partners
IN RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT
SOIL WIN FOR GREEN WASTE
TSUNAMI LAND RECOVERY
PROFITABLE EROSION CONTROL

FOOD'S RESOURCE BASE CHALLENGE
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR THE FUTURE

Across the world, the landscape on which agriculture produces food and materials for clothing and housing is a resource under pressure. More sustainable use of agricultural resources is a global issue, and research partnerships are reaching across national and geographic boundaries to foster improved whole-farm-system approaches as the demand for food and fibre increases world-wide.

In this issue of Partners we highlight the important link between good natural resource management and food security. We focus on ACIAR-supported initiatives and partnerships which are delivering sustainable approaches to agriculture, with examples of projects that demonstrate that environmental sustainability can also help smallholders increase their productivity.

Improving global food security is an important aim of ACIAR, and has been highlighted in a recent Australian Government ‘Food Security through Rural Development’ initiative announced in the recent 2009-10 Budget (see page 27). Its aim is to lift agricultural productivity in developing countries by working with other donors and research institutions using environmentally sustainable approaches.

As ACIAR Commissioner John Williams outlines on page 4, the challenges facing agricultural science are immense, but sustainability is achievable if scientists and producers can develop agriculture in a wider ecological framework.

In this issue we report on research in India and Australia that is both improving soils and reducing environmental damage through use of organic fertilisers (page 6), helping farmers rehabilitate their land in Aceh (page 10) and ways farmers in the Philippines are reducing soil erosion and increasing their incomes by planting harvestable hedgerows (page 12).

Other reports cover ACIAR-funded work in the Philippines that is reducing pesticide run-off into waterways, and also being applied in South Australia (page 16), and helping to identify suitable locations for sea-cage aquaculture to reduce environmental impacts (page 23). Another report is on research in Papua New Guinea that is helping communities develop sustainable harvesting strategies for their timber resources (page 24).

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Features

Environmental farming
the new agriculture
The challenges facing agricultural science are immense, but sustainability is achievable if scientists and producers can develop agriculture in a wider ecological framework

Soils and climate gain from fertiliser’s flipside
An India–Australia research partnership is showing it is possible to produce more food while reducing fertiliser-related damage to the surrounding environment

Could compost be a disease breaker?
An innovative soil nutrient program utilising compost is showing potential for sustainable disease control on Indonesian cocoa farms

Progress in restoring coastal agriculture
Crop failures on tsunami-affected agricultural land in Aceh, Indonesia, spurs ACIAR to get scientists involved to help farmers rehabilitate their land

Harvestable hedgerows encourage erosion change
A farmer-friendly approach to conservation agriculture is helping villagers on the Philippines island of Bohol reduce soil erosion and increase incomes

Information flows for water-wise farmers
Water management authorities in the Philippines now have the Australian-made tools to help preserve one of the world’s most important resources—clean water

Enabling more secure livelihoods in uncertain times
The greatest challenge facing smallholder farmers in eastern Indonesia is the limited range of reliable and profitable farming options for their small plots of land. An ACIAR-funded project is helping these farmers change the way they manage cattle to reduce the vulnerability of their farms and livelihoods

Location is the key to greener fish farms
Environmental impact studies of sea-cage aquaculture in tropical waters are helping identify the most appropriate locations and stocking densities to sustainably manage this expanding industry

ACIAR roundup

Ten years of soil research
ACIAR secures increased funding in 2009-10 Budget

Farewell to Peter Core
ACIAR celebrates 25 years in Indonesia
Fellowships pay dividends back home
Website accessibility improves
Energy efficiency for ACIAR

ACIAR what’s new
New appointments
New research programs
New publications
New projects