocated funds to CGIAR through IRRI to develop projects in ASEAN, but it was concluded that APAARI, with its broader network and membership, was the more appropriate organization to lead these efforts due to its operational efficiencies.*

**Comment from Dr. Ravi Khetarpal :** Dr. Ravi Khetarpal expressed that APAARI should serve as the key voice for agriculture and the Pacific, especially in global discussions. Dr. Khetarpal emphasized the need for APAARI to be invited as a representative of the region, not just as an individual, to ensure it can contribute as a think tank and policy advisor. This would establish APAARI as a significant organization in global agricultural policy discussions, enhancing its role in shaping strategies and partnerships for Asia and the Pacific.

**Comment from Dr. Shaun Coffey:** Dr. Shaun Coffey expressed the need for a more strategically pragmatic approach in the system, noting that most organizations operate in a project-based manner rather than through consistent systems and standards. He emphasized the importance of identifying specific areas where APAARI can make a mark and demonstrate its intent, rather than focusing solely on theoretical frameworks. Shaun also highlighted the critical need for technical skills at the grassroots level and better governance and strategy in multi-stakeholder projects. He argued that the focus should be on practical solutions and achieving tangible results, rather than getting bogged down by theoretical complexities.

**Comment from Dr. Simon Wilkinson:** Dr. Simon Wilkinson highlighted the challenge of engaging with the Pacific due to high costs and suggested allocating more resources for the region, possibly with donor support. He proposed online training as a feasible solution, given the increasing access to smartphones among farmers, and mentioned using AI for translation and transcription to improve communication.

**Comment from Dr. Murat Sartas:** Dr. Murat Sartas emphasized the importance of incorporating AI into the strategy for efficiency and innovation. He highlighted the potential of South Asian youth, suggesting APAARI should focus on actively deploying their capabilities in projects. He also stressed the need for AI training and infrastructure support to enhance impact and agility in operations.

**Comment from Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong:** Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong suggested that while engaging the Pacific is costly, one approach could be to focus on involving the youth and younger generations to start with, especially in regional activities. She mentioned that gradual involvement could lead to greater inclusion, which, although geographically part of Asia, shares unique ties with the Pacific.

Dr. Margaret inquired if APAARI could expand its mandate to include extension services, in addition to its current focus on research.

**Comment from Dr. Shaun Coffey:** Dr. Shaun Coffey expressed that in addressing issues in the Pacific, it is crucial to engage directly with local communities to understand their needs and solutions, rather than imposing external projects. He emphasized the importance of listening to the Pacific Islands and Territories, as they are driving their own development initiatives. He highlighted the need for a trans-contextual approach to addressing challenges like climate change, where local knowledge and systems play a significant role in finding practical solutions. Dr. Coffey also stressed the importance of involving Pacific representatives in decision-making processes and bringing them into key discussions rather

than simply sending external experts to the region.

**Suggestion from Sami:** Sami highlighted the unequal distribution of benefits to the Pacific region and suggested that developed nations like Japan and Korea, as strong APAARI members, should focus on transferring technology and innovation to the Pacific as part of enhanced collaboration.

**Comment from Mr. Norihito Kanamori:** Mr. Norihito Kanamori expressed that JIRCAS has had a long-standing collaboration with DOA for over 50 years. He mentioned that current projects, such as the Bio Pesticide Project, exemplify this ongoing partnership. He emphasized that such collaborative research efforts serve as a good model for spreading innovation across Asia and can act as pilot studies for future collaborations.

**Comment from Prof. Lindsay Falvey:** Prof. Falvey emphasized the importance of coordination among agencies to ensure broader benefits from APAARI projects. He suggested reducing redundancy by having one representative cover multiple issues and highlighted the need for wealthier countries like Japan, South Korea, and Thailand to collaborate, leveraging Thailand's international aid program for partnerships.

#### Agenda 4: Global Linkages & Way Forward

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal expressed that APAARI has significant global linkages but faces challenges in formalizing them due to issues like lack of legal status and alignment. He highlighted the importance of improving global partnerships, citing successful collaborations with organizations like WTO, FAO, and GFAIR. He emphasized the need for a strategy to engage with global partners and accelerate food security, stressing the importance of agility in project execution and capacity development. He also discussed ongoing efforts to build partnerships for innovation and technical capacity, particularly in areas like food security.

**Suggestion from Dr. Murat Sartas:** Dr. Murat Sartas expressed that APAARI could explore innovative global linkages beyond traditional partnerships. He suggested three approaches: First, leveraging "global intelligence" by identifying and empowering resource people from the Asia-Pacific region who are already making significant contributions in places like Africa and Latin America. These individuals could serve as ambassadors for the region. Second, supporting Asian investors who want to contribute to agriculture in their home countries but face challenges in doing so. Third, showcasing the innovation and agricultural research capabilities of the region, such as Thailand's food design and processing strengths, which could be beneficial for South-South or triangular collaborations. Dr. Sartas emphasized that APAARI could play a unique role in fostering these global connections and innovation exchanges.

**Response to Dr. Murat Suggestion:** Dr. Ravi Khetarpal expressed that the concept is



*promising but needs careful operationalization, requiring a solid structure and case studies. He sees it as a great opportunity for APAARI to explore further.*

***Suggestion from Dr Margaret:*** *Dr.Margaret suggested that APAARI could leverage its strength by collaborating with platforms like the ADB and CGIAR, focusing on region-specific intervention packages. She emphasized the need to start by addressing local problems and strategizing solutions that would appeal to member countries, ultimately synthesizing regional needs to create effective recommendations and solutions.*

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal expressed that APAARI has recently established linkages with USAID, CABI Pakistan, and several countries including China and Malaysia through an integrated work plan. Additionally, they have formed an alliance with APRIAS, the regional chapter for GFRAS, funded by the EU. He highlighted the need for ideas beyond CGIAR and AIRCA institutes to further benefit APAARI's extension.

