










## UC MEMBERS RANKED AMONG THE WORLD'S BEST IN AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY FOR 2022

### QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2022

BY SUBJECT: AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

RANK

	UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	#16
	GEORG AUGUST UNIVERSITY OF GÖTTINGEN	#30
	IPB UNIVERSITY	#41
	KASETSART UNIVERSITY	#53
	NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY	#79
	UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA	#80
	UNIVERSITAS GADJAH MADA	#151-200
	UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES	#151-200
	UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA	#301-350

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) congratulates its members for their achievements in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2022 for Agriculture and Forestry.

Leading the members in the ranking is University of British Columbia in Canada at #16. Taking the top 50 spot are UC members: Georg August University of Göttingen at #30 and IPB University in Bogor, Indonesia at #41. Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Thailand, followed at #53 while National Taiwan University ranked at #79. Universiti Putra Malaysia placed at #80 while University of the Philippines and Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta, Indonesia both ranked in the #151-200 range. Universitas Brawijaya in Malang, Indonesia placed in the #301-350 spot. These latest achievements of the UC members strengthen the consortium's continuous pursuit of programs relevant to addressing the complex challenges in agriculture for the region.

The QS World University Rankings by Subject guide prospective students in finding top universities according to their field. The universities were ranked according to academic reputation, employer reputation, research citations per paper, H-index, and International Research Network (by broad-faculty area). SEARCA assists the member universities in these factors through its graduate scholarships, research grants, capacity-building activities, and management of the UC grants, projects, and network as Secretariat.

Employability of the institutions' graduates is a vital factor in the ranking. SEARCA contributes to harnessing the potential of the UC members' graduates to meet the market demands and address the challenges faced by the agriculture sector through scholarship grants, training programs, and learning events geared toward the capacity building of human resources in the region.

Grants for research activities and dissemination of research results are also offered both by SEARCA and the UC to continuously support the research capacities of the institutions, which is another factor considered by the QS WUR. Travel grants for research, conference, seminar and mobility are also available to support international academic reputation by increasing the institutions' visibility among academicians worldwide through research and curricular exchanges. It allows the faculty members to become ambassadors of their universities to other international higher education institutions and networks.

The QS WUR also took into account the International Research Network this year. This metric refers to the diversity of an institution's international research network through partnerships with other higher education institutions. The UC contributes to this metric as the consortium is a commitment among 13 leading higher education institutions to share expertise and resources. Besides research projects within the consortium, the UC also facilitates opportunities for partnership with other institutions.

Reference: <https://www.topuniversities.com/subject-rankings/methodology>

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# Southeast Asian University Professors from the UC receive the 2022-2023 SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair Award

In recognition of their outstanding contributions toward Accelerating Transformation through Agricultural Innovation (ATTAIN), SEARCA awarded four Southeast Asian academicians with the SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair Grant for AY 2022-2023. The grantees from the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) are Assoc. Prof. Dr. Siti Khairunniza Bejo and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Helmi Zuhaidi Mohd Shafri from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Dr. Renato G. Reyes from Central Luzon State University (CLSU), Philippines. They are also joined by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirikachorn Tangkawattana from Khon Kaen University (KKU), Thailand. They are entitled to a grant of USD 5,000.00 each.



**Dr. Siti Khairunniza Bejo** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, and the Head of the Smart Farming Technology Research Center at UPM. Dr. Bejo has published over 65 articles in scientific journals in the last five years while her research projects have been recognized and awarded internationally. She was selected for the Regional Professorial Chair Grant for her contributions to the field of Imaging Technology and Remote Sensing. As part of the grant, Dr. Bejo will share her research through a public lecture on Plant disease sensing using hyperspectral imaging and machine learning techniques: A case study in ganoderma boninense infection.

**Dr. Helmi Zuhaidi Mohd Shafri** is the Deputy Dean of Post Graduate Studies and Associate Professor at the Department of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, UPM. Dr. Shafri's excellent achievements in the field of agricultural innovation, specifically in remote sensing and geomatics engineering, afforded him the Regional Professorial Chair Grant. As a prolific researcher, he has published more than 100 articles in scientific journals as well as books/book chapters. Dr. Shafri will disseminate his work through a public lecture on the Development of Oil Palm Yield Prediction Model Using Advanced Geospatial and Machine Learning Techniques as part of the grant.



