

SUMMARY REPORT
OF
THE 12th MEETING OF ASEAN PLUS THREE EMERGENCY RICE RESERVE
(APTERR) COUNCIL

24-25 April 2024, Beijing, the People's Republic of China

INTRODUCTION

1. The 12th Meeting of ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) Council was held on 24-25 April 2024 in Beijing, the People's Republic of China (P.R. China). The Meeting was organised by the APTERR Secretariat and hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) of the P.R. China.
2. The Meeting was attended by the members of the APTERR Council and delegation from ASEAN Plus Three countries except the Philippine delegation due to unforeseen internal circumstances. Representatives from the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Secretariat, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the APTERR Secretariat were also present at the Meeting. The list of delegates appears in **ANNEX 1**.
3. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Hongxing Ni, Counsel (DG Level) of the Department of International Cooperation of the MARA, P.R. China and Mrs. Hanh Pham Thi Hong, Director of Division, the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Viet Nam.

CLOSED SESSION

Agenda Item 1: OPENING STATEMENT BY THE OUTGOING CO-CHAIRS OF THE APTERR COUNCIL

4. Mr. Iisu Kim, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) of the Republic of Korea (ROK), expressed his sincere gratitude to P.R. China for hosting the 12th Meeting of the APTERR Council and welcoming the delegation with warm hospitality. His thanks also extended to Viet Nam, as a co-chair in this Meeting, and the APTERR Secretariat for preparing the Meeting. Apart from hosting the first on-site APTERR Council Meeting since the outset of COVID-19, the ROK in 2023 achieved numerous results in support of APTERR's activities including a delivery of 4,500 MT of rice to boost food security in Lao PDR, Myanmar and the Philippines. For 2024, the ROK continued providing 10,000 MT of rice through the Tier 3 programme. The ROK also aimed to discuss on the possibility of increasing commodities such as wheat as recommended at the Meeting. Considering the world's current problems caused by climate change, natural disasters and animal disease outbreaks, ensuring food security has become increasingly important. He underlined a significance for all APTERR members to combine their knowledge and strengthen regional cooperation on food security. The ROK reaffirmed its commitment to actively participate and support APTERR's progress and implementation. The opening statement appears in **ANNEX 2**.

5. Dr. Kanjana Kwanmuang, Deputy Secretary General of the Office of Agricultural Economics, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) of Thailand, expressed her appreciation to P.R. China for arranging the 12th Meeting of APTERR Council and thanked the APTERR Secretariat for their hard work in conducting the meeting. Recalling the 11th Meeting of the APTERR Council in the ROK, the APTERR members had a fruitful discussion related to the APTERR programme and activities. The results and recommendations from the Meeting became guidelines to ensure the concrete and practical plans of action in achieving APTERR's objectives and implementation. Thailand as a host country of the APTERR Secretariat supported a utilisation of APTERR mechanism in combating food insecurity amidst numerous natural catastrophes and reducing poverty through enhancing agricultural cooperation under the ASEAN Plus Three implementation framework. While emphasising an importance of the Meeting for creating cooperations with other development partners, Dr. Kwanmuang encouraged the delegates for active participation and motivation to bring about fruitful outcomes at the end. The opening statement appears in **ANNEX 3**.

Agenda Item 2: REMARKS BY THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE APTERR COUNCIL

6. The Co-chair from P.R. China extended warmest welcome to all delegates attending the 12th Meeting of APTERR Council held in Beijing, marking the first time China hosted the Meeting. He underscored the importance of APTERR to ensure regional food security through addressing temporary food shortages caused by natural disasters and crises including COVID-19. Apart from fulfilling country's funding commitment to the APTERR Fund, P.R. China also contributed stockpiled rice to disaster-affected member countries. In November 2022, P.R. China's then Premier announced at the 25th ASEAN Plus Three Summit that the country would continue making an in-cash contribution to APTERR in the next five years. Following this, P.R. China announced to donate four million USD from 2023 to 2027 for supporting Tier 3 programme. While the first year of donations was allocated to Lao PDR, Myanmar and the Philippines, P.R. China pledged to cooperate with the APTERR Secretariat and member countries for the implementation of Tier 3 programme under this year's donation. He expressed hope that the Meeting would foster productive discussions, information exchange, and collaboration among members. He concluded by wishing the Meeting success and encouraged all delegates to take time to appreciate the beauty of Beijing in springtime. The remarks appear in **ANNEX 4**.