***Suggestion from Dr. Murat Sartas:*** *Dr. Murat Sartas suggested that engaging with the World Economic Forum (WEF) could be a valuable opportunity, especially as they are becoming more involved in the AI innovation space. He also raised a challenging question regarding the approach to BRICS and how the Global South is pushing for globalization, suggesting that a discussion on the role of BRICS in this context could yield new ideas for engagement.*

***Response to Dr. Murat Suggestion:*** *Dr. Ravi Khetarpal acknowledged Dr. Murat's suggestion, emphasizing their efforts to engage with BRICS through India, noting its potential to revolutionize global agri-food policies. He mentioned monitoring the situation closely and exploring partnerships like GFaIR to enter this space.*

***Comment from Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka:*** *Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka commented that APAARI should conduct a proper business analysis on the various ideas presented, rather than growing them organically. She emphasized the importance of investing in initiatives with a strong business case and looking for funding to properly initiate them. Some ideas may not be a priority after thorough analysis.*

***Comment from Prof. Dr. Hildegard Lingnau:*** *Dr. Hildegard Lingnau commented that the World Economic Forum is crucial for accessing private funding, as it can provide valuable opportunities, though the application process for funding is time-consuming. She recommended applying together to avoid competition and emphasized the importance of multi-level, multi-stakeholder collaboration. Regarding BRICS, she acknowledged the changing global dynamics and the challenges with countries like India, China, and Russia. She highlighted that, due to European funding restrictions, collaboration with Russia is currently not feasible, which is a difficult and unfortunate situation.*



**Comment from Dr Margaret :** *Dr.Margaret commented that APAARI should focus on offering tangible membership benefits, as outlined in its constitution, and prioritize serving its members, including IOs and IGOs, as part of its global linkage strategy. Dr.Ravi Khetarpal acknowledged that focusing on the global linkages APAARI is already engaged in and amplifying them is a good suggestion.*

**Comment from Manish Rai :** *Manish Rai commented that APAARI should focus on anchoring research within development, as the maximum funding available is for development rather than research. This approach would allow APAARI to access both research and development funding, particularly through partnerships with organizations like USDA, which have development-focused funding but often struggle to utilize it effectively.*

**Comment from Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong:** *Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong emphasized the importance of a shared goal or vision for effective global engagement, using the unified response to pandemics as an example. He suggested that similar collaboration could be applied to address agricultural threats like pest outbreak*

**Comment from Mr. Norihito Kanamori:** *Mr. Norihito Kanamori commented on the importance of securing funding for both research and development, highlighting the challenges of obtaining funds for research alone. He also discussed the relationship with JICA, noting that while JICA is not heavily focused on research, it does provide access to certain research funding opportunities.*

**Comment from Samitha:** *Sami expressed the idea of strengthening global linkages through the platform, particularly by focusing on trade facilitation and compliance with global trade agreements such as SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) measures. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal acknowledged this point and highlighted the importance of addressing both animal and plant health to improve trade compliance. He also mentioned that APAARI has been recognized as a regional champion in this area, which could provide an opportunity to network and leverage APAARI's unique expertise in this field.*

**Comment from Prof. Dr. Hildegard Lingnau:** *Dr. Hildegard Lingnau commented on the importance of working together to attract global funding, particularly from organizations like the Gates Foundation. She emphasized that while global initiatives are valuable, it becomes more effective when regional forums join forces. She also mentioned the challenges of accessing funding for research, as some organizations, including the Gates Foundation, have shifted their focus away from research towards areas like impact, innovation, and knowledge management. She advised a strategic approach to align with these priorities and increase the chances of funding.*

Prof. Falvey highlighted China as a major investor in agricultural research, surpassing the US and Europe. He emphasized the need to view agricultural research funding globally and suggested APAARI could play a role as China grows in prominence. He also noted the World



Bank's historical involvement and suggested partnering with organizations like the Gates Foundation, which offer both financial resources and expertise.

### **Agenda 5: Technical Area - Capacity Building**

Dr. Shaun Coffey highlighted the importance of capacity building in technical areas such as sustainable intensification and biosecurity, which transcend regional boundaries. He outlined a three-tiered training approach: early-career development focusing on leadership and teamwork, mid-level training for project and organizational management, and senior executive training emphasizing governance and strategy. Dr. Coffey also emphasized the value of tailored training programs and leveraging regional expertise, citing Papua New Guinea's effective use of local knowledge during the COVID-19 response. He stressed the need for continuous learning networks to enhance regional capacity.

Dr. Coffey also underscored the strong collaboration between the Crawford Fund and APAARI in advancing capacity-building efforts, particularly through research leadership and management master classes. This partnership has bolstered confidence among National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) to participate in these initiatives. Driven by growing demand, the number of classes will double next year, with participants drawn equally from APAARI organizations, the CGIAR system, and universities or the private sector. He emphasized the opportunity to scale these programs further, especially when supported by active institutional engagement.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal emphasized APAARI's shift from project-based capacity building to integrating technical and functional capacities, proposing a formalized, programmatic collaboration with the Crawford Fund. He suggested creating a capacity-building platform involving regional partners and high-performing institutions, aiming to provide sustained post-project support and position APAARI as a global leader in capacity building.

Dr. Shaun Coffey supported this approach, highlighting the value of embedding capacity development within projects for real-time training and mentoring. He stressed capturing lessons from projects to enhance future initiatives and shared how utilizing internal expertise saved costs and drove impactful results. Dr. Coffey reaffirmed the potential of APAARI-Crawford Fund collaboration to scale capacity-building efforts effectively.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal highlighted APAARI's efforts to establish an e-learning academy, supported by an advisory group with CABI, ACIAR, and AREEO Iran, focusing on leveraging existing tools and creating a robust structure. Sami detailed progress, including consultations with countries like Fiji, Sri Lanka, Philippines and India, identifying thematic areas, and evaluating platforms. The initiative aims to serve diverse audiences, with APAARI potentially acting as a facilitator or aggregator. Further consultations will refine the approach and implementation.

