



REGIONAL ORIENTATION WORKSHOP ON GLOBALLY IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE SYSTEMS (GIAHS) FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

12-13 November 2013

Bangkok, Thailand



Table of Contents

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations | 1 |
| 1- Institutional system of GIAHS and the Secretariat | 2 |
| 2- Consultation / Advisory Service Mechanism | 2 |
| 3- National GIAHS Mechanism..... | 2 |
| 4- South-South Cooperation – Twining Programme..... | 2 |
| 5- Resources..... | 2 |
| 6- Regional networking | 2 |
| Proceedings | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Objectives of the Regional Workshop | 6 |
| Expected Outputs | 6 |
| Summary of Sessions | 5 |
| Appendix 1 Workshop Agenda | 7 |
| Appendix 2 Participant List | 10 |

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

This Regional Workshop was conducted to enhance understanding of GIAHS concept and programme, share the experiences and lessons among the countries which have implemented GIAHS and those seeking to join the programme. The workshop also took advantage of reviewing the progress and achievements of overall GIAHS programme and the function of the GIAHS Secretariat as well as identification, assessment and designation process and the operational modalities of implementation in different countries.

Pioneering GIAHS countries (China, India, Philippines) and participating countries (total of 18), shared their knowledge and experience regarding the agricultural heritage concept and possible application and engagement in GIAHS programme.

The workshop was attended by 55 delegates and participants from 18 Asia Pacific Countries including ADG-RAP and officers from FAO HQ and regional office. It was a timely opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of traditional farming systems in the face of climate change and revitalization of rural economies based on lessons learned and best practices gained from the GIAHS existing sites. The workshop promoted knowledge sharing on GIAHS and capacity building in countries in the region in identifying potential GIAHS sites and in the formulation of GIAHS proposals. The meeting was very successful in obtaining its objectives and discussed GIAHS conceptual frame work, organizational structure, policies and procedures for inventory, identification, assessment and designation procedures as well as reviewing and discussing the function of the GIAHS Secretariat, and the preparation and the implementation of Action Plans for the Dynamic Conservation of GIAHS. China, Japan, India and the Philippines presented a summary of their experience and achievements in implementing GIAHS and Korea elaborated on their two candidates GIAHS and action plans. the 12 other Asia Pacific countries presented preliminary proposals and engaged in promoting the GIAHS concept in their countries and follow up through appropriate channel the submission of their potential GIAHS.

There was an active discussion among participants during the two-day session and several potential GIAHS were presented by the delegation of the participating countries.

The workshop took advantage of the presence of experts from FAO HQs, FAORAP, GIAHS Secretariat, World Agriculture Heritage Foundation, and GIAHS implementing countries such as China, Philippines, India and Japan, in discussing various issues on GIAHS and produced recommendations for future follow up which are summarized hereunder.

1- Institutional system of GIAHS and the Secretariat:

- The GIAHS Partnership is a UN Initiative launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. It has successfully implemented its objectives and

targets through various extra budgetary funded projects. During this period the GIAHS partnership has developed a solid institutional mechanism including: A multi-donor programme covering 11 countries and 26 GIAHS designated sites supported by the GIAHS Secretariat composed of a full time technical officer funded by the Global environmental Facility and ten percent of coordinating time allocated by the Director of Land and Water Division of FAO where the GIAHS Initiative is hosted. The 15 members each Steering Committee and Scientific Committee are voluntary based composed of renowned international experts and policy makers with defined terms of reference and functions of the committees has been defined.

- This structure has been functional and regular meetings of these committees have been organized every other year during the GIAHS forum and allowed a smooth process of designation.
- However, in view of the growing number of requests for GIAHS designation and the changes in the management of GIAHS, it would be appropriate to review the mandate and composition of these bodies for more transparency and regularity.