7. The Co-chair from Viet Nam started her remarks by addressing the pressing issue of global population growth, which was expected to continue increasing the demand for food until at least 2050. She emphasised an urgent need for action in response to the adverse effects of climate change and extreme weathers on food production. The collaborative efforts among the ASEAN member states, supported by P.R. China, Japan, and the ROK through APTERR, have been an effective mechanism to alleviate food insecurity, especially during natural disasters. The successful cooperation under APTERR activities was evidence of regional solidarity. The importance of collaboration not only provided emergency rice supplies but also enhanced cooperation in capacity building and technology transfer to mitigate the impacts of climate change. She highlighted initiatives in Viet Nam, including the One Million Hectares of Low Emission and High-Quality Rice programme as well as the Food Innovation Hub, aimed at improving agricultural practices, sustainability, and competitiveness. Additionally, Viet Nam would continue collaboration with ASEAN Plus Three countries to ensure food and nutrition security in the region. In her conclusion, she conveyed her gratitude to P.R. China for hosting the 12th Meeting of APTERR Council and the warm hospitality extended. She then expressed her appreciation to P.R. China, Japan, and the ROK for their generous contribution and support, as well as the hard work of the APTERR Secretariat in organising the Meeting. The remarks appear in **ANNEX 5**.

Agenda Item 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The Meeting adopted the agenda of the meeting, which appears in **ANNEX 6**.

Agenda Item 4: BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT

9. The Meeting was held in plenary. The delegates were given a brief summary on the meeting programme and other arrangements for the meeting.

Agenda Item 5: UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE ENDOWMENT FUND AND THE CONTRIBUTION FOR THE OPERATIONAL COST

10. The APTERR Secretariat updated on the contribution for the Endowment Fund (EF) and the annual contribution to the Operational Cost (OC). The document and the presentation appear in **ANNEX 7** to **ANNEX 8**.

11. The Meeting acknowledged with appreciation the completion of five-year annual contributions made by Lao PDR and Myanmar to the OC and encouraged the remaining APTERR Parties to continue the OC contribution for FY 2024. Meanwhile, the representatives from Malaysia and Japan provided updates on their internal process for the annual contribution to the OC and expected to transfer the fund soon.

Agenda Item 6: REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

12. The APTERR Secretariat reported on the implementation of work plan and budget plan for fiscal year 2023 (1 January - 31 December 2023). The document, presentation, and audited annual financial report appear in **ANNEX 9** to **ANNEX 11**.

13. The Meeting endorsed the implementation of work plan and budget plan for fiscal year 2023.

14. The Meeting welcomed a new proposal on building a public warehouse to support APTERR programme. The proposal was first initiated by P.R. China at the meeting with APTERR Secretariat in Guangxi of China in September 2023, and aims at saving costs and time for release of emergency stockpiled rice reserves under the Tier 3 programme in the ASEAN countries. P.R. China would later provide the APTERR Secretariat with a comprehensive update on the progress of this proposal.

15. Not only the Tier 3 programme, the Meeting commended the APTERR Secretariat to promote the Tier 1 for strengthening food security cooperation. To support this, the Meeting underlined an importance of determining the crisis conditions as well as strengthening of an early warning system related to regional food security conditions to prepare for an immediate response to crises.

16. The meeting noted Japan's update on the Tier 1 cooperation with the Philippines and its intention to continue to work with the Philippines and the APTERR Secretariat for possible release of 10,000 MT of the earmarked rice.