Prof. Falvey emphasized the importance of utilizing regional expertise for capacity-building efforts, aligning with ongoing programs in research institutions, universities, and ministries rather than solely focusing on externally funded projects. He highlighted the need for culturally



relevant training tailored to the diverse needs of countries in the region, moving beyond generic textbook approaches. Prof Falvey also suggested co-branding between Crawford Fund and APAARI to strengthen collaboration and demonstrate a model for organizational partnerships. He noted that APAARI's broader regional scope could involve additional institutions for joint activities in the future.

Dr. Shaun Coffey emphasized the need for an "extension practice statement" to clarify agency roles, especially in South Asia. He highlighted the increasing involvement of Southeast Asian universities in training and the shift towards utilizing local expertise. Additionally, he proposed a governance and strategy initiative, offering \$80,000 to support the project, with an additional \$75,000 available to strengthen governance and strategy across the network.

Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong emphasized the need for capacity building assessments to identify required skills and knowledge. She mentioned that universities, particularly in ASEAN, are already advancing e-learning initiatives, offering lifelong learning courses and micro-credentials, with a focus on climate change and food security.

Dr. Hildegard stressed a bottom-up approach to capacity building, starting with existing knowledge and needs. She advised against presenting capacity development as a complete reset and recommended complementing existing structures. She also suggested that APAARI contribute to the CGIAR's Mega Project 10 by leveraging its innovation lab and marketplace, rather than duplicating efforts.

Dr. Joanna emphasized the importance of recognizing and amplifying the work being done by experts in the Asia Pacific region. She suggested that APAARI should explore and identify existing initiatives in the region, support those efforts, and facilitate knowledge sharing, rather than solely focusing on external organizations like CGIAR.

Dr. Murat emphasized the importance of ensuring sustainable capacity building in low-income countries. He highlighted the need for continuous funding alongside capacity development efforts, as one-time interventions are insufficient. He also noted the challenge of trained individuals leaving after capacity building, suggesting that long-term investment in human resources is essential. Additionally, Dr. Murat pointed out the importance of fundraising capacity as a critical area to focus on, as it attracts significant attention and investment, particularly in Africa.

Dr. Shaun emphasized embedding capacity building within projects and budgets for long-term development. He noted the CGIAR's need for training to bridge the gap between planning and implementation. Despite the loss of trained individuals, many return at senior levels, highlighting the long-term benefits of capacity development. He concluded that the legacy of these efforts is developing competent individuals to drive future progress.

## **Agenda 5: Technical Area - Policy Strengthening**



Dr. Orachos Napasintuwong emphasized the need for a bridge between research and policy, suggesting that APAARI could play a crucial role in policy outreach. By leveraging its network, APAARI could help translate evidence-based research into impactful policy decisions at local, national, and regional levels, complementing the work of organizations like IFPRI.

Dr. Margaret emphasized the importance of evidence-based policy research, pointing out that while some agricultural departments conduct policy research in areas like climate change and food safety, there is a lack of comprehensive policy services. She highlighted the critical role of policy advocacy, stressing the need for robust evidence to support it, particularly in the agricultural sector. Dr. Orachos agreed with Dr. Margaret, acknowledging the significance of evidence-based policy research. She explained that many ministries of agriculture, including her own, have policy research units, but their focus is primarily on economic issues like climate change and food safety. She further emphasized that to effectively bridge the gap in policy development, it is crucial to integrate research findings into actionable policies.

Prof Falvey highlighted the importance of broadening the focus beyond plant sciences to include a more comprehensive approach to agriculture policy, emphasizing that agriculture encompasses not just crop science but also livestock, fisheries, and broader policy frameworks.

Dr. Orachos suggested collaborating with ministries that bridge higher education and science and technology, particularly those that handle research under the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology, and Innovation. She also noted that agriculture policy is not confined to national borders, stressing the importance of regional cooperation. Meanwhile, Dr. Ravi Khetarpal emphasized the need for a policy framework that aligns ministries and research priorities across countries, recognizing that successful policy implementation requires continuous engagement with policymakers.

Dr. Joanna suggested that APAARI could play a crucial role in facilitating evidence-based policy development by helping create a "basket" of policy solutions, making it easier for policymakers to navigate diverse ideas. Finally, the discussion touched on the importance of advocacy in agriculture, with Dr. Joanna stressed that advocacy should extend beyond policymakers to include the entire agricultural value chain, ensuring that meaningful changes happen at all levels of the system.

Dr. Hildegard stressed the need to bridge the gap between research and policy development. She emphasized that policy should be needs-driven, with a clear understanding of the target audience. Research should not only produce high-quality results but also ensure those results are actionable and aligned with government priorities. She advised conducting a needs assessment to ensure that policies meet the real needs of policymakers and stakeholders.

Manish emphasized that agricultural policy must account for different systems in each country, such as ministry-level, multi-department, or autonomous bodies. He stressed that policies should be tailored to these structures for effective analysis and implementation.





Dr. Shaun Coffey highlighted the challenges of a one-size-fits-all approach in agricultural policy, especially in regions with different levels of infrastructure. He emphasized the role of soft diplomacy and relationships in policy-making, citing his connection with Indonesia's new minister. He also mentioned Crawford's focus on specific policy areas like biosecurity and sustainable intensification, with plans to expand into broader policy development through partnerships with experts.

Further, Prof Falvey mentioned that a country on the edge of ASEAN, not yet part of the policy forum, is of interest to APAARI. This presents an opportunity to expand the reach of the forum to include this country, broadening its impact.

### **Concluding Remarks for the Day 1:**

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Falvey acknowledged the productive and insightful discussions throughout the day. He emphasized the importance of developing a new strategic plan for the organization, one that aligns with a larger vision. He pointed out that effective policy is not just a piece of paper but a reflection of human behavior, highlighting the need for properly placed incentives to drive the right actions. He noted that current incentives in the agriculture research community, such as the focus on writing research papers, do not always align with impactful outcomes. He encouraged the group to think about new incentives that will better guide both policy and technical research moving forward. He concluded by expressing his hope that the team would continue to refine the strategic plan and identify the key points for the future direction of the organization.

