



GFAR

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research

Together we're shaping the future: Transforming agricultural research, education, extension and enterprise for development

GFAR Constituent Assembly Bangkok, Thailand, 24-26 August 2015

NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

Shaping the future of agricultural research and innovation requires a new understanding between public and private research, farmers, civil society, education, extension and enterprise. Bringing together the voices of thousands of diverse organizations, GFAR has defined essential processes of change in the way we think about agricultural innovation and its impact in development. In so doing, we have recognized that the Global Forum itself needs to change, to build, strengthen and enrich its partnership base and operations to create a forum that is truly owned by all and able to foster change across all sectors.

You have been nominated to attend the Assembly through a consultative process with global and regional stakeholder networks that has identified key leaders from each sector. You have been invited to help reshape the collective actions, mechanisms and governance of GFAR. The Constituent Assembly will be the first step in these changes.

More information about the GFAR Constituent Assembly is available on our website at the following address: <http://www.egfar.org/about-us/governance-and-organization/constituent-assembly>

Meeting documents will be made available as they become available. These will be circulated to all confirmed participants and available on the website noted above. All sessions of the GFAR Constituent Assembly will be conducted in English.

Donner forme à l'avenir de la recherche agricole et de l'innovation nécessite une nouvelle compréhension entre la recherche publique et celle privée, les agriculteurs, la société civile, l'éducation, la vulgarisation et de l'entreprise. Réunissant les voix de milliers d'organisations diverses, GFAR a défini les processus essentiels de changement dans la façon dont nous pensons à l'innovation agricole et son impact dans le développement. Ce faisant, nous avons reconnu que le Forum mondial lui-même a besoin de changer, de construire, renforcer et enrichir sa base et opérations de partenariat pour créer



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un forum qui est vraiment possédé par tous et en mesure de favoriser le changement dans tous les secteurs.

Vous avez été désigné pour assister à l'Assemblée à travers un processus consultatif avec les réseaux mondiaux et régionaux intervenants qui a identifié les principaux dirigeants de chaque secteur. Vous avez été invité à aider à remodeler les actions collectives, les mécanismes et la gouvernance du GFAR. L'Assemblée constituante sera la première étape de ces changements.

Plus d'informations sur l'Assemblée constituante du GFAR est disponible sur notre site Web à l'adresse suivante: <http://www.egfar.org/about-us/governance-and-organization/constituent-assembly>.

Les documents de la réunion seront disponibles à mesure qu'ils deviennent disponibles. Ceux-ci seront distribués à tous les participants confirmés et disponibles sur le site Web indiqué ci-dessus. Toutes les séances de l'Assemblée constituante GFAR seront menées en anglais.

Dar forma al futuro de la investigación agrícola y la innovación requiere un nuevo entendimiento entre la investigación pública y privada, los agricultores, la sociedad civil, la educación, la extensión y la empresa. Reunir las voces de miles de diversos organismos, GFAR ha definido los procesos esenciales del cambio en la forma en la que pensamos sobre la innovación agrícola y su impacto en el desarrollo. Al hacerlo, hemos reconocido que el Foro Global si mismo tiene que cambiar, para construir, fortalecer y enriquecer la base y las operaciones de la asociación y de crear un foro que es realmente propiedad de todos y fiable para fomentar el cambio en todos los sectores.

Usted ha sido nominado a la Asamblea a través de un proceso de consulta con las redes mundiales y regionales de interesados que tiene la aprobación de los principales líderes de cada sector. Usted ha sido invitado a ayudar a reestructurar las acciones colectivas y mecanismos de gobernanza del GFAR. La Asamblea Constituyente será el primer paso en estos cambios.

