

PATHWAYS TO AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS
REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON IPR
NEW WORLD RENAISSANCE HOTEL, MAKATI, PHILIPPINES
30-31 MAY 2006

Announcement

Background

The global need to foster sustainable food security, especially for the poor and marginal groups, is an important underlying link between intellectual property rights and agriculture. Access to food, both in physical and financial terms, and its availability are continuing challenges. The quest for their solution gives rise to the development of new technologies aimed at enhancing food production. With such innovations come the associated issues on biotechnology and biodiversity as well as the question of who will have the access and rights to these technologies, resources, and new information resulting from their application.

Objectives

The Conference aims to discuss major Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues and concerns in Southeast Asia, with focus on biotechnology, biodiversity, and farmers' rights toward agricultural and rural development, as well as the policy environment within which they are happening. It is expected to provide perspectives on the priority research areas and policy directions toward ensuring fair and equitable access to the benefits of harvesting biodiversity and the appropriate property rights regimes that should accompany its sustainable use. It hopes to pave the way for a regional collaboration on IPR initiatives.

Features of the Conference

Organized by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), and International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), the conference will feature a Keynote Paper on IPR and Agricultural and Rural Development, with the discussion linked to the Millennium Development Goals. It will provide a global overview of the institutional and policy aspects of biotechnology, biodiversity and farmers' rights as well as underscore the IPR benefits and disadvantages to society. Other papers shall focus on the state of IPR in the region, policies and governance issues, constraints and opportunities in international platforms in biodiversity, capacity building, and conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources.

A workshop session is scheduled to discuss and prioritize collaborative R&D areas, and policy and institutional framework enhancement.

Participants

Key personalities with work experiences on IPR, IPR and biotechnology, biodiversity, and farmers' rights will be invited to deliver the keynote and thematic presentations.

Participants will come from the academe, government organizations (R&D and trade), non-government organizations, international development agencies, and the private sector, mostly within, but not limited to, Southeast Asia. Preferably, the participants must be practitioners or are involved with IP decision-making and management in their institutions or countries.

Conference Fees and Hotel Accommodation

A registration fee of PhP4, 500 for local participants and US \$100 for foreign participants will cover meals and a conference kit. Single room accommodation at the New World Renaissance Hotel is \$85/night, inclusive of breakfast.

There are limited seats available. For those interested to attend, please contact: SEARCA Research and Development Dept., through telephone (63 49) 536-2290/536-3459 ext 137 or 398 or email ipr@agri.searca.org.



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