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## **Day2**

### **Agenda 5: Technical Area - Agricultural Innovation System**

Dr. Murat explained innovation as a multifaceted concept with varying definitions across disciplines and contexts but emphasized two key elements: novelty and problem-solving. Innovation involves introducing something new or adapting existing knowledge to address contemporary challenges, even if it means reviving practices from the past. The distinction between innovation and invention lies in its purpose—while inventions are novel creations, innovations are solutions designed to solve real-world problems. Dr. Murat categorized innovation into three main types: knowledge, product, and arrangement solutions. Knowledge solutions involve creating or applying assets such as databases, research papers, or communication tools to help people learn and make decisions. Product solutions include tangible innovations like hardware, software, or tools that address practical challenges, such as mobile phones evolving from telephones to meet modern communication needs. Arrangement solutions focus on fostering collaboration and coordinated action, such as collective action initiatives, policy frameworks, innovation platforms, or procedural arrangements like Standard Operating



Procedures (SOPs). Dr. Murat highlighted that while often overlooked, arrangement solutions are critical for impactful innovation. He further noted that APAARI's comparative advantage lies in arrangement solutions, particularly in facilitating collaboration through innovation platforms and policies, creating cohesive frameworks for stakeholders, and strengthening institutional mechanisms for effective knowledge sharing and implementation. By leveraging these strengths, APAARI can drive impactful innovations, solve regional agricultural challenges, and support sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.

**Comment from Manish Rai :** *Manish commented that APAARI holds a strong position in two key areas. Firstly, in generating and sharing knowledge through its members and partners, APAARI effectively creates and disseminates valuable insights to those who need them. Secondly, APAARI excels in connecting people and fostering collaboration, as demonstrated through initiatives like the GNC or the RNC digital network. These efforts highlight APAARI's ability to serve as a hub for both knowledge exchange and collaborative action.*

**Comment from Dr. Margaret:** *She commented that APAARI should focus on identifying existing initiatives and practices within the region and build upon them to develop or innovate solutions. She emphasized the need to take action by leveraging what is already present and evolving it further.*

**Comment from Dr. Joanna:** *She commented that APAARI's strength lies not in possessing knowledge or products directly but in its ability to facilitate arrangements that lead to the creation of knowledge and products. She emphasized that APAARI's core comparative advantage is its role in enabling these processes, even though there is a connection to knowledge and products through its facilitation efforts.*

Dr. Murat acknowledged that APAARI has the potential to excel in producing knowledge, products, and arrangements, but emphasized that it should focus on its strongest area to position itself effectively. He highlighted APAARI's ability to create process, arrangement, and partnership solutions, considering them as a form of innovation. Dr. Murat stressed that arrangement solutions—like fostering effective partnerships and navigating political and contextual challenges—are often underestimated in R&D but are crucial for success. He advocated for better documentation of these solutions, noting that they are highly valuable to organizations and donors seeking evidence-based approaches to operationalize innovations. By focusing on documenting and refining its arrangement solutions, APAARI can leverage its strengths and significantly enhance its impact.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal highlighted that APAARI's innovation is primarily in its process of bringing people together on a common platform to collaborate. He gave examples of successful projects, such as the WTO Bio Pesticide initiative and genome editing policies in Thailand. APAARI's knowledge is derived from the 22 NARS, including CGIAR, and serves as a global knowledge



broker. The key innovation is in the arrangement or process that enables problem-solving and collaboration across various stakeholders.

Dr. Murat emphasized that APAARI's draft innovation strategy reflects its roles in knowledge, product, and arrangement. He pointed out that APAARI's strength lies in its process-oriented approach, with some niche products important for the region and knowledge related to partnerships. The focus is on developing a shared understanding and identifying specific areas where APAARI can contribute to innovation.

**Query from Dr. Margaret:** *She raised a concern about the commercialization of research results, questioning whether innovation should supersede research outcomes. She emphasized that APAARI is a research institution focused on promoting the commercialization of its research findings, and expressed caution about the potential confusion between research results and innovation.*

**Response from Dr Ravi Khetarpal :** *He responded to Dr. Margaret's concern by differentiating between commercialization and scaling up. He explained that commercialization involves elements like intellectual property rights, while scaling up is a different process. He emphasized that scaling up doesn't always involve commercialization of research outputs, suggesting the need for clearer differentiation between the two.*

**Comment from Dr. Hildegard:** *commented that innovation does not necessarily correlate with having large NARS like India and China. She suggested that innovation often arises out of necessity, especially in challenging situations. Using Rwanda as an example, she highlighted how the country, after recovering from genocide, became one of the most innovative in Africa by developing its own unique model for development, despite being a small, landlocked nation. She emphasized that innovation can come from smaller or less prominent countries, driven by the need to overcome significant challenges.*

Dr. Murat explained that while inventions can happen during times of stress or conflict, true innovation typically requires stability and peace. He explained that historical evidence shows that while difficult situations may prompt jumps in knowledge, innovation usually emerges when there is a clear problem to solve in a stable environment. Dr. Murat emphasized that scaling is multidimensional, going beyond just increasing user numbers. It includes expanding use cases, increasing the frequency of use, reaching new geographies, and addressing multiple goals, such as income and nutrition. Scaling also involves fostering behavioral changes, improving resource use, and building capabilities through training. He highlighted that scaling solutions effectively requires considering these broader impacts, not just user adoption or numbers.



**Query from Dr. Ravi Khetarpal :** *He commented that while outputs can be measured, outcomes like changing the government's mindset are more difficult to quantify. He questioned if such a mindset shift could be considered scaling up, especially when the government takes charge of the process and implements its own programs. He highlighted that mindset change is key to fostering innovation.*

**Response from Dr. Margaret:** *She responded to Dr. Ravi Khetarpal's comments, emphasizing the importance of starting with the real needs of the users before introducing scaling strategies. She acknowledged that while expected outcomes might not always be immediately realized, understanding the underlying needs is crucial for effective scaling.*

**Response from Dr. Joanna:** *She responded by challenging Dr. Ravi Khetarpal's point, stating that even to reach the output stage, the work must be driven by the needs of the users (NARS). She expressed that APAARI, as a facilitator, plays a crucial role throughout the entire process, not just up to the output stage. Dr. Joanna emphasized that the vision of making a change on the ground requires continuous involvement, and although the approach might evolve, APAARI should remain responsible for the entire journey, serving as a catalyst.*

Dr. Murat emphasized APAARI's role in building regional capabilities, particularly in ASEAN and the Pacific, by creating innovation management systems and resources. He suggested that APAARI's competitive advantage lies in connecting regional innovations and solving local problems, offering a unique scaling approach beyond just training. This could help APAARI compete in a space dominated by larger organizations.

