

Market Transformation of Resource-Efficient Rice

Public-Private Partnership to improve sustainability and resilience of rice production

Rationale

Rice provides food security to more than half the world population and is in Southern countries mainly produced by millions of smallholder farmers.

Today, the global demand for rice is increasing, while the rice production is lagging behind. In addition, current practices in irrigated rice are often inefficient in the use of resources, especially water, fertilizers and pesticides. There is, hence, an urgent need to sustainably intensify the rice production, in order to meet the growing demand, keep the prices within reach of consumers, reduce pressures on natural resources, lower greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to climate change and associated drought, flooding, heat and salinity. The good news is that this is actually within reach.

In 2010, a group of rice exporters, traders, processors, retailers, research institutes and the Thai government has joined forces with a UNEP led initiative to create a Public-Private Partnership to initiate a market transformation in support of resource-efficient intensification of irrigated rice. Currently, the partners form a Sustainable Rice Task Force that serves as a learning platform.

The PPP's Strategy

The partners have formulated a strategy that aims to: develop an enhanced set of Good Agricultural Practices that combine good practices for resource efficiency and social welfare; define a clear set of specific targets related to yield, quality, food safety, greenhouse gas emissions and water quality; and develop an international Sustainable Commodity Initiative for Rice.

To realize the strategy, field pilots are being designed and will be executed for the development of a tool kit of agricultural practices for increased resource-efficient rice. A first pilot will be used to develop a framework of best practices for resource efficiency which will take into account the diversity and specificity of individual rice systems and be applicable to rice systems globally.



Source: Aidenvironment.

Secondly, the Sustainable Rice Task Force is designing a governance structure that includes membership, decision making and funding. To ensure that the initiative has the intended impacts on its beneficiaries, progress will be measured through monitoring and evaluations. Tools, guidelines and a communication platform will be developed to facilitate the exchange of best practices and knowledge to encourage the scaling up of collective action and create economies of scale.

‘Realizing sustainability impacts in less-developed countries requires an understanding of market linkages and a balance between economic, social and environmental goals.’

The Vision of Success

In 5 years time, the Task Force wants to have achieved:

- A toolbox of resource-efficient rice agricultural practices that suits a variety of agricultural, social and environmental conditions and that is deployed at farm and landscape/watershed level;
- An increase farmer's income at regular market prices. No premium prices are needed to sustain resource-efficient rice production;
- The stakeholders work together in the form of a Sustainable Commodity Initiative. The Initiative has become global and acts as a learning platform, creating an enabling environment for resource-efficient rice production.

The partners



Interested?

Contact Jan Willem Molenaar to find out what we can do for you.

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