



Meeting Information

The Fifth Focal Point Meeting of AFSIS Project Century Park Hotel, Manila, Philippines 30 – 31 May 2007

1. Background and Objectives

The ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Project is an ASEAN and Japan initiative with participation open to China and Korea. The Project was approved by the Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry of the ASEAN member countries plus China, Japan and Korea in their meeting held in Lao PDR in October 2002. The Project has the period of five years, from 2003 to 2007. The overall objectives of the Project include facilitating food security planning and implementation in member countries through the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of food security information. It is led and coordinated by Thailand, in particular, the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. The Statistics Department (SD), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Japan is the donor through ASEAN Trust Funds.

The Focal Point Meeting (FPM) is the decision-making mechanism of the Project, which is planned to be held at least once a year. The Fifth FPM will discuss, review and decide on the following matters:

- a) Project activities at the regional and national levels.
- b) Project Work Plan in year 2007.
- c) Implementation Plan of the second phase of the Project.
- d) Other important matters relevant to the Project implementation.

2. Participants of the Meeting

The FPM will be attended by representatives nominated as Project's Focal Points from each of member country including representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), East Asia Emergency Rice Reserve (EAERR) Project and other concerned agencies.

3. Date and Venue

The Fifth FPM will be held during Wednesday 30 to Thursday 31 May 2007 at the Century Park Hotel, 599 P. Ocampo St. 1004 Malate, Metro Manila, Manila City, Philippines.

4. Traveling Costs

The project will provide the participants from ASEAN countries with air-tickets, terminal expenses, daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and accommodation (*except for Brunei and Singapore, such costs will be provided through the ASEAN Secretariat, therefore, those participants are advised to contact Ms. Nurry Purwanti, e-mail address: nurry@aseansec.org for further arrangements*). The participants will be advised to receive their round trip air-tickets in advance. As for the terminal expenses, the reimbursement shall be made upon the submission of receipt, while DSA will be paid in cash during the meeting.

5. Accommodation

A group booking for all participants will be arranged at the Century Park Hotel, Manila, Philippines. The participants who buy their own air tickets are requested to inform the Project of their arrival and departure dates in due course.

6. Arrival at the Airport

The Project will arrange transportation from Ninoy Aquino International Airport to the hotel for all participants. Participants who buy their own air tickets are requested to inform the Project staff with their flight numbers and arrival dates in advance.

7. About Philippines

The Philippines is made up of 7,107 islands covering a land area of 115,739 sq.m. (299,764 sq. km.). Main island groups are Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Capital is Manila. Time Zone is GMT + 8 hours.

CLIMATE

March to May is hot and dry. June to October is rainy, November to February is cool. Average temperatures: 78°F / 25°C to 90°F / 32°C; humidity is 77%.

POPULATION

There are a total of 76.5 million Filipinos as of the latest national census in May, 2000. Population growth is estimated at 2.36 percent annually. Luzon, the largest island group, accounts for more than half of the entire population.

LANGUAGES

Two official languages --- Filipino and English. Filipino which is based on Tagalog, is the national language. English is also widely used and is the medium of instruction in higher education.

Eight (8) major dialects spoken by majority of the Filipinos: Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense.

Filipino is that native language which is used nationally as the language of communication among ethnic groups. Like any living language, Filipino is in a process of development through loans from Philippine languages and non-native languages for various situations, among speakers of different social

backgrounds, and for topics for conversation and scholarly discourse. There are about 76 to 78 major language groups, with more than 500 dialects.

RELIGIONS

Some 83% of Filipinos are Catholic. About 5% are Moslem. The rest are made up of smaller Christian denominations and Buddhist.

UNIT OF MEASURE

The Metric System is used in most trade and legal transactions.

ELECTRICITY

220 volts a/c is the common standard. 110 volts a/c is also used, especially in major hotels.

CURRENCY

The Philippines' monetary unit is the peso, divided into 100 centavos. Foreign currency may be exchanged at any hotels, most large department stores, banks, and authorized money-changing shops accredited by the Central Bank of the Philippines. International credit cards such as Visa, Diners Club, Bank Americard, Master Card, and American Express are accepted in major establishments.

8. Getting a visa

Even though Nationals from many countries are allowed to enter the Philippines without a visa for a period of stay of twenty-one (21) days or less, it is advisable to contact Philippine Embassy in your respective country for necessary information.

9. Contact Person

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10. Registration Form

All participants are requested to complete the attached registration form and return it to the project by fax or e-mail as soon as possible.