**Comment from Dr. Margaret:** *She shared insights from a keynote on climate-smart agriculture, highlighting the concept of "scaling by design." She emphasized that scaling should be tailored to the specific needs of each location and community, aligning with the idea that understanding local systems and parameters is crucial for an effective scaling strategy.*

Dr. Murat discussed the challenges of scaling innovation, emphasizing that successful scaling requires a tailored strategy. Key factors include creating solution packages, focusing on effective demand, ensuring technical excellence, and promoting user independence for sustainability. He also highlighted the role of innovation hubs, which go beyond infrastructure to foster community engagement and policy influence. Murat shared his experience in building AI capacity for organizations, which can aid in fundraising and research management.



## Agenda 5: Technical Area - Knowledge Broker

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal emphasizes the importance of knowledge sharing, co-collation, and processing for APAARI. He highlights that APAARI should be a platform for knowledge exchange and innovation, with a focus on strengthening its role as a knowledge broker in the region. The discussions aim to ensure that APAARI builds confidence and fosters effective decision-making based on knowledge across its thematic areas.

Dr. Joanna facilitated the discussion, inviting comments on APAARI's role in knowledge sharing and innovation, emphasizing the need for interconnection across sectors.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal highlighted the importance of revisiting APAARI's value proposition as a knowledge broker and its role in facilitating inclusive scaling of innovation. He emphasized the need to assess how knowledge management partnerships can support scaling efforts and shift perceptions of scaling from geographic reach to broader, more inclusive impacts.

**Comment from Dr. Murat:** *He emphasized the need to focus on making knowledge more usable and beneficial, rather than just generating it. He suggested that APAARI could enhance its knowledge management approach by improving the usage and application of knowledge. Additionally, he highlighted the potential role of AI in transforming knowledge generation and suggested that APAARI could play a key role in leveraging AI in the Asia-Pacific region. By building capacity and using AI effectively, APAARI could become a center of attraction for AI-driven knowledge management in the region.*

**Comment from Dr. Hildegard :** *She provided two key suggestions for refining APAARI's value proposition. First, she noted that the current value proposition might appear too static and recommended making it more dynamic and agile. Instead of stating that APAARI "has a position," she suggested emphasizing its role in empowering and leveraging the strengths of its members. Second, she pointed out that the relationship between APAARI's vision and its members should be redefined. Rather than positioning the members as serving APAARI's vision, she proposed that APAARI's vision should serve and support the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), as they are the primary drivers of agricultural outcomes.*

*Dr. Ravi Khetarpal explained that APAARI, as a secretariat, does not have its own vision but works to support the collective vision of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS). He emphasized that APAARI's role is to facilitate and assist, rather than to drive a separate agenda.*

**Comment from Dr. Margaret:** *She followed up on Dr. Murat's comment, discussing the potential of using AI in agriculture. She shared an example where farmers might interact with*

*AI to ask questions related to farming, but emphasized that scientists must play a crucial role in contributing knowledge to ensure the AI system's effectiveness. She acknowledged the challenge but highlighted the potential impact of such efforts.*

**Comment from Sami:** *She emphasized that for AI to be effectively implemented in agricultural research, researchers need an interdisciplinary approach, combining knowledge of computer science with their expertise.*

**Comment from Prof Falvey:** *emphasized that AI should revolutionize agricultural research beyond generating reports. She highlighted its potential in creating new solutions, like bacteriophages for disease control, by bringing together multidisciplinary insights. She urged members to explore and stimulate such innovative uses of AI.*

**Comment from Dr. Joanna:** *Dr. Joanna emphasized that free AI models are already accessible and come with enough features to unlock numerous possibilities. She agreed that further advancements are forthcoming, with the key challenge being how to navigate these tools effectively. She stressed the importance of understanding the available tools, their functions, and the alternatives, highlighting the need for greater awareness and clarity on how to utilize them.*

**Suggestion from Dr. Margaret :** *Dr. Margaret suggested that this session is connected to the e-learning initiative. She proposed that the ideas discussed here could be incorporated into the e-learning work plan. She also recommended discussing potential topics to include in that plan. Prof Falvey agreed on linking the two topics, suggesting that the e-learning platform should focus on helping research organizations improve performance using AI, rather than just teaching basic lab setup.*

Dr. Joanna appreciated the connection between knowledge management, e-learning, and innovation, and raised the question of whether this also connects with policy and Dr. Ravi Khetarpal highlighted that knowledge is essential for policy-making and knowledge management is central to an organization, enabling effective policy development and implementation. Dr. Joanna expressed the importance of APAARI not only helping others use AI but also incorporating it into its own activities. She suggested that APAARI should demonstrate how it utilizes AI for knowledge sharing and operations, aligning with its internal practices and setting an example for others.

**Comment from Prof. Falvey :** *He emphasized that AI has much deeper and more significant applications within research institutions. He highlighted that APAARI's role as a knowledge broker should focus on how AI can be utilized in knowledge brokering. This involves understanding how elite researchers apply and interpret AI tools. He also pointed out that AI can help spread innovations, such as those from Japan, to other members of APAARI, fostering the exchange of knowledge.*

Dr. Joanna raised a concern about the rapid pace of AI development, noting that it may require APAARI to rethink its approach to knowledge brokering. She emphasized that while AI is an important topic, it is just one part of the broader scope of knowledge sharing and brokering. Given the fast-changing nature of AI, there may be a need to adapt how APAARI operates in this area.