2- Consultation/ Advisory Service Mechanism:

- The consultancies and advisory services as well as technical assistance for identification, assessment and the preparation of the submission for GIAHS designation; the policy support, fund raising (for developing countries) and technical assistance for the formulation and the implementation of “ GIAHS Dynamic Conservation Action Plans”, has been provided by the GIAHS Secretariat or occasionally through partner institutions.
- In view of the present evolution of the GIAHS Secretariat which is involved directly in GIAHS designation decision making, it would be appropriate to separate these two functions to avoid a conflict of interest and such process should be implemented through independents reviewers and institutions that could be hired by the interested country or institutions which are not directly involved in GIAHS designation.

3- National GIAHS Mechanism;

- The establishment of a national GIAHS Committee/Mechanism is recommended at country level with the establishment of a mechanism for the recognition of national GIAHS sites.
- The National GIAHS Mechanism is composed of a multi-institutional mechanism generally chaired by the representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, or Natural Resources and Environment in each country, that provides overall policy direction in the mainstreaming of GIAHS into national plans and programs, coordinate and monitor the development of the action plans and review and approves policy

intervention measures. This mechanism is fully functional and operates depending on national level priority. However, more support involvement and coordination of the Ministries of agriculture is desirable.

4- South-South Cooperation- Twinning program

- The South-South cooperation is an excellent opportunity for GIAHS countries to exchange expertise and learn from each other in the implementation of dynamic conservation of GIAHS. This would also allow expanding GIAHS and providing technical assistance through financial and human resources provided by the experienced middle income countries like China under its umbrella South-South cooperation programme.
- The Twinning concept was coined by the Director General of FAO Mr. Graziano da Silva during the GIAHS Forum organized in Japan in May 2013 and is an integral part of Noto Communiqué. It would allow close collaboration and mutual support between two countries with similar GIAHS and would apply both between developing and developed countries. Considering many Rice systems in Asia, twinning between GIAHS Rice systems in several Asian countries such as Japan and the Philippines and or Indonesia, as well as Korea and or India, Sri-Lanka and Thailand, etc. would be appropriate. The Twinning concept could also be used labeling of the GIAHS products and promotion of agro-tourism

5- Resources (formulation and implementation)

- Appropriate and sustainable financial and human resources should be allocated for both running of the GIAHS Secretariat as well as supporting countries in the identification, formulation and submission of their GIAHS including the preparation of GIAHS Dynamic conservation action plan.
- At the Secretariat level Regular Programme funding would be necessary for the sustainability, transparency and neutrality of the GIAHS Secretariat in the designation process. At regional and country levels TCP facility resources could be allocated based on the priority formulation of the request for the initial phase of the identification, assessment, formulation and submission of the GIAHS but also for exploring the donor support and extra-budgetary resources such as GEF funding as well as self-funding support.

6- Regional networking

- FAO need to invest in enhancing awareness and understanding of the importance of agricultural heritage and how stakeholder in different countries can share experience and can benefit or be rewarded from their sustainable management practices. General features and replicable characteristics of GIAHS in the in-situ

conservation and sustainable utilization of genetic resources; conversion of ecosystems goods and services into marketable products and incomes; resiliency of production system; adaptation to harsh environments especially in an era of climate change are among valuable lessons learnt and collaborative arrangement to be implemented.

- Specific Regional network with dedicated website connected with the global and national GIAHS networks hosted at the initial stage by the FAO regional offices should be established to enhance collaboration among countries and learning lessons on GIAHS dynamic Conservation. Once the networks are strong and functional the secretariat of such networks could be rotated among countries.

All presentations made at the workshop can be found at the below web link.

http://www.fao.org/asiapacific/rap/home/meetings/list/detail/en/?meetings_id=992&year=2013

Introduction

Today, a major challenge facing humanity is how to achieve a sustainable agriculture that provides enough food and ecosystem services for present and future generations in an era of climate change and accelerated environmental degradation. In continuously looking to survive and coping through centuries with extreme weather events and climatic variability, farmers living in the world have developed and/or inherited their own farming practices managed in ingenious ways, allowing smallholders to meet their subsistence needs in the midst of environmental variability without depending much on modern agricultural technologies. The stubborn persistence of millions of hectares under traditional farming is living proof of a successful indigenous agricultural strategy and constitutes a tribute to the “creativity” of small farmers throughout the developing world. Today, well into the first decade of the 21st century, there are in the world millions of smallholders, family farmers and indigenous peoples practicing resource-conserving farming which is testament to the remarkable resiliency of these agroecosystems in the face of continuous environmental and economic change, while contributing substantially to conservation of biodiversity, household food security and traditional cultural heritage. Many of these agro-ecosystems are unique in their attributes and maintain a specific landscape in rural areas.