Más información sobre la Asamblea Constituyente del GFAR es disponible en nuestro sitio web en la dirección a seguir: <http://www.egfar.org/about-us/governance-and-organization/constituent-assembly>

La documentación de las reuniones estará disponible a medida de que se produzca. Los documentos se distribuirán a todos los participantes que hayan confirmado su participación y disponibles en el sitio web indicado anteriormente. Todas las sesiones de la Asamblea Constituyente del GFAR se impartirán en inglés



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1) VENUE.....	4
2) PREPARATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION.....	4
3) EXPENSES.....	5
4) HOTEL ACCOMMODATION.....	5
5) FORMALITIES FOR ENTRY INTO THAILAND: VISA REQUIREMENTS.....	6
6) TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPONSORED PARTICIPANTS.....	6
7) AIRPORT TRANSFERS IN BANGKOK.....	7
8) COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE GFAR SECRETARIAT.....	8
9) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.....	8
 ANNEX : SUMMARY OF COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES ENTITLED TO VISA EXEMPTION AND VISA ON ARRIVAL TO THAILAND.....	 9



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1) VENUE

The venue for the GFAR Constituent Assembly is the Rama Gardens Hotel Bangkok (<http://ramagardenshotel.com/>). All sessions of the Constituent Assembly will be held in the conference center of Rama Gardens Hotel.

All participants will also be accommodated at the Rama Gardens Hotel. Guestrooms feature modern amenities, including WiFi and premium television channels. (See notes on accommodation arrangements in point 4, below, for booking information.)

Rama Gardens Hotel Bangkok
9/9 VibhavadiRangsit Road
Laksi, Bangkok 10210 Thailand
Phone: +66 2 558 7888- Fax: +66 2 558 7808
e-mail: rama@ramagardenshotel.com
<http://ramagardenshotel.com>

To visualize the location on Google Maps, please go to <http://bit.ly/1e3C9dM>

2) PREPARATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

Invitation letters from the GFAR Steering Committee Chair have been sent individually to nominated participants via email. As noted in the invitation, accommodation at Rama Gardens for up to four nights (including breakfast), lunches at the Assembly, and a lumpsum allowance to cover other dinners and incidental expenses, are provided by GFAR to all participants. Please note points 3 and 4 below on the details of this support.

As GFAR central funding is limited, where possible participants are asked to support their own travel costs. If, due to exceptional circumstances participants cannot cover their flight costs, the GFAR Secretariat will, at the participant's request, explore what support may be possible. Requests for air travel sponsorship will be reviewed and a response provided by early July so that travel arrangements can be made (see point 6).

Upon receipt of the invitation letter, invitees are kindly asked to initiate preparations for their participation. Where necessary, we urge participants to begin the process of visa application as soon as possible (see point 5).

3) EXPENSES

Hotel accommodation during your participation (up to four (4) nights) will be supported in full and arranged by the GFAR Secretariat. Lunches will be provided for all days of meetings; breakfast is included in the accommodation booking.

An allowance for expenses will be provided to participants as a standard lumpsum of USD 370. This lumpsum is intended to cover:

- Three (3) dinners while in Bangkok,
- Two (2) airport transfers in the country of origin, transit arrangements in the case of airport change for flight connection, and two (2) airport transfers in Bangkok, and
- Miscellaneous expenses en route and during the conference.

The per diem will be paid to participants in cash (USD) during the course of the meeting.

A gala dinner will be offered by the GFAR Secretariat on Monday, 24 August. Transportation to the dinner will be arranged by bus.

4) HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Block bookings at the Rama Gardens Hotel Bangkok have been made for all participants by our local partner, APAARI. Final bookings will be for up to four (4) nights (23-27 August), in accordance with participants' final itinerary. You will receive an email confirmation of your booking prior to your departure for Bangkok.

Please note that any additional costs (e.g. laundry, mini bar, room service) will be at the expense of the participant. Upgrades or extensions of bookings must be arranged directly with the hotel and funded by the participant.

Check-in at the Rama Gardens Hotel is from 2pm; guests should check-out by 12pm. However, reception will store luggage as needed, and will allow early check-in where possible according to availability of rooms.

TRAVEL TO BANGKOK

All participants whose travel to Bangkok is not being handled by the GFAR Secretariat are kindly asked to communicate their dates of arrival and departure to the GFAR Secretariat at the earliest.

This is to ensure that the accommodation booking matches with each participant's itinerary.

