



Introduction to the Workshop

Objectives, Organization of the Sessions and Expectations

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APIRAS Learning Workshop
24-26 January 2023

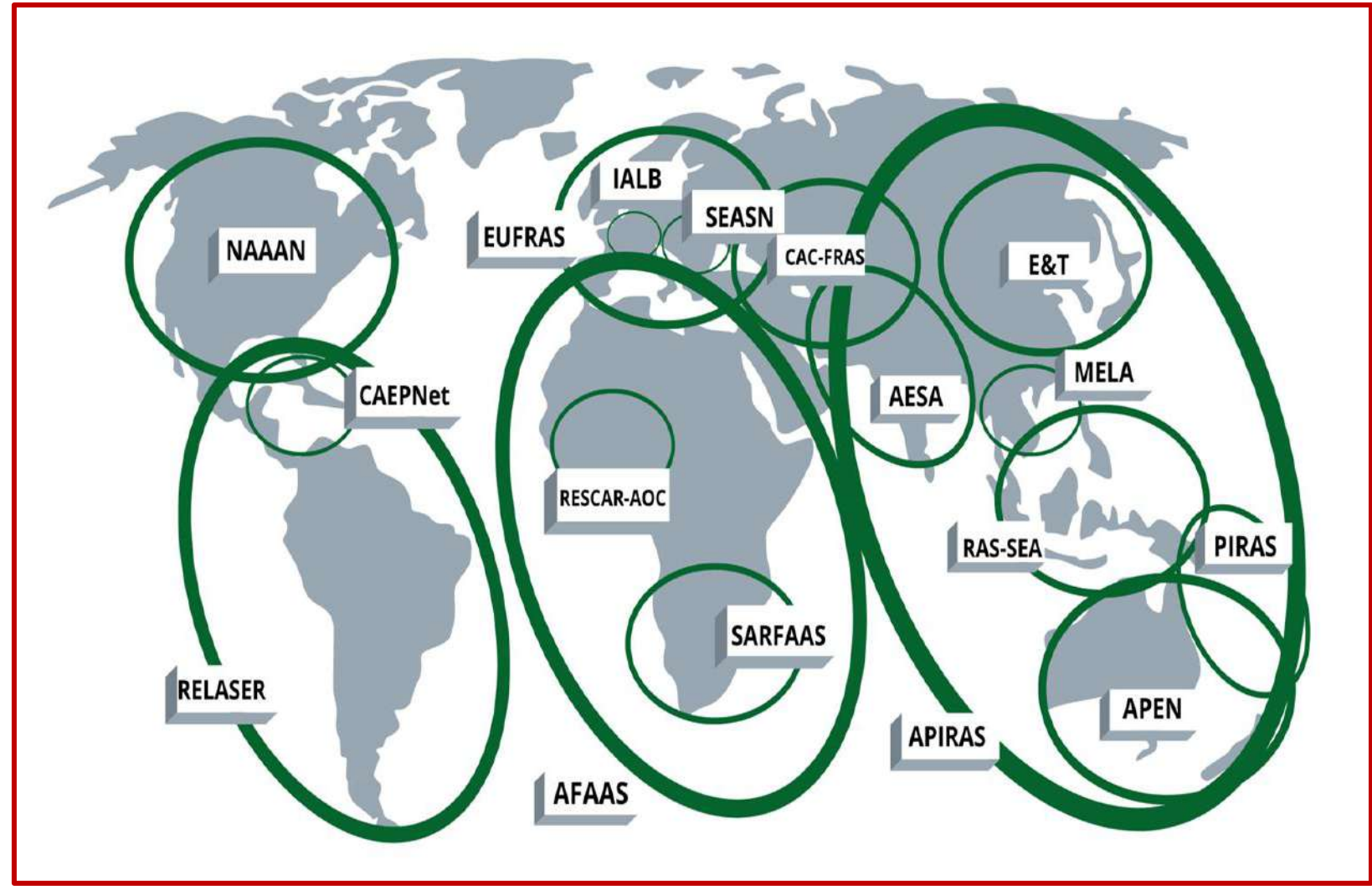
Background

APIRAS is one of the **Regional Networks** of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS)

(<https://www.g-fras.org/en/>)