17. The Meeting commended an improvement of effective implementation of Food Emergency Monitoring and Information (FEMI) by using data from various sources and suggested the APTERR Secretariat to coordinate with related agencies for capacity building in a support of strengthening FEMI.

Agenda Item 7: WORK PLAN AND ANNUAL OPERATIONAL BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

18. The APTERR Secretariat presented the proposed work plan and annual operational budget proposal for fiscal year 2024. The document and presentation appear in **ANNEX 12** to **ANNEX 13**.

19. The Meeting endorsed the work plan and annual operational budget proposal for fiscal year 2024 and acknowledged that the budget proposal would forecast expenses based on the actual activities planned for the upcoming fiscal year.

20. To provide a swift response, the Meeting suggested the APTERR Secretariat to seek a possibility of coordination with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) as well as member country's ministries or institutions for disaster management and data interconnection.

21. The Meeting welcomed Japan's proposal to contribute USD 720,000 to the Tier 3 programme in 2024 including pre-cooked rice assistance and the School Distribution Programme (SDP).

22. The Meeting welcomed Japan's new proposal namely 'Rice Storage Hub Project' (Tier 3 FLEX) to support the Tier 3 programme. The presentation appears in **ANNEX 14**. Noting comments and concerns regarding implementation, financial and management aspects from the member countries, the Meeting noted that Japan would collaborate with the APTERR Secretariat to develop more detailed information and facilitate further discussion on this new programme.

Agenda Item 8: REPORT ON APTERR PROGRAMES

23. The representatives from Cambodia and Myanmar presented the implementation of Tier 3 programme in their countries and the APTERR Secretariat presented the implementation of Tier 3 programme in the Philippines. The presentations appear in **ANNEX 15** to **ANNEX 18**.

24. The Meeting acknowledged with satisfaction the successful implementations of 300-MT milled rice and 2-MT pre-cooked rice contributed by Japan for floods and COVID-19 in Cambodia, 600-MT milled rice contributed by the ROK and 2-MT pre-cooked rice contributed by Japan for Cyclone Mocha in Myanmar, and 320-MT milled rice contributed by Japan for Mayon Volcano eruption and the SDP as well as 400-MT milled rice contributed by the ROK for floods and landslides in the Philippines. The Meeting extended an appreciation to the Governments of Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines for cooperation in carrying out the smooth and effective Tier 3 programme implementation.

25. Representatives from Cambodia and Myanmar expressed grateful gratitude to the Governments of Japan and the ROK for generous contributions under Tier 3 programme in strengthening food security and alleviating poverty in their countries.

26. The representative from the ROK was grateful for the successful implementations and hoped that the ROK's contribution would be efficient for the recipient countries. In the meantime, the Meeting noted that Japan has appreciated positive feedback on pre-cooked rice from beneficiaries in Cambodia as well as successful implementation of SDP in the Philippines as the first case of the initiative. Japan also would continue to implement APTERR programmes under Tier 3 including the SDP, and welcomed other countries interested to participate in this programme.

Agenda Item 9: UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF APTERR PROGRAMMES

27. The representatives from the APTERR Secretariat, Lao PDR and Myanmar updated on the ongoing implementation of APTERR programmes and FY 2024 Tier 3 programme. The document and presentations appear in **ANNEX 19** to **ANNEX 26**.

28. The Meeting welcomed the new contributions for FY 2024 from P.R. China, Japan and the ROK aimed at continuously supporting the Tier 3 programme in alignment with APTERR's objectives of strengthening food security in the region. For FY 2024, the received contributions for Tier 3 programme are as follows:

- i) P.R. China for about USD 800,000 of in-cash contribution; approximately 1,000 MT of milled rice
- ii) Japan for USD 720,000; approximately 622 MT: 620 MT of milled rice and 2 MT of pre-cooked rice
- iii) The ROK for 10,000 MT of milled rice; more than doubling FY 2023's contribution of 4,500 MT (2,000 MT for pre-positioned programme and 2,500 MT for urgent request to rice assistance)