5) FORMALITIES FOR ENTRY INTO THAILAND: VISA REQUIREMENTS

Participants are advised to enquire at the nearest Thai Embassy or Consulate of whether visas are required to enter Thailand as soon as possible after receipt of the letter of invitation. Please refer to the Annex for a list of nationals who are exempt from the visa requirement for Thailand and those who may be eligible for a visa on arrival.

It is the participant's responsibility to check if transit visas are required for stopovers in cities according to his/her flight itinerary.

IMPORTANT: If you require a support letter from GFAR as the organizer as part of your visa application, please send a scanned copy of the first page of your valid passport *and* the following information to Ms. Gianna de Cesare Metcalfe, GFAR Secretariat (gianna.decesare@fao.org):

- i. Full name precisely as it appears in your passport;
- ii. Your date and place of birth;
- iii. Passport number;
- iv. Place and date of issuance;
- v. Date of expiry;
- vi. Your full address of residence (with telephone, email and fax);
- vii. The address, telephone and email of the Embassy/Consulate of Uruguay where you are applying for the visa.

6) TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPONSORED PARTICIPANTS

For those participants where there is an agreement to provide air travel support from GFAR, they are requested to contact the GFAR Secretariat immediately after the sponsorship has been agreed upon to initiate their travel arrangements.

The GFAR Secretariat has established a partnership with Carlson Wagonlit Travel at FAO Headquarters to establish an itinerary for sponsored travel to Bangkok. **The itinerary is based on the most direct,**

economical route with arrival in Bangkok scheduled one day prior to the start of the Constituent Assembly (23 August 2015) and departure from Bangkok on 26 August following the close of meetings, or as required by flight availability.

Based on your acceptance of the itinerary via email and after having verified that your name is precisely as it appears in your passport (or other travel document), a return ticket will be issued and sent to you electronically.

No business class tickets will be issued, regardless of the country of origin or total flight duration.*

Please note that having agreed to the proposed schedule for your travel, any changes to the approved itinerary or issued ticket will be at your own expense, by contacting the airline directly. Locally-purchased tickets will not be eligible for reimbursement; no travel or visa assistance will be provided to family members of the sponsored participants. Cancellations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

* As per rules of the Food and Agriculture Organization established in the FAO Administrative Circular 2011/29. In virtue of its administrative status within the Organization, GFAR is subject to FAO rules concerning all travel related expenditures in favor of GFAR sponsored participants.

7) AIRPORT TRANSFERS IN BANGKOK

Participants coming by air will arrive at one of two airports, depending on routing. Suvarnabhumi Airport is located at about 50 km, or about 40 minutes by vehicle without traffic, from the Rama Gardens Hotel. The Don Mueang International Airport serves mostly destinations in Asia and is located about 9 km from Rama Gardens.

Participants are advised to take an airport taxi to the Hotel, and use a taxi service for drop-off at the airport. A metered taxi will cost generally about THB 700, plus the toll charges.

Suvarnabhumi Airport is also serviced by an airport rail link that provides direct connection with Makkasan station in downtown Bangkok. From Makkasan station take a taxi to reach the Rama Gardens Hotel.

Optionally, there is an airport limousine service which costs about THB 1500 each way. Keep adequate local currency for this purpose before taking local transport (see currency exchange information in the Additional Information section below).

Please remember that the expense allowance in the amount of USD 370 to be disbursed on-site to all participants covers the amount advanced by participants for inbound airport transfers.

For directions on Google Maps from Suvarnabhumi Airport to Rama Gardens Hotel, please go to <http://bit.ly/1BAQYzs>

8) COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE GFAR SECRETARIAT

Requests for information should be addressed to the GFAR Secretariat:

GFAR-Assembly-2015@fao.org

GFAR Secretariat

c/o FAO-DDNGD

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla

00153 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39 0657053189

9) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

For the terms and conditions of the travel insurance provided by GFAR Secretariat c/o FAO, kindly contact the GFAR Secretariat.

