

Thailand to revamp rice sector with 118M euro climate-smart farming plan

Thailand is set to transform its rice sector through the 118 million euro-funded initiative: Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming Project.



Aiming to support 253,400 Thai rice farmers in adopting climate-smart farming practices and to reduce 2.44 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2028, this project commitment was reinforced at the national inception event held at the Eastin Grand Hotel Phayathai, where key stakeholders convened to advance Thailand's rice sector towards low-emission and climate-resilient pathways.

The Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming Project, is a multi-agency collaboration funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the develoPPP programme, and private sector partners including Ebro Foods, MARS Food, Olam Agri and PepsiCo.

Additional in-kind contributions from executing entities and implementing partners – GIZ Thailand, the Rice Department (RD), the Department of Agricultural Extension (DoAE), the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC), the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) – will further bolster its implementation. Through this collaborative effort, the project is working to transition smallholder rice farming in Thailand to climate-smart and resilient models, boosting productivity, enhancing farmers' livelihoods, strengthening market environments, and lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

Over the five-year implementation period from 2024 to 2028, Thai smallholder farmers will be supported in adopting ten key climate-smart technologies, including Farm-level Water Management (FWM), Laser Land Levelling (LLL), Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD), Straw and Stubble Management (SSM), Site-Specific Nutrient Management (SNM), Rice Variety Diversification (RVD), Dry Direct-Seeded Rice (DSR), Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Crop Diversification Rotation (RCS), and Agro-Met Advisory Services (AAS).

These innovations are designed to enhance efficiency, lower emissions and build resilience against climate change. By equipping farmers with the skills, financial-support resources and innovative tools needed for climate-smart production, the initiative aims to secure long-term benefits for both farmers and the broader rice sector.

The project's inception event brought together over 190 participants from across the rice value chain, including representatives from government officials, private-sector entities, farmers and academic and research institutions.



Under the theme ‘Rice is More: More Vision, More Action, More People Benefitting’, the event focused on strengthening collaboration and synergies among key actors as they collectively scale up the implementation of climate-smart rice farming practices across the country. It also served as a platform where diverse perspectives from different stakeholders contributed to policy-oriented discussions and public-private dialogues on investment opportunities in the rice sector.

Ernst Reichel, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Thailand, in his welcome speech, highlighted the importance of collaboration in addressing climate change.

“Today, we see the Thai government, international partners, private-sector actors, and farmer representatives coming together with a shared vision. No single actor can achieve this transformation alone. It requires collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and a long-term commitment from all stakeholders to scale solutions that benefit both people and the planet,” said Reichel.

Arnon Noncie, Deputy Director-General, Rice Department, elaborated on the concept of ‘Rice is More’ during his keynote speech. This vision aligns with the project’s goals to enhance rice productivity, improve farmers’ livelihoods and strengthen the market ecosystem for Thai rice.

“‘Rice is More’ is a vision to move Thai rice forward. Rice is not just an economic crop; it is an important tool for building a sustainable future. We need to position Thai rice as a symbol of quality, high standards, and innovation – an economic opportunity that will allow Thai farmers to compete on the global stage.”

Timo Menniken, Country Director, GIZ Thailand said “Through our collaboration with local Thai and international partners, we aim to make climate-smart rice farming a standard practice moving forward, combining increased income for farmers with climate protection.”

Through this event, the project has shaped a common vision and mutual goals among different actors, with full-fledged action plans on track to be rolled out across 21 provinces in Thailand’s key rice farming regions.



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