Since 2002 FAO implements a global initiative on dynamic conservation and adaptive management of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage systems (GIAHS) aiming to identify and ensure global recognition of the importance of these unique traditional agricultural systems for food security and sustainable development.

The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)¹ is an international partnership initiative that aims to identify, support and safeguard Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and their livelihoods, agricultural and associated biodiversity, landscapes, knowledge systems and cultures around the world. The GIAHS Partnership recognizes the crucial importance of the well-being of family farming communities in an integrated approach while directing activities towards sustainable agriculture and rural development.

The GIAHS Initiative explicitly recognises that change in "traditional" political, social and economic processes is inevitable; they cannot be frozen or re-created. Consequently, it adopts the “adaptive management” approach to explore and develop novel political, social and economic processes that strengthen the existing management systems, and which generate the same biodiversity outcomes – that is, maintain the same races, species and agroecosystems. Thus, the processes may be different and contain new and modern elements, but the way they interact with the biophysical world will maintain the values of these agroecosystems.

¹ For more information, www.GIAHS.org

Over the past decade, the GIAHS Initiative has been piloting an innovative model of engaging communities, local and national governments in the adaptive management of agricultural heritage and conservation of system's goods and services. It has served as a learning laboratory for identifying new ways to sustain nature's bounty, the health of ecosystems, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture, protection of traditional knowledge systems, culture, and more importantly, building a bridge for the sustainable future. The GIAHS Initiative promotes activities aimed at: (i) assisting in formulation and implementation of national policies aimed at preserving these agricultural heritages systems and the biodiversity, traditional knowledge and natural resources management systems; (ii) empowering local communities and indigenous peoples to sustain their livelihood that is based on these systems and explore options for improvement of these systems without jeopardizing their ecosystem resiliency, goods and services; and (iii) recognizing the links between "agri-cultural" diversity and cultural diversity and the achievements of local community members and indigenous peoples. In parallel to the *in situ* activities, the GIAHS initiative is looking for a stronger recognition, at the highest level of the policy making agenda, of the contribution made by traditional agricultural systems to the conservation of the biological and cultural diversity of the planet.

Ultimately, it will help the small farmers, indigenous communities and rural peoples living in and around GIAHS to establish strengthened socio-political systems (governance) and economic processes (markets and employment opportunities) that help them address the challenges of today's world (with all its modern pressures) and let them to take advantage of the opportunities of modern living, while at the same time maintaining the traditional agro-ecosystems and interlinked cultures they have.

Currently, there are a total number of 26 GIAHS sites which were approved by FAO till now (as of July 2013) including those in Africa, Latin America and Asia. In Asia and the Pacific region, the participating countries are limited to China India, Japan and the Philippines. Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Iran, etc. are in the process of formulating GIAHS proposals. More recently there are potential sites identified in various countries in the region including Thailand for the teak forest resources conservation.

In May 2013, an [international forum on GIAHS](#) was held in Noto, Ishikawa, Japan where participants from around the world have shared their knowledge on the fundamental values of agricultural patrimony as well as shared their experiences on managing and revitalizing local economies through GIAHS dynamic conservation. The Forum was highlighted by the presence of the FAO Director General and several High Level officials from existing GIAHS sites and key international organizations. The GIAHS Forum featured, among others, the adoption of the [Noto Communique](#).

The Noto Communique recommends (i) the progressive designation of further GIAHS sites to promote the conservation of agricultural heritage and its contributions towards global food security and economic development; (ii) promotion of on-the-ground projects and activities, particularly in developing countries; (iii) the existing GIAHS support the

recognition of candidatures of GIAHS areas in less developed countries; and (iv) promote the twinning of GIAHS sites between developed and developing countries.

