



SESSION: POLICY FORUM



Dr. Nipon Poapongsakorn, Ph.D.
Distinguished Fellow, Thailand Development Research Institute Foundation

Dr. Nipon Poapongsakorn is a Distinguished Fellow and former President of the Thailand Development Research Institute Foundation. Earlier, he was Associate Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University, Thailand.

Dr. Nipon Poapongsakorn is the author of over 200 research projects and publications related to agricultural policies, focusing specifically on water management and climate change; rural credit markets; labor economics and human resources; trade, competition and industrial policies; and anti-corruption and conflicts of interest policy. His on-going research focuses on smart farming and technology policy, and the future of small farmers.

Dr. Nipon Poapongsakorn has advised the Thai government, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank on various issues ranging from rice price and agricultural policies to education and industrial policy, to trade strategies.

He has held leadership positions or been a member of numerous national or international associations that work on agricultural development, including the Asian Society of Agricultural Economists, the Asia Pacific Agricultural Policy Forum, Thailand's National Rice Policy Committee, and the Thai Economics Society, to name just a few.

Dr. Poapongsakorn received his Master's in Economics from Middle Tennessee State University, USA, and his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Hawaii, Manoa, USA.



**Dr. Mercedita Agcaoili Sombilla, Ph.D.
Undersecretary of the National Economic and Development Authority,
the Philippines**

Dr. Mercedita Agcaoili Sombilla is currently Undersecretary of the National Economic and Development Authority, which is the economic planning body of the Philippine Government.

Her early passion was research which she continues to do, aligned with various international policy institutions, including the International Food Policy Research Institute based in Washington D.C.; the International Rice Research Institute based in Los Baños, Laguna, the Philippines; and the Southeast Asian Center for Graduate Studies in Agriculture, also based in Los Baños Laguna.

As a researcher she focuses primarily on policy studies related to the development of agricultural and rural economies. Her work and research have provided her with rich perspective on critical challenges in the agriculture sector, particularly within the ASEAN region.

She has also served as consultant to various development partners, such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Australian Center for International Agricultural Research, the United States Agency for International Development, and also to various governmental ministries.

She received her M.A. in Economics from the University of the Philippines, and her Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Minnesota, USA.



Dr. Ravi Khetarpal
Executive Secretary, Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions,
Bangkok, Thailand

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal has been the Executive Secretary of the Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) since 2017. He facilitates information management and promotes networking and capacity building with partners in the Asia Pacific region involving projects related to agricultural innovation systems, phytosanitary compliance, pesticide risk mitigation, agribiotechnology and bioresources, agricultural science technology indicators, and risk mitigation.

He presently chairs the Tropical Agricultural Platform of the United Nation Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and was recently selected to chair the Global Forum of Agricultural Research and Innovation.

He previously served as Head, Plant Quarantine at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research National Bureau of Plants Genetic Resources, (ICAR-NBR), New Delhi, and also as Regional Director of ICAR Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (ICAR-CABI) for South Asia. He was also a Consultant to several collaborative projects sponsored by the FAO/World Bank/United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that focused on biosecurity and compliances in Asian countries and he represented Asia as Developing Country Expert to the working group on Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) under the WTO's Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).

He earned his Ph.D. in Life Sciences (Plant Pathology) from the University of Paris



Dr. Eiichi Kusano
Senior Researcher in the Social Science Division, Japan International Research
Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS)

Dr. Kusano's expertise is analyzing food supply and demand using macro-level data. He compiled information on the food value chain in ASEAN member states for the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) based in Jakarta, working with researchers in each country.

Currently, he has been conducting research on the impact of the fall armyworm, a transboundary pest insect, infecting countries in the Mekong Region, as well as estimating global food and nutrition supply for the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS).

He has provided his expertise related to basic food supply and demand analysis to officials in the Ministry of Agriculture for ASEAN countries by actively participating in the activities of the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) in Bangkok. He also shared his expertise regarding the food value chain to university students in ASEAN countries under a project of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Agriculture Cooperatives (ASWG on ATE).



Mr. Chris Stevens
Director, Global Agribusiness, Kellogg Company, Michigan, USA

Mr. Chris Stevens has been working in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods industry for more than 30 years covering product development and innovation, brand marketing, national sales, commodity trading and procurement, including leading the Asia, Middle East & Africa Regional Procurement Organisation. Much of his career has been with the Kellogg Company.

Chris's current role is leading the Global Agribusiness function for Kellogg, which involves developing and managing global and regional supply chains of key agricultural ingredients, from varietal development through farming networks and onto the processor, and aligning key partners and networks to deliver the desired business outcomes.

His duties encompass the elements of sustainable and responsible agriculture, focusing on improving farmer livelihoods whilst making them more climate resilient and having a positive impact on reducing their greenhouse gas emissions footprint.

Chris earned his Bachelor's in Agricultural Science with Honours in Biochemistry from the University of Sydney, and his Master's in Finance and Marketing from the University of New South Wales, Australia.



Dr. Suresh Chandra Babu, Ph.D.
Head, Capacity Strengthening, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI),
Washington DC (USA) & Extraordinary Professor,
University of Pretoria, South Africa

Dr. Suresh Babu is an international agricultural economist who has conducted policy research, capacity development, and policy advisory activities for more than 30 years in the Sub Saharan Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, and other developing regions. He joined IFPRI in 1992 and has since served in several positions including as Coordinator of IFPRI's Southern Africa Food Security Program, Coordinator of its Central Asia Program, and Coordinator of its South Asia Initiative and its Policy Analysis and Advisory Network.

At IFPRI, Dr. Babu is guiding its regional and country programs in their capacity development activities. He has conducted many national dialogues leading to the development of national food security and agricultural policies of several developing countries in Africa including, Malawi, Ghana, and Nigeria; and in Asia including India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan.

Dr. Babu was previously a research economist at Cornell University.

Over the course of his distinguished career, he has published 20 books and more than 100 peer reviewed journal papers on food and agricultural policies in developing countries, and he has served on the editorial boards of several leading academic journals including, *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*, *Food Security*, *Agricultural Economics Research Review*, and the *African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*.

Dr. Babu earned his M.Sc. in Agricultural Economics from the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, India, and received his M.S. and Ph.D. in Economics from Iowa State University, USA.

His most recent co-edited publication is (2019) *Agricultural extension: Global status and performance in selected countries*. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). <https://doi.org/10.2499/9780896293755>