29. The Meeting acknowledged with appreciation the progress in implementing 300-MT milled rice contributed by P.R. China, 320-MT milled rice (including 20-MT rice for the SDP) and 2-MT pre-cooked rice contributed by Japan and 500-MT milled rice contributed by the ROK to be pre-positioned in Lao PDR, 200-MT milled rice contributed by P.R. China, and 750-MT milled rice contributed by the ROK for the pre-positioned programme and another 2,500-MT milled rice contributed by the ROK for urgent assistance in Myanmar, and 375-MT milled rice contributed by P.R. China in response to an urgent request and 300-MT milled rice contributed by Japan for pre-positioning as well as a release of 750-MT milled rice contributed by the ROK for floods, landslides and earthquakes in the Philippines.

30. Noting a spike in local rice prices and exchange rate fluctuations, the Meeting acknowledged that the amount of rice purchased with P.R. China's in-cash contribution for FY 2023 was adjusted from the approved proposals. For Tier 3 in Lao PDR, the amount was reduced from 350 MT to 300 MT, and for Tier 3 in Myanmar, it was reduced from 350 MT to 200 MT.

31. The Meeting thanked the Governments of Lao PDR, Myanmar, and the Philippines as well as the APTERR Secretariat for tremendous efforts and cooperation to ensure a smooth operation of Tier 3 programme in providing humanitarian reliefs amid emergency situations and for poverty alleviation.

32. Representatives from Lao PDR and Myanmar expressed their profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to the Governments of P.R. China, Japan and the ROK for their continued and benevolent rice contributions under Tier 3 programme.

**Agenda Item 10: STUDY ON EXPANDING APTERR TARGET ITEMS BY THE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

33. The representative from the ROK presented the outcomes of study on expanding APTERR target items. The presentation appears in **ANNEX 27**.

34. The Meeting expressed appreciation to the ROK for their tremendous efforts on conducting the study. In light of the concerns regarding the inclusion of wheat or other new target items to APTERR, the Meeting underscored the necessity for comprehensive information (e.g. how the proposed mechanisms for the stockpiling of additional APTERR target items would be operationalized), and detailed clarification to proceed further discussion. ROK also noted that it would be important to consider the consumption culture of food products throughout ASEAN.

35. The Meeting noted that the ROK would take all comments and suggestion from the Meeting into account, and develop a revised proposal for APTERR member countries' consideration.

Agenda Item 11: OTHER MATTERS

36. The representative from the AFSIS Secretariat presented the AFSIS implementation in 2023 - 2024 (Q1) and the important role of AFSIS in providing food security-related data for the ASEAN Member States, as well as APTERR's activities. The presentation appears in **ANNEX 28**.

37. The Meeting noted the presentation of AFSIS Secretariat.

38. The ADB consultant presented a preliminary report on a systematic review of APTERR. The presentation appears in **ANNEX 29**.

39. The Meeting expressed gratitude and appreciation to the ADB and its consultant team for support of this systematic review. Incorporating the comments and suggestion from the Meeting, the ADB consultant would finalise the report and submit to APTERR. Then, the APTERR Secretariat would circulate the final report to the APTERR Council for consideration and comments, before considering further comprehensive technical assistance from the ADB.

Agenda Item 12: DATE AND VENUE OF THE 13th MEETING OF APTERR COUNCIL

40. The Meeting noted that the 13th Meeting of APTERR Council would be hosted by the Government of Japan on 19-20 February 2025 in Tokyo, Japan. The APTERR Secretariat in collaboration with Japan will announce the details of the meeting in due course.

Agenda Item 13: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

41. The Meeting took note that the summary report of the 12th Meeting of APTERR Council would be adopted ad-referendum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

42. The Meeting was held in a spirit of the ASEAN Plus Three co-operation and cordiality.

26 April 2024, the People's Republic of China