BACKGROUND TO THE SAGO NETWORK

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Expert Consultation on the Establishment of A Sago Network for Asia and the Pacific
Overview

- Putting issues into perspective
  - Why promote sago palm?
  - Status of sago palm usage in producing countries
  - The sago processing chain and factors that influence its performance
- FAO’s involvement with the sago palm
- Progress with sago palm development over the past 30 years
- The Sago Network – A vision for the future
Why Promote Sago Palm?

- Grows in swamps and wetlands that are not suitable for agricultural production;
- Is tolerant to soil salinity, drought and floods;
- Has a high level of starch productivity.
- Low production cost of starch
- Serves as an emergency source of food
- Is of socio-economic importance in the region
  - Generates household income and employment for small-holders
The Sago Palm - Ecosystem Conservation and Environment

- Contributes to:
  - conserving traditional mixed ecosystems towards sustainable development
  - mitigation of climate change, through the carbon dioxide absorbing function of its leaves;
  - Protection of low-lying coastal areas from extensive saltwater flooding by storm surges
  - Protection and expansion of fresh water swamps
Current Status of Sago Palm Usage in Producing Countries

Food & income generation for the Poor
- worms, starch, rachis, leaflets

Market Information? Safety standards? Quality standards

Infrastructure? Suitable level and scale of technology?

Commercial Uses Food and Non-food
Downstream Products

Level of Value Added
Scale of operation

STARCH

Level of Value Added
Scale of operation
Schematic Flow Diagram of Sago Processing and Waste Streams

Source: Adapted from Yean and Lan (1993)
Factors that Influence Performance of the Sago Starch Chain

- Consumer and market requirements
  - Market information

- Sago pith material
  - Quality of raw material
  - Availability of raw material

- Technology
  - Level of technology
  - Scale of technology
  - Cost of technology

- Stakeholder Organisation
  - Knowledge and skill of stakeholders
  - Level of organisation of stakeholders
Managing waste streams and minimizing waste is important.

Source: Rahman and Sundin (2008)
1970’s  FAO-supported sago palm initiatives in Asian countries begun.


1984  FAO flagship publication on sago palm published.

1985  FAO in collaboration with Wageningen Agricultural University, Netherlands, introduced and transplanted sago palm in Costa Rica, Brazil, Congo and Vietnam.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>First Regional Round Table Meeting on sago palm: Sustainable Small-Scale Sago Starch Extraction and Utilisation: Guidelines for the Sago Industry, convened by FAO, Thailand.</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>National Sago Symposium organized by FAO, Yadfon Association (CSO) and the Japanese Embassy in Thailand organized (in Trang).</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Regional Consultation on the Promotion of Underutilized Indigenous Food Resource, Khon Kaen, Thailand (Sago palm was one of major topics).</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>FAO study on sago palm in Pacific Islands.</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>FAO co-sponsored and contributed to the 2nd ASEAN Sago Symposium</td>
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Limited progress with sago palm development and commercialization

- The sago palm and its potentials are not widely known and/or appreciated.
- Few countries have invested in modernizing the extraction of sago starch or in upgrading the technologies used for extracting sago starch and adding value to it.
- Relatively limited networking among researchers, development agencies and government, and non-government organizations engaged in sago palm research and development.
- Lack of a strategic vision and orientation designed to guide sago palm development in the region for sustainable development of the crop.
- Lack of policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks to guide and support sago palm development
A vision for the future
Modernization of the sago palm sector will necessitate the introduction of value chain approaches.

Supportive Policies and Enabling environment

Financial flow

Information flow

Input Supply → Growing → Harvesting - Post-harvest handling → Processing → Market

Product flow

Innovative approaches that are environmentally friendly, and climate smart, and which integrate small-holders will be required to support value chain development.
The Sago Palm Network for Asia and the Pacific (SNAP)

- The SNAP will be a voluntary partnership of stakeholders promoting research, utilization, conservation and sustainable development of sago palm and its products with an overarching goal of enhancing the contribution of sago palm to food security.
Network Activities

- **Knowledge sharing** - research results, meeting reports, project outputs/outcomes - on the research, utilization and conservation of the sago palm in Asia and the Pacific Region;

- **Identification of issues and gaps** in sago palm research and development and implementation of follow up actions;

- **Establishment of a web-site** on sago palm (it is envisioned that this website would be maintained by a volunteer organization/university);

- **Development of a regional strategic framework** on sago palm research, development (including effective and sustainable utilization) and conservation, which would serve as a common platform for concerted and harmonized efforts;

- **Conduct of an annual regional meeting** that brings together a broad range of expertise and perspectives that enrich the dialogue on sago palm and enhance collaborative action to promote its sustainable development, conservation and utilization;

- **Formulation of an action plan and/or annual work plan** of the Regional Sago Network and implement joint activities as appropriate.
Requirement (Billion USD) %

Primary crop production 1,684 57

Downstream support services
- Cold and dry storage
- Rural and wholesale markets
- First stage processing

Cumulative Investment Requirements for East Asia - 2005/07 to 2050

1

Source: Capital Requirements for Agriculture in Developing Countries to 2050. FAO Rome (2009)

All numbers are in 2009 US$ values

Thank you