**Comment from Dr. Margaret:** *She suggested that APAARI should consult with members who have expertise in knowledge programs to leverage their skills and better integrate AI into their knowledge-sharing efforts. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal mentioned that the experts are already part of the e-learning group, and they will be consulted on this matter as well.*

**Query from Dr. Joanna:** *She raised the question of how APAARI is differentiating itself as a knowledge broker, emphasizing that while there are many knowledge platforms available, APAARI should not just be another one. She pointed out that the focus should not only be on the technology of the platform but on what APAARI is doing differently in its role as a knowledge broker.*

**Response from Dr. Ravi Khetarpal:** *He explained that APAARI has a knowledge management focal point in each partner country, and they hold annual meetings to ensure information is shared effectively across the network. He emphasized the role of national and sub-regional focal points in disseminating knowledge, rather than relying solely on APAARI's central office. Additionally, he highlighted that APAARI is evolving by linking innovation with knowledge management, working with platforms focused on agricultural innovation. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal noted that while APAARI does not directly create innovations, it captures and shares them, fostering a network for scaling up knowledge with partners*



Dr. Joanna expressed concern about APAARI's role as a knowledge broker, questioning how it could stand out as unique and impactful. She suggested that while knowledge brokering is integrated into APAARI's work, it might need a distinct approach or messaging to make it feel special and compelling.

In response, Dr Margaret emphasized the importance of APAARI's engagement with global forums, suggesting that showcasing its products and ideas on the global stage would highlight its uniqueness and value. Further Prof. Falvey pointed out that while APAARI's work might not seem exciting at first, its efforts, such as improving market access across regions by bringing together regulations, have significant potential benefits. He emphasized that this work, which crosses boundaries, plays a crucial role in policy research.

Dr Joanna highlighted that knowledge brokering is integrated and a key part of the process, but what APAARI is doing feels more like collective action.

Dr. Murat suggested reconsidering the term "knowledge broker" due to language differences and its potential misinterpretation, such as "middleman." He recommended testing the term across languages. He also emphasized that APAARI should focus on creating actionable, useful knowledge—referred to as "intelligence"—rather than just being a broker.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal expressed that there is need to fine-tune the presentation of the strategic plan. He emphasized the importance of approval from the General Assembly, which could take up to a year due to their infrequent meetings. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal proposed that, in the meantime, a 3-4 page document could be developed based on the strategic plan for use in discussions with potential donors or partners. He also noted that the current adjustments were more of a refinement than a new plan and that it was important to align actions with the existing strategic plan while evolving it over time.

### **Agenda 6: Scope in Asia Pacific**

Dr. Margaret acknowledged APAARI's ongoing strength in the Asia Pacific region despite delays in securing legal status in Thailand. She commended the APAARI Secretariat and Dr. Ravi Khetarpal's leadership, emphasizing that the work continues and that a host country agreement would further enhance APAARI's effectiveness.

Further, Prof. Falvey expressed that APAARI has been successful as a member organization and highlighted the potential for further growth once APAARI achieves IGO status. He emphasized the changing landscape over the past 30 years, suggesting that APAARI can enhance efficiency in the region by acting as a broker, facilitating better collaboration with local expertise and





organizations like CGIAR. He sees APAARI as a platform to drive dynamic growth and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Dr. Joanna expressed that APAARI should consider having a signature innovation or product to enhance its visibility and marketability. She emphasized the importance of positioning APAARI with a standout innovation that could be highly impactful and relevant across various areas. This could help build a stronger profile and recognition. She suggested that such an innovation, even as part of a broader series, would not only showcase APAARI's capabilities but also contribute to long-term recognition, similar to how organizations like FAO release periodic reports like the State of Nutrition.

Dr. Shaun Coffey expressed that APAARI could consider developing a "signature innovation" focused on an integrated farming systems approach, rather than just singular technologies. He emphasized that in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in the Pacific Islands, farming and fishing are often intertwined with forestry. Therefore, an integrated approach that combines multiple sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, and forestry, would be more beneficial for smallholder farmers in these regions. This could include technology packages that integrate products, processes, and people to improve farming systems. He suggested that APAARI could play a key role in facilitating such integrated systems, which would have a broader impact across the region.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal appreciated Dr. Shaun Coffey's point about the integrated systems approach, emphasizing that APAARI has been striving for a systems approach but lacked resources. He agreed that working towards a framework for integrated systems is crucial and should be a signature focus for APAARI. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal also highlighted the importance of incorporating indigenous and "forgotten" foods, noting the work done with GFAIR to scale up this effort. Additionally, he proposed exploring partnerships with organizations like NACA to integrate fisheries into the broader framework, especially for the Pacific region.

Dr. Simon Wilkinson from NACA clarified that while NACA primarily focuses on aquaculture, it occasionally engages in fisheries-related issues, particularly in areas like genetics and conservation. He expressed NACA's openness to collaboration, despite resource constraints, and emphasized their flexibility in leveraging contacts and networks to support APAARI's activities. He also mentioned NACA's agreement with SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community), through which they collaborate in the Pacific region rather than operating directly.

Dr. Shaun Coffey stressed the need for collaboration in innovation systems, highlighting challenges like water management and the impact of trade on local diets, contributing to issues like nutritional diabetes. He suggested involving churches as partners to address diet balance and food preservation, leveraging their local influence.

Dr. Simon Wilkinson expressed that most member governments are open to training and capacity-building requests, particularly if they come from official government channels. He highlighted the challenge of sustaining innovation, noting that even successful innovations often lose their novelty over time, emphasizing the need for continuous movement and adaptation. He

suggested that APAARI's e-learning academy could be a promising signature innovation due to its scalability, adaptability, and low funding requirements. The platform could offer diverse training courses, involve partners, and be accessible for free, making it widely accessible despite communication barriers in some regions. Additionally, he noted significant progress in overcoming language barriers through improved translation technologies.

