

Seminar Report for NJF490 Seminar: Nordic Agrifood Expertise for Development

22nd of January 2016, Helsinki, Finland

Venue: Tieteiden Talo (House of Science and Letters), Kirkkokatu 6, Helsinki

The seminar addressed the question how the Nordic agrifood expertise could contribute to the progress of sustainable food production and food security in developing countries? The aim was to enhance participation of Nordic agrifood experts in development cooperation activities. The seminar exhibited different funding channels, promoted Public – Private – Partnership actions and highlighted possibilities for activities in agriculture, food and environment expertise areas, particularly from a research point in view. The main objective of the seminar was to establish connections between experts, actors and authorities within development cooperation activities in the agrifood area. The seminar was arranged at Tieteiden Talo (House of Science and Letters), Kirkkokatu 6, in downtown Helsinki. The Finnish Association of NJF was the main organizer of the seminar. As the Finnish Association of NJF is a member organization of the Federation of the Scientific Associations in Finland the venue was provided free of charge for the function. In addition, the organizers were happy to receive financial support in form of payment of the lunch and coffee expenses of the occasion. Therefore it was possible to arrange the seminar without a participation fee. *The organisers warmly thank Biolan Oy, The Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Oy Faintend Ltd and Raussi-yhtiöt Sippola for their support for the seminar. The seminar collaborated with the “Enhancing development of water use efficient crops & production methods to dry and saline conditions” project which collaboration between Natural Resources Institute Finland and the Field Crops Research Institute of Agricultural Research Center of Egypt, and is supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.* Seven Egyptian experts participated in the seminar through the project. The seminar had 55 participants from Finland, Egypt, Tunisia, Latvia and Sweden. Nine persons working in Finland from nine other countries increased international touch to the function. 58 percent of participants were women and 42 percent men.

The seminar served its purpose to raise interest toward development collaboration activities among agrifood research area in Finland. However, the seminar failed to bring together information of the activities in the whole Nordic – Baltic region for discussion. A lot of projects on development cooperation are underway by the Nordic / Baltic countries, but it was noted that it is challenging to pull together a comprehensive information package of them. A short presentation of the “Projectnet” service shows one way to improve the situation. One practical suggestion is to write “development cooperation” in the key words in the key word list of the project description. Mentioning the target country would help to sort the projects by regions.

Fifteen oral presentations were given in the seminar, and five posters exhibited. Thanks for all contributors!

The seminar had four sessions:

Session 1 EU’s Research Programmes enabling collaboration with 3rd countries and tools for enhancement of Public Private Partnership

Session 2 Brief of on-going development projects in the agrifood research area by Finland

Session 3 Egypt as an example – current activities, needs and opportunities

Session 4 EU’s Twinning and TAIEX programmes as a way for capacity building in research establishments

The presentations of the NJF490 seminar are available in a Dropbox at: <http://www.njf.nu/publications/>

Organizing Committee:

Professor Jarkko Niemi, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke); Chair of the NJF Finnish Association

Senior Agricultural adviser Svein Skøien, Fylkesmannen, Norway; President of NJF

Professor Magnus Halling, SLU Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Principal investigator Magdy Mohamed, Agricultural Research Center of Egypt

Programme Coordinator Mila Sell, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)

Principal research scientist Oiva Niemeläinen, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) Seminar contact: oiva.niemelainen@luke.fi

The seminar was arranged in collaboration with Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) and the Nordic Association of Agricultural Scientists (NJF).



Fig. 1. NJF's recently elected new President Fredrik Fogelberg from Sweden gave the opening address in the seminar. The Tieteiden talo served as a good venue for the seminar. (Photo. Oiva Niemeläinen)



Fig. 2. The seminar provided a good opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones, and hear what is going on. Participants formed a good mix of experts from various positions in development cooperation area. (Photo: Oiva Niemeläinen)