**Dr. Renato G. Reyes** is the current Vice President for Academic Affairs of CLSU, Philippines, and is a multi-awarded academician in the field of Mycology, which includes his recent recognition as the 2021 Outstanding Filipino JSPS Fellow. Dr. Reyes authored the manual on the Philippine National Standard for Natural Ingredients titled "Standard for Edible Fungi and Code of Hygienic Practice for Mushroom and the Code on Good Cultivation Practices for Mushrooms." He will present his work on recent advances on the domestication and mykopharming of wild edible mushrooms in the Philippines for the biofunctional food industry as part of the grant.

**Dr. Sirikachorn Tangkawattana** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Pathology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, KKU, Thailand. She was involved in the creation of the Lawa Model which focuses on community engagement to support the improvement of community knowledge on liver fluke prevention and control. The said model has been adopted by the National Health Policy of Thailand and was also selected to be one of the two showcases on neglected parasitic zoonoses control by the World Health Organization (WHO). Her immense contribution to the field of OneHealth, pathology, and zoonotic diseases for the development of her country's health system has been duly recognized by the Regional Professorial Chair Grant. Dr. Sirikachorn will share the findings of her study "From liver fluke control to community's supplemental income/agricultural benefits" during her public lecture.

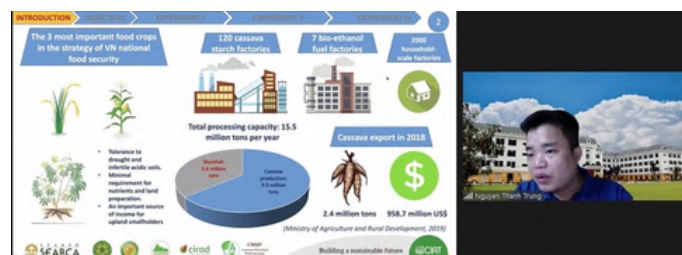


The SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair Grant recognizes the contribution of institutions and individuals in the fields of agriculture and related sciences, contributing to agricultural and rural development in Southeast Asia through instruction, research, innovation, and extension work. Since the academic year 2012/2023, the Center has awarded SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair Grants to 51 deserving individuals, of which 35 are from UC member institutions.

# KU alumnus shares PhD research on sustainable agriculture production in northern mountainous areas of Vietnam

The Education and Collective Learning Department (ECLD) of SEARCA conducted a Special Graduate Seminar on 29 April 2022 with Dr. Nguyen Thanh Trung from the Department of Soil Science and Plant Nutrition, Faculty of Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam National University of Agriculture (VNUA). Dr. Trung is an alumnus under the SEARCA Full MS/PhD research scholarship. He earned his PhD in Tropical Agriculture from Kasetsart University, Thailand in 2021. He shared his PhD research on Enhancing Soil Fertility and Sustainable Agricultural Production Using Legume-based Intercropping in Northern Mountainous Areas of Vietnam.

Dr. Trung talked about the importance of Cassava in Vietnam, specifically in the strategy of the country's food security. However, soil erosion continues to threaten the production of Cassava as it removes the highly fertile topsoil, decreases soil water infiltration capacity, leads to waterlogging and water scarcity, reduces rooting depth, causes off-site soil and water pollution, and damages infrastructures. The monocropping systems on steep slopes also contribute to severe erosion. The overall impacts of soil erosion have led to a decline in cassava production of 31% in the Northern Mountainous Areas of Vietnam.



Dr. Nguyen Thanh Trung during his Special Graduate Seminar presentation.



Dr. Trung's preliminary investigation in 2017 for his research.



Dr. Trung's field inoculation experiment in 2018.

Dr. Trung's screening of native rhizobia strains under greenhouse condition at VNUA in 2018.



Dr. Trung's on-farm erosion experiment in 2018.

Through research funding from SEARCA, CIAT-Asia, CIRAD, and the ACTAE project funded by the French Agency of Development, Dr. Trung embarked on his study to address the issues of low agricultural production and economic benefit, and poor soil fertility in Vietnam through sustainable agroecological practices, specifically, the intercropping of legumes.