Within this context, a two-day Regional Workshop on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems for Asia and the Pacific shall be organized. Countries in the region with existing GIAHS shall be invited to share their knowledge, experiences and achievements. The Regional Workshop is aimed to enhance understanding and promote awareness of the fundamental values, essential goods and services harboured in agriculture in globally important agricultural heritage systems.

Objectives of the Regional Workshop

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To promote awareness of GIAHS, and its impacts and benefits
- To share experiences and knowledge on dynamic conservation of GIAHS
- To build up the capacity of countries in the region in identifying potential GIAHS sites and formulating quality GIAHS proposals for recognition
- To promote a network of stakeholders including recipient Governments, development partners, donors, UN agencies, CSOs, private sectors, etc. towards creating a strong public interest and support to the initiative, and mobilize resources

Expected Outputs

- Enhanced understanding and awareness on GIAHS Initiative
- GIAHS knowledge, experiences and lessons learned are shared with the member countries and partners in the region
- Capacity of countries in identifying and formulating GIAHS proposal is enhanced
- A regional network on GIAHS and twinning programme is conceptualized and way forward is discussed and agreed

Summary of Sessions

Opening Session

Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO RAP) delivered his welcome and opening remarks in highlighting millions of smallholders, family farmers and indigenous peoples practicing resource-conserving farming which is testament to the remarkable resiliency of these agroeco-systems in the face of continuous environmental and economic change while contributing substantially to conservation of biodiversity, household food security and traditional cultural heritage. Mr Chalit Damrongsak, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), Thailand welcomed all participants to the important forum and emphasized the importance of initiative and opportunity. Mr Yuji Niino, Land Management Officer, RAP introduced the workshop background, objectives and expected outputs with the workshop agenda (Appendix 1).

Session 1: GIAHS Familiarisation

The session was moderated by Mr Konuma to discuss the origin, nature, concept of agricultural heritage, criteria for selection, and implementation framework of the GIAHS Initiative. Mr Masahito Enomoto, Deputy Director, AGP introduced origin, nature, criteria and conceptual framework of GIAHS programme. Dr Parviz Koohafkan further elaborated the implementation framework and synergies and inter-linkages of GIAHS within various development strategies and agenda with sharing the cases and lessons learned. GIAHS was discussed as a model for resilient agriculture in similar ecosystems and for sustainable agriculture and rural development. It also discussed demonstration and exploration, including GIAHS activities that responds to international development agenda of medium term and long term and emphasized to achieve balance between conservation, adaptation and sustainable socio-economic development.

Session 2: Expansion of sites, Mainstreaming of GIAHS Concept and Marketing of GIAHS essential goods and services

This session was to share the lessons based on the past and on-going GIAHS activities, and capitalize on what has been learned to date from the existing country achievements and examples to build recommendations and way forward to further the: (i) expansion and/or out scaling of sites; and (ii) mainstreaming of GIAHS concept at national and local level policies, and (iii) marketing goods and services e.g. promote sustainability and conservation by increasing the premium of GIAHS products and services through branding and labelling and empowering small scale farmers and local communities through recognition of their agricultural heritage.

The representatives of China, India, Japan and the Philippines presented the current status of GIAHS programme in each country with their experiences and recommendations. Mr Tong Yue, Director General, Center of International Cooperation Service (CICOS), Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), China presented that GIAHS received high priority by the Government, importance of having management system in place, exploring various conservation measures, widely cover heritage conservation at national level, intensifying scientific and technology research to support understanding and validation of systems and necessity of wider effort in publicizing the programme and its value and effectiveness. He suggested enhancing regional cooperation, experience sharing and joint studies under the FAO GIAHS programme.

Mr Min Qingwen, CNACH-IGSNRR-CAS introduced 8 existing GIAHS sites and several potential sites with emphasis in managing local sites and its benefits. He also introduced their procedures, planning, training and benefits ecologically, economically and socially.

