

ASEAN and CGIAR launch joint program on accelerating innovation in agri-food systems

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The ASEAN-CGIAR Innovate for Food and Nutrition Security Regional Program was officially launched during the 45th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This program aims to scale up and scale out integrated innovations in order to enhance the resilience of ASEAN's agri-food systems to climate change.

"Over the next 10 years, the program envisions delivering better livelihoods for food producers and stakeholders, while ensuring affordable, nutritious, and healthy food for consumers. Additionally, it seeks to foster a healthier natural environment for all," according to Dr. Jongsoo Shin, the ASEAN-CGIAR Regional Program Director.

CGIAR has been working with the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Member States, and a range of funding and other partners to develop this multi-year research and innovation program.

Dr. Stephan Weise, ASEAN-CGIAR Program Co-Director, emphasized that "the Program aims to be bottom-up, cross and trans-disciplinary. It is being co-created and, therefore, is fully co-owned by ASEAN partners."

Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Malaysia, who is also the AMAF Chair, extended his gratitude to CGIAR for developing the Intervention Packages (IPs) that are in line with the 9 thematic areas to address comprehensively, the needs of the country's food, land and water systems. He stressed that the ASEAN-CGIAR Regional Program "underscores the dedication and commitment of AMS towards achieving a competitive, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food and agriculture sector in our region."

Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, the Secretary General of ASEAN, emphasised that the program is "formulated to address the above-mentioned challenges by leveraging cutting-edge research, technology, and innovation that enhance the resilience of the

agricultural system. With eight intervention packages, the Programme will catalyse transformative change, enabling us to adapt to the evolving needs of our region, particularly with the impact of climate change."Â