Intercropping has its share of advantages and disadvantages. It boosts crop production, maximizes land use, controls pests, diseases, and weeds, maintains soil fertility, decreases soil runoff, emits a considerably lower amount of greenhouse gases, gives higher profit to cash crops, and promotes functional diversity of the soil microbial communities. However, intercropping also provides limited possibilities for different cultural practices, production mechanization and harvesting, competes for soil resources, and decreases yields as the crops differ in their competitive abilities.

Dr. Trung's study looked into assessing the effects of the cassava-cowpea intercropping system on soil and nutrient losses, crop yields and economic returns to smallholders and the potential strains for effective rhizobia inoculants and the scaling-up of production through farmer associations. Results of the study showed that the Cassava-cowpea intercropping in the Northern Mountainous Areas of Vietnam exhibited potential that may be considered a highly appropriate strategy for sustainable agricultural production. Research results showed the presence of effective rhizobia and its potential as an efficient inoculant for further scaling-up production in the fields. Results also include improved soil covering level, reduced soil erosion, and nutrient loss. And that more importantly, it maintained cassava yield and significantly improved the income of local farmers.

Dr. Trung also shared his experience as a SEARCA scholar during the seminar. He learned about the opportunity through his colleagues at VNUA. He also highlighted the avenues that opened for him as a SEARCA scholar and even received multiple organizations' support for his PhD research.

SEARCA's Special Graduate Seminar is held once every semester and highlights outstanding research by scholars from their graduate thesis. Hosting the seminar is the Center's way to support the scholars' academic milestones and recognize their capacity to produce quality research that has a great impact on agriculture and rural development.

# UC Student Travel Grantees attend the Training-Workshop on Sustainability Assessment in Agricultural Production and Food Processing



Participants of the Training Workshop on Sustainability Assessment in Agricultural Production and Food Processing from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and France. Besides the UC grantees, DAAD-SEARCA scholars Arjay A. Gerance and M Royan also attended the training.

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) supported the participation of three delegates to the Training Workshop on Sustainability Assessment in Agricultural Production and Food Processing from 15-25 May 2022, at Krabi, Thailand.

The training workshop, organized by Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand and L' Institut Agro of France, is designed to equip the participants with the capacity for sustainability assessment and to build their skills in data collection, survey, observation, investigation, and interview. The participants are placed in a position to actively assess sustainability in agricultural production. The training workshop is also a part of KU's ARE-TALENT program which aims at providing students and professionals with the capacity of understanding the concept of sustainable agricultural production and food processing. Twenty-two (22) participants are currently attending the training from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and France. They are guided by three faculty members from KU and two from L' Institut Agro of France.

The training workshop is also an offshoot of the ERASMUS+ CBHE funded project on Joint Master's Degree in Food Security and Climate Change (MS FSCC). It was designed by the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Faculty of Economics of KU based on the original MS FSCC compulsory course with the same title and is commonly referred to as the Summer School. L' Institut Agro of France, co-organizer of KU, has been a project partner of the UC for the said MS FSCC project.

Besides the UC student travel grantees, the training workshop was also attended by Leveling Up Philippine Higher Education Institutions in Agriculture, Fisheries, and Natural Resources (LevelUPHEI AFAR) grantees: Reymond Denver Q. Buenaseda from the University of the Philippines Los Baños, Ms. Crislin B. Cruz from Visayas State University, and Ms. Ella Joy A. Ponce from Central Luzon State University with funding from the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) through SEARCA. All three LevelUPHEI AFAR grantees also come from UC member universities. DAAD-SEARCA scholars Arjay A. Gerance and M Royan are also in attendance during the training workshop. They are currently taking their MS in Applied Economics for Agriculture and Environment at KU.



(L-R) Danniary Ismail Faronny (Universitas Brawijaya), Nur Syamimi Binti Yaakub (Universiti Putra Malaysia), Ella Joy A. Ponce (Central Luzon State University), Crislin B. Cruz (Visayas State University), Nur Amelia Syakira Binti Abdul Aziz (Universiti Putra Malaysia), and Reymond Denver Q. Buenaseda (University of the Philippines Los Baños)

Universitas Brawijaya (UB) sent Mr. Danniary Ismail Faronny who is currently taking his Master's Program in Environmental Development. UB is also set to host the upcoming UC Summer School for 2022. Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) sent Ms. Nur Syamimi Binti Yaakub and Ms. Nur Amelia Syakira Binti Abdul Aziz, who are both taking Master of Science in Agribusiness. The UC delegates received a UC Student Travel Grant which enables graduate students from any UC member institution to attend trainings, workshops, short courses, conferences, or research exchanges organized by another UC member.