Dr N. Anil Kumar, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, India presented characteristics and uniqueness of the Indian GIAHS sites, on-going management efforts, challenges/opportunities and possible plan of actions in GIAHS management, and conclusions how and why to develop the ideal sustainable management actions. He introduced 12 high priority agricultural heritage systems in India including KUTTANAD GIAHS which characterizes below sea level farming and ingenious water management and special benefits such as diverse and rich fish resources. He claimed that climate change would be an opportunity as heritage agriculture is Climate Smart Agriculture and bio-diverse agro-ecosystems are generally resilient to abrupt disruptions and community based management of agricultural biodiversity can underpin local adaptation. Five strategies namely a) working at the landscape level with an ecosystems approach, b) inter-sectoral approaches and consistent policies across the agricultural, food security, cultural change and climate change, c) studying and scaling up of effective climate-smart practices of Heritage Agriculture, d) institutional and financial support for farmers, fishers and forest dependant peoples to make the transition from heritage agriculture to climate-smart agriculture, and e) investments in heritage-climate-smart agriculture must link finance opportunities from public and private sectors. He also introduced the world biodiversity strategic plan with 20 strategic targets.

Mr Yutaka Sumita, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan presented the GIAHS programme in Japan, with specific features of Japanese agriculture environment, culture and economic benefits. He particularly highlighted the contribution for regaining pride and confidence in local farming and production methods and changing youth's perception to farming and agriculture. He cited the Noto communique to reiterate the importance of putting efforts in keeping up with the

quality and value of the GIAHS through periodic monitoring and support for GIAHS activities and information dissemination of the designated region such as promoting twinning of GIAHS sites. Mr Masazumi Horihata, Environment Department, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan introduced the Ishikawa's Dynamic Conservation of GIAHS - Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi" case studies.

Mr Francis Basali, Project Development Officer, DENR-CAR, Baguio City, Philippines introduced and share the experiences of implementing dynamic conservation of the Philippines' Ifugao rice terraces system. He highlighted the significance of the system in awareness of the people on the values and importance of floral resources that influences the biodiversity richness of the community, not only the economic and commercial values of the biodiversity resources but more importantly consider its ecological value, and important uses of plants in the community for food, construction materials, fuel, medicine, and wood carving material.

Session 3: Discuss the criteria and methodological procedures and guidelines of application process for recognition

The session was to explore and discuss the criteria for enlisting systems as GIAHS and application processes and guidelines for preparing a GIAHS proposal for recognitions. It also aimed to discuss the establishment of the regional partnership and twinning programme between and among sites. Ms Mary Jane Ramos dela Cruz, Land and Water Division, Natural Resources and Environment Management, FAO presented and introduced the criteria for enlisting systems as GIAHS and application processes and guidelines for preparing a GIAHS proposal for recognitions. The GIAHS Partnership, particularly Steering Committee (ST), Scientific Advisory Committee (SC), National Steering Committees (NSC), and GIAHS Secretariat were particularly elaborated in detail. She briefed on general GIAHS criteria and approaches. GIAHS Template and designation processes and methodologies were well elaborated in detail and systematically. She noted that a) all pilot GIAHS sites took the same methodology and approach but came up with own priority activities to promote the conservation of the functionalities (goods and services), b) the significance of the practical and cultural dimensions of technical knowledge based on a systemic vision of the human-nature interactions taking into account the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of agricultural production, and c) agricultural heritage does not mean directly reapplying the techniques from the past but understanding the logical reasoning underlying the knowledge system and applying it in a creative way: today's appropriate innovations constitute tomorrow's traditional knowledge.

Session 4: Country presentations by potential GIAHS countries on the ideas on proposals

This session was allocated for potential new GIAHS participating countries to present their GIAHS ideas/proposals for consultation. The presentations were made by the participated countries namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The Republic of Korea presented two proposals on traditional irrigation management system of Gudeuljangnon terraced rice paddies in Cheongsando Island and Jeju Batdam Agricultural System.

Session 5: Concluding and closing

The session was moderated by Mr Konuma to discuss how to proceed and recommendations for regional networking, way forward and recommendations which were structured in the following topics and outputs of discussion are listed in the below Summary Recommendations section.