**Comment from Dr. Murat :** *He emphasized that e-learning sustainability depends on making the platform useful and user-friendly, rather than just developing the technology. He highlighted the importance of understanding user needs and fine-tuning the interface to help users find relevant content quickly.*

**Comment from Dr. Shaun Coffey:** *He commented that sustainability should be viewed as an evolving process, not an endpoint. He emphasized the need for sustainable intensification to enhance natural capital and cautioned against imposing sustainability rules on smallholders without considering the context of their systems.*

**Comment from Dr. Joanna:** *She commented that APAARI needs to clarify its position, beyond just listing activities like capacity building and advocacy. She suggested that the organization should focus on positioning itself as either a broker, catalyst, or active participant in collective action, and this positioning should be reflected in how APAARI presents itself internationally.*

Further Dr. Shaun Coffey expressed support for collaboration on the e-learning academy, noting that while some may lack direct access, they can be guided to places where they can connect. He agreed with Simon on the potential of the platform, mentioning that with the right tools and culturally sensitive content, it could be an effective and accessible resource.

Dr. Margaret concluded by urging APAARI to strengthen its position in the Asia Pacific region, engage more in global forums, and focus on knowledge sharing and sustainability. She emphasized APAARI's role in supporting small-scale farmers and encouraged greater visibility in international platforms like the ATW (Asia-Pacific Tropical Wetlands) Guard.

## **Agenda 7: Resource mobilization**

Manish emphasized that resource mobilization goes beyond finances, including human resources, knowledge, and collaborations. Building trust with major donors like ADB or the World Bank expands funding opportunities. Strategic alignment with donor priorities is crucial to avoid compromising the organization's mandate. Partnerships, such as with CAPSHA and GNC, enable resource sharing, like expertise and insights, without relying solely on funding. This holistic approach ensures effective resource utilization while staying mission-focused.



Dr. Hildegard highlighted key points, including the distinction between **public and private funding**, the necessity for **co-funding**, and the existence of various funding types. She also emphasized the importance of meeting specific requirements to successfully apply for funding opportunities.

Dr. Joanna emphasized the importance of refining APAARI's resource mobilization strategy by focusing on key donors and building long-term relationships. Given APAARI's limited fundraising capacity, she suggested prioritizing a select group of donors, leveraging existing connections within the board, council, and team to strengthen ties. Additionally, she proposed engaging high-net-worth individuals, particularly Asians abroad who are keen to give back to Asia, citing the Lee Foundation's \$1 million annual contribution to IRRI for capacity building as an example. Finally, she recommended creating a modest endowment fund to cover operational costs, positioning APAARI as highly cost-efficient by eliminating overhead expenses, thereby enhancing its appeal to funders. These approaches aim to secure sustainable, unrestricted funding while showcasing APAARI's value and efficiency.

Prof. Falvey suggested that resource contributions for APAARI don't always need to be in monetary terms. He proposed that Thailand, as an obvious contributor, could provide non-financial support, such as office facilities. This would not cost Thailand much but could significantly benefit APAARI by saving on expenses like rent and maintenance.

Dr. Hildegard highlighted in-kind contributions, like membership fees or endowment funds, to enhance APAARI's independence, allowing external funders to focus on projects. She suggested host countries, like Thailand, provide support through facilities or resources.

Dr. Murat proposed innovative fundraising ideas for APAARI, including leveraging crowdsourcing platforms, offering expertise-based services regionally or globally, creating an online presence on platforms like YouTube or TikTok for ongoing cash flow, and utilizing donor mechanisms like GIZ funds to deploy experts at no cost. These strategies focus on mobilizing both financial and non-financial resources effectively.

Dr. Ravi suggested a strategic approach for resource mobilization, emphasizing the concept of triangular cooperation. This involves leveraging the economic and technical resources of countries within the region, such as Malaysia, Korea, Japan, and Australia, to address regional gaps without directly asking for funds from them. He also highlighted the importance of approaching large agencies like the Asian Development Bank and Rockefeller Foundation for potential funding aligned with APAARI's goals. Additionally, he proposed tapping into corporate social responsibility (CSR) funding and carefully preparing for triangular cooperation opportunities before pitching to potential donors.

Dr. Hildegard highlighted climate finance as the largest funding source for research in the Global South, surpassing traditional development funds. She suggested leveraging this for agri-food system transformation projects that contribute to sustainability and climate goals. Additionally, she noted that remittances from the diaspora are a significant source of funding.



Dr. Joanna shared several resource mobilization ideas, including leveraging high-net-worth individuals through connections like Rockefeller, exploring climate change funding through carbon credits, and developing self-sustaining income streams like collective branding of "forgotten foods." She also suggested tapping into Singapore's growing nonprofit hub and India's CSR funds by setting up a foundation. Additionally, she emphasized exploring funding opportunities in wealthier Asian countries and the potential of AI funding from companies like Google, which are interested in innovative projects. Lastly, she recommended exploring banks and programs like U.S. AID for additional support.

Dr. Hildegard concluded by stressing the importance of prioritizing resource mobilization efforts, focusing on co-funding and investments rather than donations. She highlighted the new CSR regulations in Europe and the need for an independent legal status. She also recommended leveraging triangular cooperation and strengthening branding and marketing to attract investors.

### **Agenda 8: Human resources:**

Manish discussed the progress toward securing the organization's IGO status, which involves assessing resources and funding needs. With assistance from ACIAR and KPMG, they analyzed staffing and funding scenarios, providing a strategic view for 2025 and beyond. Three funding scenarios were proposed, outlining minimal, conservative, and optimal resource allocation. The team's structure and growth will depend on annual funding, with a goal of expanding staffing and operations to meet the organization's needs. Manish emphasized the importance of transitioning from a small, overstretched team to one with permanent, salaried staff for long-term sustainability. He highlighted that the legal status would enable better operational structure and funding.

Dr. Joanna suggested exploring innovative ways to increase staff while keeping costs low. She proposed considering staff roles that could overlap with other organizations or initiatives, such as GFAR and APAARI, to maximize efficiency. By leveraging shared efforts, it may be possible to derive additional benefits without doubling the resources. She also recommended thinking creatively to identify potential partnerships or collaborations that could help meet staffing needs while maintaining a focus on efficiency. Dr. Joanna pointed out that ACIAR's strong focus on Asia Pacific might offer opportunities for collaboration or innovation in staffing and resource mobilization.