The UC student travel grant accepts applications all year round with evaluations conducted every last week of March, June, September, and December.





# UPM professor shares graduate-on-time pointers for SEARCA scholars

The Education and Collective Learning Department (ECLD) of SEARCA organized the 3rd GSID Conversations on 27 May 2022 to specifically tackle how scholars can navigate their postgraduate studies. The webinar is part of the scholarship package provided by the Center which includes academic and extracurricular learning events that serve as tools for the scholars to complete their academic requirements and support their social well-being. Dr. Ng Siew Imm, Associate Professor at the School of Business and Economics and Associate Editor of the International Journal of Economics and Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia, served as guest speaker for the event and provided expert advice on managing the scholars' academic journey toward graduating on time.

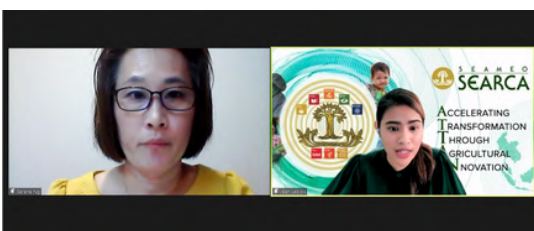
Amidst the unique pressures thrown by graduate school, Dr. Ng Siew Imm inspired the scholars to envision their end goal which is to complete their studies and graduate. But to get there, the scholars need to manage three areas of their postgraduate lives – manage their time, their supervisor, and themselves. Dr. Ng Siew Imm shared an acronym to help the scholars remember her tip: "I DO" stands for "get In, get Done, and get On with life". She explained that they will not move forward with the rest of their goals if they are not proactive in finishing their studies. The longer they stay with their MS or PhD studies, the higher the chance for them to lose momentum and abandon getting a degree.

Dr. Ng Siew Imm suggests that students manage their timeline by knowing the academic calendar, semestral requirements, and the administrative process of their respective graduate schools. By managing their timeline, students will know if they are still on track with the required milestones per semester that would lead them to finish their studies on time. Writing one paragraph a day helps and sticking to a timetable will assist students to get through with their research. Dr. Ng Siew Imm also recommends conducting research that meets the requirement of the degree and saving the more ambitious studies after graduation. This way, students can complete their thesis within the maximum number of semesters as the scope of the study is manageable. Getting a job while studying may also be detrimental to postgraduate studies as the workload can get in the way of completing academic requirements. If possible, and if resources will permit, studying full-time will help students graduate on time.

Dr. Ng Siew Imm also shared an article by Lynch (2008) where most postgraduate students chose the supervisor as the most vital factor which influences their research and the completion of their studies on time. Dr. Ng Siew Imm, however, highlights that there is no dream supervisor. The student's relationship with their supervisor could make or break their entire postgraduate journey. Based on her experience as a supervisor, students need to be specific regarding their plans, expectations, and progress whenever meeting with her. This way, both can manage their time wisely and discuss important matters that would contribute to the completion of the research. Dr. Ng Siew Imm also recommends that students address the comments provided as well as monitor the quality of their work. She reminds students not to expect the supervisor to revise or write for them and that postgraduate studies require a degree of independence on their end. Students need to show ownership of their research and not always turn to the supervisor for an easy solution without exploring all other options. Dr. Ng Siew Imm shared that for them as supervisors, the relationship with their advisees can be strengthened if they can see the hard work, effort, independence, and diligence in the student.

Besides managing their academic timeline and their relationship with the supervisor Dr. Ng Siew Imm highlights that it is also important for students to manage their life and enforce self-discipline. This includes allocating time for their studies while also setting aside time for ample rest, avoiding procrastination, and refraining from isolating themselves. She encouraged the scholars to mix with the right people and expect that not everything needs to be perfect. They can always work on their personal and professional development, skills, and knowledge even after graduation. But as students and scholars of the region, they have the responsibility to finish their studies first. As Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer of Facebook shared, "Done is better than perfect."

