New sustainable rice project to guard Myanmar’s rice sector against climate change

Nay Pyi Taw, 10 May 2019 – A new initiative will introduce sustainable rice-growing practices to farmers across Myanmar, with the goal of reducing vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters, project partners announced today.

The Climate Smart Rice Project will introduce sustainable standards and best practices to 4,000 smallholder farmers around Mandalay, southern Shan, Mon and Bago over the coming three years, working closely with the Government of Myanmar and the agri-business sector.

The project is funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the Swiss Agency for Development (SDC) and implemented by a consortium of partners including UN Environment, the Sustainable Rice Platform, Helvetas Myanmar and PRIME Agri Group.

The Government of Myanmar has previously announced its intention to boost sustainable rice production in order to both satisfy domestic demand and turn the country into a sustainable rice exporter. This project is fully aligned to the government’s policies and has been endorsed by the Parliamentary Committee for Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development.

Rice production in Myanmar faces several challenges, including the rice sector’s vulnerability to climate change impacts like higher temperatures, drought, flooding and other stresses. The sector is also challenged by its demand for water, land, fertilizer and pesticides and its own environmental impact, including a significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

Peter Schmidt, Country Director of Helvetas, said, “This project will support participating farmers and other actors in the value chain in adopting global rice sustainability standards and resource-efficient practices. These standards and practices have been shown to boost productivity, make crops more water- and fertilizer-efficient and improve resilience to climate change impacts, safeguarding livelihoods in the process.”

Dechen Tsering, UN Environment’s Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, said, “Myanmar is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change. By expanding sustainable
rice production, we can ensure rice crops are resilient to the impacts we are seeing and protect the economic welfare of thousands of farmers and their families."

Wyn Ellis, Coordinator of the Sustainable Rice Platform, said, "Sustainable rice standards and practices are spreading rapidly around the world. Not only are they nature-friendly, they also increase production and protect against various environmental threats. The potential upside for Myanmar's rice sector in adopting these practices is substantial."

Mike Anderson, Operations Manager of PRIME Agri, said, "We have significantly increased the incomes of rural farming households by developing Myanmar farmers into reliable compliant suppliers for both domestic and export markets. The CSR Project is another example of the successful collaboration between public and private sector commercial partners for the improvement of the livelihoods of Myanmar's smallholder farmers. Upskilling and training farmers for higher productivity to international standards like Global G.A.P. and SRP (Sustainable Rice Platform) have proven successful in connecting smallholders to higher value markets."

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မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ ဖျင့်တယ်။ ဗုဒ္ဓရာဇီးများမှာ စီမံခန်းများ၊ ငန်းသေချာတက်ကြိုက်ကြောင်း မယူလွန်းမင်းဖစ်တယ်။ ဗုဒ္ဓရာဇီးများကြည့်ရာမှာ များတယ်။ သက်ရောက်သော မိမိသို့ ဖစ်တယ်။

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“…” by UN Environment & World Biodiversity Day. Dechen Tsering said.

"…" by Sustainable Rice Platform.

…” by Wyn Ellis said.

…” by Global G.A.P. and SRP. Mr. Mike Anderson, Country Director, Helvetas Myanmar, +95 (0) 9 767412316, Mr. Peter Schmidt, Country Director, Helvetas Myanmar, +95 (0) 9 797647277, YeWin.Paing@helvetas.org