

## ICBA, SEARCA partner to develop individual and institutional capacities

**Dubai, UAE, March 15, 2021** – The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture ([ICBA](#)) and the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture ([SEARCA](#)) have agreed to collaborate on, among other things, capacity development and knowledge sharing.

ICBA and SEARCA signed a memorandum of understanding to this effect during a virtual ceremony today in the presence of senior officials from both organizations.

Signed by Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Acting Director General of ICBA, and Dr. Glenn B. Gregorio, Director of SEARCA, the agreement paves the way for cooperation in such areas as the implementation of programs to develop individual and institutional capacities, as well as the exchange of scientific materials, publications, and information between the two organizations.

Under the agreement, ICBA and SEARCA will also work on developing programs and projects of mutual interest.

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi said: “Partnership is a keyword in ICBA’s mission statement. That is why we are really pleased to form this partnership with SEARCA. By tapping into each other’s strengths, our organizations will be able to create new capacity development opportunities for researchers, especially youth and women. We also look forward to extending the reach of our capacity development programs to Southeast Asian countries.”

Dr. Glenn B. Gregorio, Director of SEARCA, said: “With the complexity of the challenges in agriculture in our society, we need to work together in partnerships. We are one with you in fighting food insecurity and shortage, as well as steering climate-smart crops and technologies. We are very much confident that this partnership between ICBA and SEARCA will lead us to a better, bigger, and smarter normal that is highly relevant for the future of our respective stakeholders.”

Based in the Philippines, SEARCA is an international non-profit organization established by the [Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization](#) with a mandate to provide to the participating countries high quality graduate study in agriculture; promote, undertake, and coordinate research programs related to the needs and problems of the Southeast Asian region; and disseminate the findings of agricultural research and experimentation.

Established in 1999, ICBA is a global center of excellence focused on developing tailor-made solutions for marginal environments - the areas of the world which face the problems of salinity, water scarcity and drought, among others.

ICBA has partners in more than 50 countries, and over the years the center has carried out research-for-development activities and programs in around 45 countries in Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, South Caucasus and sub-Saharan Africa.

Through this partnership, ICBA will also share its technical know-how in Southeast Asian countries in such areas as management of natural resources; climate change modeling and adaptation; crop improvement and sustainable production; and integrated agri-aquaculture systems.

###

## **About ICBA**

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is a unique applied agricultural research center in the world with a focus on marginal areas where an estimated 1.7 billion people live. It identifies, tests and introduces resource-efficient, climate-smart crops and technologies that are best suited to different regions affected by salinity, water scarcity and drought. Through its work, ICBA helps to improve food security and livelihoods for some of the poorest rural communities around the world.

[www.biosaline.org](http://www.biosaline.org)

## **Press enquiries:**

### **ICBA**

Mr. Showkat Nabi Rather, ICBA, Dubai, UAE: [s.rather@biosaline.org.ae](mailto:s.rather@biosaline.org.ae), or +971 55 137 8653