Lynch, S. (2008). Happy days: Why PhD students need a helping hand from their supervisors. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/higher/happy-days-why-phd-students-need-a-helping-hand-from-their-supervisors-781842.html>



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Get In  
Get Done  
and  
Get On With Life!

**It does not have to be Perfect**

- Perfectionists may not complete their dissertations
- Polishing every sentence until it gleams
- Block your ability to let ideas flow and build momentum
- Perfectionism can actually diminish the eagerness and desire to work
- Writing your dissertation is not about perfection
- It is not about the perfect dissertation, the perfect chapter, section, paragraph or sentence

# UGM Professor receives honorable mention at the 2022 Bridge Builder Award

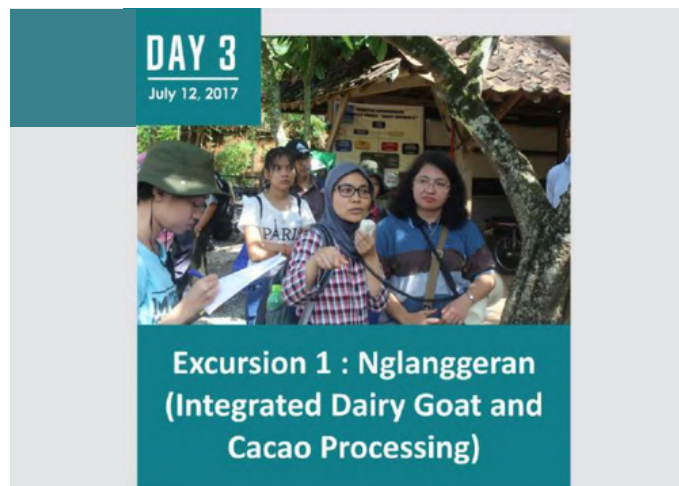
Dr. Arini Wahyu Utami, Assistant Professor from the Department of Agricultural Socioeconomics, Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) received an Honorable Mention for the 2022 Bridge Builder Award from the International Association of Society & Natural Resources (IASNR). The Bridge Builder Award is designed to celebrate association members who build bridges across novel boundaries— whether by identity, geographic, disciplinary, knowledge system, and/or institutional – in natural resource social science.

SEARCA, as the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) Secretariat, provided its support for Dr. Arini's nomination based on her active engagement in the consortium's events, specifically during the ERASMUS+-funded project to establish the Joint Master program in Food Security and Climate Change (MSFSCC). Part of the project is the offering of Summer Schools, which is one of the core courses of the MSFSCC program on Sustainability Assessment in Agricultural Production and Food Processing (FSCC 504). The MS FSCC Summer School combines fieldwork, case studies, and discussion to train students to assess the dynamics of change, innovation, and adaptation to transitions in rural areas.



*Dr. Arini Wahyu Utami during the closing program of the 2017 Summer School.*

Dr. Arini was part of the core organizing team for the 2017 and 2019 Summer Schools that designed the program, the search for appropriate sites for fieldwork, the different activities on the field, the resource persons to be invited for the different topics, the selection of student participants up to implementation and evaluation. Her home institution, UGM, hosted the 2017 Summer School, and Dr. Arini led the implementation of Excursion 1 focused on Dairy Goat and Cacao Processing. She also gave a lecture on the dimensions of sustainability. For the 2018 Summer School hosted by Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Dr. Arini served as facilitator. For the 2019 Summer School hosted by the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Dr. Arini served as a lecturer for Session 6 on the Socio-economic dimension of sustainability and facilitated an interactive activity on the Design of Innovation.



In all three Summer Schools, Dr. Arini facilitated group activities for students hailing from various countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam from Southeast Asia; Japan, and Taiwan; and those from Europe; and from various disciplines in Agriculture, Forestry, Economics, Environmental Sciences, and related fields; as well as from different religious affiliations. Besides the MSFSCC project, Dr. Arini went on to become the lead organizer of the UC Graduate Forum hosted again by her institution, UGM, in December 2020 with the theme "Resilient Food and Agricultural System for Accelerating Economic Recovery: Strategy and Implementation." Faculty members and graduate students from UGM, IPB University, UPM, UPLB, Kasetsart University (KU), Universitas Brawijaya (UB), Tokyo University of Agriculture (Tokyo NODAI), and National Taiwan University (NTU) attended the forum.