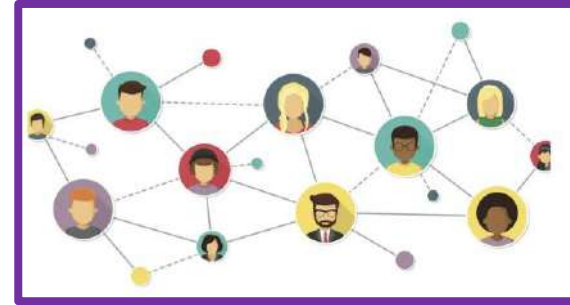


- Asia Pacific Region has 7 **sub-regional networks** and are further organised at the country level as **Country Fora**



Country Fora (CF) of EAS: “our architecture”

- It is the national platform of pluralistic EAS providers at the country level
- **A CF also serves as entry point for engaging with the sub-regional, regional and international initiatives that are aimed at strengthening EAS**
- A CF is represented at the sub-regional/regional level and thus they are connected to the global community of EAS providers represented by the GFRAS



CF in Asia Pacific Region

Well established* CF

Bangladesh (AESAS)

Philippines (RASSEA)

Kyrgystan (CACFRAS)

Fiji (PIRAS)

Sub-Regional Network:
APEN

A few emerging

* got initial funding



Global experience: CF are critical for strengthening capacities of EAS

Mainly *addressing the most important challenges* EAS are facing at the country level

- **Insufficient funding (due to poor recognition of EAS efforts)**
- **Lack of adequate capacities** among extension staff, especially to deal with new challenges
- **Very little policy support** (no credible voice to enhance policy support)
- **No shared platform** to better understand the contributions of diverse providers (public, private, NGOs, Producer Organisations) within the country
- **Lack of mechanisms to learn from good practices at the country and regional levels** (and also across the globe to improve performance)

- Policy advocacy
- Strengthening capacities
- Promote Networking

GFRAS allocated additional 40,000 USD (SDC) in 2022 to strengthen CF

APIRAS Board discussed in 2022, how best we can use this funding to strengthen CF

Decision

To organize a **Regional Learning Workshop** with already established and emerging networks so that collectively we develop an action plan to do the same

Other considerations

Need for shared learning

Strengthen capacities at all levels for sustaining capacities in the long run

- There was no APIRAS meeting post 2019 (partly COVID-19 and lack of resources)
- No real knowledge about what every one is doing at the Regional/Sub-Regional and Country Fora
- There is a need to learn from each other (including other similar regional initiatives) and plan future course of action than dividing the funds thinly over 2-3 CF
- Strengthening CF would also need strengthening the capacities of SRNs to mentor CFs

Objective of the Workshop

- Support the representatives of the CF/SRNs to know more about the activities of APIRAS at the regional and sub-regional and country level (DAY 1)
- Learn about potential opportunities and interventions to strengthen (*emerging*) CF and plan the next set of interventions (DAY 2)
- Discuss ways of improving the governance of APIRAS and new hosting arrangements (DAY 3)



Expected output: Strengthen CF (committed in the LoA)

Objective “*enhancing the institutional capacity of the country fora to execute ideas and initiatives that contribute and assure its long-term functioning*”

The objective with the support is: *To strengthen GFRAS Country Fora in accordance with the listed achievements in outcome 4 of the Joint Operational Plan.*

Outcome 4 Networks are functional and financially sustainable	Number (n) of countries with active RAS CF	Baseline: 50 Target: 75
	Number (n) of CF at maturity stage 3	Baseline: 10 Target: 30
	Number (n) of CF generating income to operate a secretariat	Baseline: 10 Target: 20
	Number (n) of CF with 20% or more of its members being private sector stakeholders.	Baseline: 2 Target: 5
	Number (n) of CF with active youth and gender policy	Baseline: 0 Target: 15

Our participants

- Representatives of CF/SRNs from 4/6 Sub-Regional Networks including the Board Members (RDA+APEN)
 - *ET- There is no update and they are yet to take a firm decision on whether they are part of APIRAS*
 - *PIRAS invited- Board Member expressed difficulty in getting the visa and inability to attend*
 - *Fiji- No response to our follow-up*
- Some of our participants are sponsored by other organizations/projects and our special thanks to all of them (GIZ, FAO-TAP, GFRAS) including those who are self sponsored
- Also our gratitude to APAARI, FAO-RAP and APEN

We hope to have productive interactions and frank exchange of perspectives on how we collectively strengthen APIRAS at all levels in these 3 days

THANKS!