1. Institutional system of GIAHS and Secretariat
2. Consultation/Advisory Service Mechanism
3. National GIAHS Mechanism
4. South-South Cooperation – Twinning
5. Resources (formulation & implementation)
6. Regional Networking

WORKSHOP AGENDA

12 November 2013

Morning

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| 8:00 – 9:00 | Registration |
| 9:00 -9:15 | <p>Welcome and Opening Remarks Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General, Asia and the Pacific (RAP) Mr Chalit Damrongsak, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), Thailand</p> |
| 9:15 – 9:30 | <p>Overview and Purpose of the Workshop Mr Yuji Niino, Land Management Officer, RAP</p> |
| Session 1: GIAHS Familiarisation | <p>This session will discuss the origin, nature, concept of agricultural heritage, criteria for selection, and implementation framework of the GIAHS Initiative. This session will also discuss a step by step selection of systems or sites. GIAHS will be discussed as a model for resilient agriculture in similar ecosystems and for sustainable agriculture and rural development. This session will also include discussion on demonstration and exploration, including GIAHS activities that responds to international development agenda of medium term and long term (e.g. Aichi targets, IYFF, ITPGRFA, NBSAPs, Regional Rice Initiative, etc.), and ultimately, to achieve balance between conservation, adaptation and sustainable socio-economic development.</p> |
| 9:30 -10:00 | <p>Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS): origin, nature, criteria and conceptual framework Mr Masahito Enomoto, Deputy Director, AGP</p> |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | <p>The Implementation Framework of GIAHS and GIAHS <i>Noto Communique</i>, synergies and inter-linkages of GIAHS within various development strategies and agenda Dr Parviz Koohafkan</p> |
| 10:30 -11:00 | Coffee/tea break |
| Session 2: Expansion of sites, Mainstreaming of GIAHS Concept and Marketing of GIAHS essential goods and | <p>This session will share the lessons based on the past and on-going GIAHS activities, and capitalize on what has been learned to date from the existing country achievements and examples to build recommendations and way forward to further the: (i) expansion and/or out scaling of sites; and (ii) mainstreaming of GIAHS concept at national and local level policies, and (iii) marketing</p> |

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| services. | goods and services e.g. promote sustainability and conservation by increasing the premium of GIAHS products and services through branding and labelling and empowering small scale farmers and local communities through recognition of their agricultural heritage |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | Country experiences in implementing dynamic conservation of GIAHS: Vision and Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China • Japan |

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break

Afternoon

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| Continue Session 2: 14:00 – 15:30 | Country experiences in implementing dynamic conservation of GIAHS: Vision and Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippines • India • Examples from other region (thru video or ppt, tbd) |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | Coffee/tea break |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Payments for environmental services harboured in GIAHS: examples and experiences Dr Parviz Koohafkan Marketing of GIAHS products and GIAHS label for Tourism Sector Dr Parviz Koohafkan |
| 17:00 – 17:30 | Discussion and Wrap-up Chaired by Mr Konuma |
| 18.30-21.00 | Welcome dinner at Plaza Athenee Hotel (venue will be announced later) |

13 November 2013

Morning

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| Session 3: Discuss the criteria and methodological procedures and guidelines of application process for recognition. | This session will explore and discuss the criteria for enlisting systems as GIAHS and application processes and guidelines for preparing a GIAHS proposal for recognitions. It will also explore the establishment of the regional partnership and twinning programme between and among sites. |
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| 9:00 – 10:00 | Criteria for enlisting systems as GIAHS and application processes and guidelines for preparing a GIAHS proposal for recognitions Ms Mary Jane Ramos de la Cruz, GIAHS Technical Officer |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Coffee/tea break |
| Session 4: Country presentations by potential GIAHS countries on the ideas on proposals | This session will allow potential new GIAHS participating countries to present their GIAHS ideas/proposals for consultation. |
| 10:30 – 12:30 | Presentation of proposals/ideas by potential new GIAHS participating countries, followed by suggestions/comments |

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break

Afternoon

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| Session 5: Concluding and closing | This session will discuss how to proceed and recommendations for regional networking. |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | Way Forward and Recommendations including regional networking Round table discussion chaired by Mr Hiroyuki Konuma |
| 15:00 – 15:30 | Closing Ceremony / Group Photo Session |

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12-13 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand**

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