*Dr. Arini Wahyu Utami with the 2018 Summer School Team.*



*Dr. Arini Wahyu Utami was the lead organizer of the 2020 Virtual UC Graduate Forum hosted by her home institution, Universitas Gadjah Mada.*

Dr. Arini has contributed greatly to the programs of the UC as she brought together students and faculty members from different institutions, different countries, and different disciplines to work together harmoniously. With this, the consortium highly recommended her for the Bridge Builder Award.



Faculty members from University of Southern Mindanao, University of the Philippines Los Baños, and Nueva Vizcaya State University are ongoing with their visits at Universiti Putra Malaysia and Kasetsart University in Thailand.

## Faculty members from Philippine HEIs conduct mobility programs in UPM and KU

SEARCHA further facilitates capacity building activities and international linkages for Philippine higher education institutions through the Leveling Up Philippine Higher Education Institutions in Agriculture, Fisheries, and Natural Resources (LevelUPHEI AFAR) project funded by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Three faculty members are ongoing with their mobility programs in partner universities from the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC).

The LevelUPHEI AFAR project aims to upgrade the institutional capacities of the State Universities and Colleges – Association of Colleges of Agriculture in the Philippines, Inc. (SUC-ACAP, Inc.) and its 75 members. Faculty and staff members from SUC-ACAP may participate in activities organized by the UC and its member institutions as part of the project.



Courtesy visit of mobility grantees in UPM with the Putra International Centre officials. (L-R) Mdm Ida Suhaila binti Md Tahir, Section Head, Global Engagement Section, Putra International Centre, UPM; Mr. Noe S. Mamon, Jr., Assistant Professor II, Department of Horticulture, College of Agriculture, USM; Prof. Dr. Suhaimi Ab Rahman, Director of Putra International Centre, UPM; and Dr. Analyn L. Codilan, Associate Professor at the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, College of Forestry and Natural Resources, UPLB.

Dr. Analyn L. Codilan, Associate Professor at the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, College of Forestry and Natural Resources (CFNR), University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), and Mr. Noe S. Mamon, Jr., Assistant Professor II, Department of Horticulture, College of Agriculture, University of Southern Mindanao (USM), are currently in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) for their one-month UC mobility program. The one-month mobility aims to conduct benchmarking activities, and discuss collaborative programs in research, extension, or other curricular activities between the project grantee's home institution and the UC member. Asst. Prof. Mamon is assigned to the Faculty of Agriculture with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zulkefly Sulaiman as host lecturer.

Dr. Codilan is with the Faculty of Forestry and Environment with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamziah Abd Kudus and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Norizah Kamarudin as host lecturers. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamziah is also an alumna of the SEARCHA Scholarship program.



Asst. Prof. Mamon and Dr. Abdul Aziz S.A. Kadir, Secretary-General of the International Rubber Research Development Board (IRRDB) in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

In the first week of his mobility, Asst. Prof. Mamon visited the International Rubber Research Development Board (IRRDB) in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, and met with Dr. Abdul Aziz S.A. Kadir, Secretary-General of IRRDB, and the IRRDB Fellows. His mobility activities are in line with the ongoing rubber research endeavor of UPM, specifically on rubber micropropagation and production. In the coming weeks, UPM arranged for Asst. Prof. Mamon to visit the rubber plantation, nursery, and rubber-related projects in Alor Gajah, Melaka. His mobility relates to USM's goal of becoming globally competitive in terms of instruction, research, and development. The mobility program will also create linkages for future collaboration on research and development programs that will hopefully support the rubber-producing provinces/regions and revitalize the rubber production system in the Philippines.