Reimbursement of Visa Expenses

Costs associated with visa application, transportation to drop off and collect visa, courier delivery service or visa on arrival fee may be reimbursed following completion of travel and upon presentation of adequate proofs. All relevant receipts, as well as boarding passes for all legs of round trip travel, must be sent in scan to the GFAR Secretariat for processing.

Weather in Bangkok

Bangkok experiences a rainy season from July to October. In August/September, there will be a 68%-75% chance of rain. The average temperature in August/September is 30 degrees Celsius, with an average of 5 hours of sun each day.

Currency exchange

The current exchange rate is 1 USD = 33.7750 THB (Thai Baht). Money exchange booths at Suvarnabhumi Airport operate 24/7 as the airport has both arrivals and departures nearly around the clock.

It is recommended that participants carry at least THB 2800 (THB 1000-1200 for visa-on-arrival and THB 700/THB 1500 for taking airport taxi/limousine to the hotel plus the toll).

Health Information

Information for travelers to Thailand can be found at the following site:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/thailand>

ANNEX: SUMMARY OF COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES ENTITLED TO VISA EXEMPTION AND VISA ON ARRIVAL TO THAILAND

1) Tourist visa exemption

Passport holders from the countries listed below are not required to obtain a visa when entering Thailand for tourism purposes and will be permitted to stay in Thailand for a period not exceeding 30 days on each visit.

1. Australia	2. Austria	3. Belgium	4. Brazil
5. Bahrain	6. Brunei Darussalam	7. Canada	8. Denmark
9. Finland	10. France	11. Germany	12. Greece
13. Hong Kong	14. Iceland	15. Indonesia	16. Ireland
17. Israel	18. Italy	19. Japan	20. Republic of Korea
21. Kuwait	22. Luxembourg	23. Malaysia	24. Monaco
25. Netherlands	26. New Zealand	27. Norway	28. Oman
29. Peru	30. Philippines	31. Portugal	32. Qatar
33. Singapore	34. Spain	35. South Africa	36. Sweden
37. Switzerland	38. Turkey	39. United Kingdom	40. United Arab Emirates
41. USA	42. Vietnam	43. Czech Republic	44. Hungary
45. Liechtenstein	46. Poland	47. Slovak Republic	48. Slovenia

NOTE: Citizens of other countries are advised to contact the Thai Embassy or Consulate-General at their respective point of origin regarding visa requirements. For more information, please refer to the following websites: <http://www.thaiembassy.org/> or <http://www.mfa.go.th/web/2637.php>

2) Visa on Arrival

Participants who are passport holders from 28 countries and territories listed below may apply for visa on arrival at the immigration checkpoints for the *purpose of tourism* for the period of not exceeding 15 days.

1. Bhutan	2. China	3. India	4. Taiwan
5. Estonia	6. Hungary	7. Cyprus	8. Kazakhstan
9. Latvia	10. Liechtenstein	11. Lithuania	12. Maldives
13. Mauritius	14. Oman	15. Poland	16. Russian Federation
17. Saudi Arabia	18. Slovakia	19. Slovenia	20. Uzbekistan
21. Ukraine	22. Ethiopia	23. Czech Republic	24. Bulgaria
25. Andorra	26. Malta	27. Romania	28. San Marino

Your passport must have at least six-month validity and must present full paid ticket which is usable within 15 days since the date of entry. **Passport size photos (4x6 cm; white background)** and **visa fee THB1000** are needed for application of Thai visa on arrival. You need to have a confirmed air ticket showing the return travel date (carry a copy of the ticket). The purpose should be mentioned as **tourism**. The hotel details are: Rama Gardens Hotel, 9/9 VibhavadiRangsit Road, Laksi, Bangkok 10210 Thailand; Tel: (66 2) 558-7888. If you need to mention a local contact, please mention: Ms. UrairatRujirek, APAARI, Bangkok; Cell: 091 775 2961.

NOTE: There is a **fast-track lane for visa-on-arrival at the Airport**. Besides THB 1000 for visa fee, there is an additional fast-track processing fee of THB 200 for this lane (no receipt for this additional fee will be provided)