Dr. Hildegard responded, acknowledging Dr. Joanna's suggestion. She confirmed that they are already working on sharing resources and collaboration, particularly due to the challenges of affording staff. She emphasized the importance of paying decent salaries and being more distributed in the current remote work environment. Dr. Hildegard also noted that funding organizations, like the European Commission, prefer collaborative efforts rather than isolated projects, which reinforces the value of partnering and working together towards common goals.

Dr. Shaun Coffey emphasized the importance of aligning with funders' value propositions and starting fundraising with specific projects to demonstrate success. He suggested that securing



government support could be key, as it would reduce future public sector costs. He also noted that funding flows from North America are expected to change in the next 6 to 12 months.

Dr. Murat suggested three models to address the human resources and fundraising intersection: subsidizing human resources, where experts from the North are funded by governments to work in the global South; utilizing volunteers, especially young professionals or retirees willing to contribute without compensation; and offering internship programs to attract young talent while providing learning opportunities and salaries. These approaches, he believes, could be particularly beneficial for APAARI and similar organizations, helping to drive future development efforts.

Dr. Joanna suggested that volunteers could be effective in communications, especially for fundraising. She shared her experience of empowering local communicators in Africa through capacity building, which could be a potential model for APAARI. She also noted the challenge of localizing aid distribution and how APAARI could help empower local communities in that process. Lastly, she humorously referenced a \$6.2 million banana artwork as a creative fundraising idea.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal highlighted the importance of human resource development and resource mobilization for APAARI's future. He acknowledged the team's hard work and dedication despite challenges and emphasized that these areas would be the foundation for future efforts.

### **Agenda 8: Concluding Remarks**

Prof. Lindsay concluded by emphasizing the importance of focusing on resources, especially financial and human capital, for the success of institutions. He highlighted the need for a shift in strategic planning to adapt to the changing global context, including China's influence and security concerns related to food and water. He stressed the necessity of using regional resources to support local initiatives rather than relying on external funding. He also reflected on the productive and civil discussions over the past two days and encouraged continued collaboration in line with evolving global trends

### **Vote of Thanks:**

On behalf of APAARI, Sami conveyed heartfelt appreciation to all the participants for their invaluable contributions throughout the meeting. Sami expressed special thanks to Dr. Joanna, Dr. Hildegard, Dr. Murat, and Dr. Margaret for their unwavering support and insightful contributions. Acknowledgement was also given to the team from DoA Thailand and to the behind-the-scenes team for their dedicated efforts in ensuring the event's success.

Sami emphasized the importance of collective collaboration and looked forward to continued partnerships and shared progress. The gratitude extended to everyone involved reflects the commitment to future work and collaboration in the spirit of mutual growth and success.



## Annexure 1A

### List of Participants

S No.	Country	Participants Name	Organization
1	Australia	Prof. Lindsay Falvey	ACIAR
2	Rome	Prof. Dr. Hildegard Lingnau	GFAiR
3	Thailand	Mr. Simon Wilkinson	NACA
4	Thailand	Mr. Chokanan Prompichai	NACA
5	Thailand	Mr. Norihito Kanamori	JIRCAS
6	Thailand	Dr Margarate Yoovatana	Expert
7	Australia	Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka	Expert
8	Australia	Prof Shaun Coffey	Crawford Fund
9	Chang Mai	Dr. Murat Sartas	EFARD
10	Thailand	Dr. Orachos Napsintuwong	Kasetsart University
11	Thailand	Ms. Mallika Kaewwises	DOA
12	Thailand	Mr. Piyasak Akcaboot	DOA
13	Thailand	Mr. Tridate Khaithong	DOA



14	Thailand	Dr. Ravi Khetarpal	APAARI
15	Thailand	Mr. Manish Rai	APAARI
16	Thailand	Ms. Samitha Haldar	APAARI
17	Thailand	Dr. Thomrongsak	Consultant

**Annexure 1B**

**Tentative Programme  
Strategic Planning for APAARI**

Chair: Prof Lindsay Falvey

<b>21 November (10 AM – 4-30 PM)</b>		
Welcome and Introduction of Participants/Experts	Ravi Khetarpal,ED, APAARI	10 AM
Opening Remarks and Purpose of the Meeting	Prof Lindsay Falvey, Chair, APAARI	10-10 AM
Setting the Stage: Background on APAARI	Ravi Khetarpal	10-20 AM
Impressions of Participants	All participants	10-50 AM
Comfort Break		
Discussions on Comparative Advantages		
Partnership and Membership	Open Discussion (Facilitated by Joanna and Sami)	11-15 PM
Way Forward		12-15 PM
Lunch		
		12-30 PM
Global Linkages	Facilitated by Ravi Khetarpal	1-30 PM
Way Forward		2-30 PM
Comfort Break		
Scope in Asia Pacific	Open Discussion (Facilitated by Margaret, Joanna, Shaun, Ravi)	3 PM
Way forward		4 PM
Closing Remarks	Prof Lindsay Falvey	4-30 PM
<b>22 November (9 AM – 5-15 PM)</b>		
Recap of Day 1	Ravi Khetarpal	9 AM
Technical Areas to be addressed ( 9-30 – 12 noon)		



● Agricultural Innovation System	Facilitated by Hildegard and Murat	
● Capacity Building	Facilitated by Shaun and Ravi	
Comfort Break		
● Knowledge Broker	Facilitated by Joanna	
● Policy Strengthening	Facilitated by Orachos	
Lunch		12 noon
Visit to MOFA, Thailand by Chair and APAARI officials		1-30 PM
Coffee Break		3 PM
Human resources	Ravi, Manish	3-30 PM
Resource mobilization	Hildegard, Joanna, Ravi, Manish,	4-30 PM
Concluding Remarks by the Chair	Prof Lindsay Falvey	5 PM