For Dr. Codilan, her mobility activities focus on benchmarking the Bachelor of Forestry Science program and postgraduate programs of UPM and identifying areas for collaboration between UPM and UPLB, specifically in program development, course offerings, virtual mobility, research studies, and faculty development. Dr. Codilan's activities are in line with her experience as Coordinator for Instruction of CFNR in 2016, where she managed the curricular initiatives of the college for various program levels (BS, MS, PhD) and collaboration with other local and international universities. She also facilitated the completion of the revised BS Forestry curriculum in 2018 as a response to the K-12 program and Outcomes-Based Education, and co-facilitated the preparations for the 2017 ASEAN University Network - Quality Assessment. Asst. Prof. Mamon and Dr. Codilan will stay at UPM until 30 June 2022 to complete their mobility activities.



Faculty Mobility delegates at the Putra International Centre, UPM

Another LevelUPHEI AFAR grantee, Mr. Ventura Chinaman, Instructor III at Nueva Vizcaya State University, is also ongoing in his mobility activities at Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand until 31 August 2022. He will stay at KU for one semester to conduct research on the prebiotic effect of chitosan on the immune system of hybrid catfish at the Department of Aquaculture, Faculty of Fisheries, under the guidance of Asst. Prof. Dr. Prapansak Srisapomee.



Mr. Ventura Chinaman, Instructor III at Nueva Vizcaya State University, at the Faculty of Fisheries, Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand

The research collaboration aims to strengthen NVSU's research capacity toward developing projects that may cater to food security and environmental protection.

Besides the one-month and one-semester mobility programs of the UC, three other LevelUPHEI AFAR grantees from UPLB, Central Luzon State University (CLSU), and Visayas State University (VSU) recently finished their Summer School in Krabi, Thailand. KU co-organized the Training-Workshop on Sustainability Assessment in Agricultural Production and Food Processing from 15-25 May 2022 with L' Institut Agro of France. The Summer School is another activity conducted by UC member institutions open to SUC-ACAP members by invitation.

The LevelUPHEI AFAR project is ongoing with the preparations that will allow more faculty and staff from SUC-ACAP member institutions to conduct mobility and attend training programs hosted by any of the seven (7) UC members in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, and Taiwan.

## SEARCA scholar from UPM bags the Magda Staudinger Prize Award

The German UNESCO Commission awarded Mr. Amar Maruf from Indonesia with the Magda Staudinger Prize Award for his scientific achievement in the field of Biodiversity and Climate Change. Amar is a SEARCA Full PhD scholar studying Community Development at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

The Magda Staudinger Prize Award recognized his early-career research activities presented during the Research and Science in, for, and with UNESCO Biosphere Reserves Conference from 16-20 May 2022 in the Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve, Germany. One hundred twenty (120) early-career scientists and research managers attended the conference from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It aimed to discuss research in biosphere reserves, develop strategies for future action, and guidelines for effective research support based on the best practices shared by the delegates.

Amar presented his PhD research on Exploring the Potential Role of Patron-Client Relationship on Social Resilience to Climate Change Impacts and Risks among Small Scale Sama Bajau Fishermen in Wakatobi National Park, Indonesia. The study tackled the perceived impacts and risks of climate change, the forms of patron-client relationships among the fishers, the relationships' roles on the Bajau fishers' social resilience to climate change impacts and risks, and the social resilience of the fishermen to these impacts and risks.

The conference organizers from the Biosphere Reserves Institute, Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, considered Amar's research as an important input during the joint exchanges of early-career scientists.



Amar Maruf, SEARCA scholar studying PhD in Community Development at UPM. (C) HNEE, Florian Reischauer

The Magda Staudinger Prize Award recognizes young researchers in the fields of biodiversity and climate change, innovative and sustainable use of natural resources, sustainable societies and economies, and ecosystem services. It also commemorates the 25th death anniversary of Dr. Magda Staudinger who was instrumental in the institution of the UNESCO programme for biosphere reserves. Dr. Staudinger was a biologist and botanist who became vital in organizing UNESCO's 'Biosphere Conference' in Paris in 1968. The conference was the first intergovernmental global conference on nature conservation.

Besides receiving a certificate, Amar was awarded 500 Euros from the Danone Waters Germany. For his attendance to the conference, Amar received a research dissemination travel grant from SEARCA. He also received training on Scientific Writing and Presentation early this year. Both the grant and training are part of a wider scholarship package exclusive to SEARCA scholars that includes academic and extracurricular learning events that serve as tools for personal and professional development and social well-being.



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