



Report November 2013

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Background;

It was time for Monitoring Committee meeting in Vietnam. This time we had two new persons in the group; member of the MC, Monitoring committee Jan Dahl, professor at LTU, Luleå Technical University and Carina Ingesson from Piteå Municipality who is going to do the evaluation of the project together with Dr. Ho Thanh Binh from the university in Long Xuyen.



Carina Ingesson, evaluator



Jan Dahl, MC member

During the preparation for this visit we had also included working group meetings/sessions for the Rice to Energy plan and GIS.

The Swedish steering group included also Peter Roslund and Åsa Wikman. Åsa is also part of the project group as well as Bo Wiberg, and Krister Vikström. I, as the project leader participated also.

In August 2013 the provincial People's committee approved one action plan for climate change and another one for electricity. There is also a proposal to make a biomass plan and include the "Ricewaste to energyplan". As this work has not yet started it was decided on a meeting in September that the work with the "Ricewaste to energyplan" should continue as planned and should be merged with the biomass plan when it is made. The biomass plan is not part of the project between Piteå and An Giang.

In the beginning of October the different stakeholders in the cooperation between An Giang and Sweden, met in HCMC in connection to the open house, hosted by SEA, Swedish Energy Agency which also was their final event in the project between An Giang and SEA. The focus for this meeting was to discuss the future of the cooperation.



Program

After a couple of relaxing days off at Phu Coc for part of the group we came to Long Xuyen on November 3 and started to work in groups on Monday morning.

Evaluation team Dr. Ho Thanh Binh and Carina Ingesson



In the proposal it says “The follow up will focus on the indicators and in the evaluation we would like to enlarge the picture by making a transnational evaluation with a qualitative approach”. The two evaluators met for three half days and prepared an outline of the evaluation. The report will be written in English and translated into both Vietnamese and Swedish. They want to focus on participation of target groups, dissemination of information through the websites and of course to follow up the indicators that was set in the application. The websites will be followed from now on and to the end of the project.

Rice waste to energy plan



Mrs Huynh

Mrs Åsa

Mrs Xuan



During 1, 5 day the rice waste to energy plan was in focus. Mr. Thu Tran Ahn has the main responsibility for the plan. It is decided about a timetable for the plan. The aim with the plan is to enable to find ways to increase production of renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas, increase involvement for more partners and improve economic, social and ecological sustainability for farmer.

Xuan should send Gerd a progress report at the end of each month

The content of the plan will be

Climate and energy plan with focus on rice waste

1. Aim
2. Introduction (why are we doing this)
3. Municipality's roles and responsibility for An Giang and for Chau Thanh
4. Vision, Overall objects for Vietnam, An Giang, Chau Thanh,
5. Short term objectives – Farming, rice dryer, rice mill, municipality
6. Activity plan, what to do, who is responsibility, until when, how to follow up - indicators
7. Today situation
 - a. Farming – number of farmer and area <1 ha, 1-5 ha, >5 ha, methods to cultivate, also some words about farming life – income, pesticides, fertilizer, water situation – soil-salt, methane
 - b. Rice dryer,
 - c. Rice mills- different technical, energy outcome,
 - d. Transports, focus on rice (already done by Mr. Thu)
 - e. Municipality in the district and commune
8. Climate changes
9. Policy's Vietnam, An Giang
10. Results from GIS-database
 - a. Greenhouse gas,
 - b. Capacity on rice husk, straw, ash
 - c. Fertilizer
11. Scenario for 2030? Greenhouse gas, renewable energy,
12. What kinds of effects on environmental , economic and social will be the results from the action plan
13. Climate changes, how to face the problem for all target group

Target groups

It was decided that there should be meetings with the target groups, in order to get input to the activity plan. The target groups should be involved and take responsibility for activities, target groups should get feedback through the web.



In November 2013, Mr Thu will have done the overall objectives for the plan on how to increase renewable energy from rice husk and reduce the green house gas. At this time it should also be shown how to involve other partners and which responsibilities they will have.

In this first outline it should also be reflected on how this plan can contribute to improve economic, social and ecological sustainability for the farmers. The outline should be translated into English.

The University of An Giang



This afternoon we spent at the University in Long Xuyen. During the project different persons/departments have been involved in the project, mainly in the work linked to the GIS data base.

The University is under the governance of People's Committee. There are around 13 000 students in six different faculties, education, agriculture & natural resources, technology environment, culture and arts, economic & business administration and philosophy. Besides there are five different centers, center for information and communication technology, foreign languages, research center for rural development, social sciences & humanities and community development.

The priorities are in education and agricultural research. The students pay a small fee, all except those who are trained to become teachers as there is a big need and the pay check for teachers is small.

They are located in new, nice, premises which are only 5 years old. Many rooms are still not equipped due to financial reasons.



Tour



At the research center for rural development they are involved in the work with the GIS data base. Students have been involved in conducting the interviews and they have also been involved in storing the information in the database and make the analyses of the results. One of their members Dr. Kien has also been to Sweden.

The library



The library is equipped with more than 500 computers for students' free use. They have more than 20 000 titles and 90 000 volumes.

In the library you find "corners" donated by and informing about different countries and their possibilities for further studies. Now they are expecting to get a "Swedish corner".



Students are practicing traditional dances for a celebration at the University

The faculty of agriculture and natural resources



Dr. Ho Thanh Binh, who is doing the evaluation together with Mrs. Ingesson is deputy dean at this department. During the years 1 800 have graduated from here and the faculty has been and is involved in international cooperation programs.

Here they train engineers for jobs related to technology and environmental issues as well as conduct research.



English courses



Familiar faces at the English course

One expressed need in our project has been possibilities to improve their English skills. It has also been obvious to many after being involved in international projects that they need to improve. We visited an English class where students who hope to go abroad to take post graduate courses participated, but also those who need to improve their English skills in order to fully participate in our cooperation. Here we found a handful of students who in one way or another are involved in our project, as Mrs. Xuan the local project leader.

Tuesday

The work in the different groups continued in the morning and in the afternoon it was time for the monitoring committee meeting. (minutes see app.1)



Mrs Huynh

Mr Don Nan

mrs Xuan

part of the MC group



Highlights from the MC meeting

- *The climate and energy plan.* At the provincial level there is today both an activity plan for climate change and for electricity. They also want to make a plan related to bio mass but it was decided that the plan with rice waste to energy should continue according to the plans and that his plan should be merged with the bio mass plan when it was approved. Included in this work should also be a review of the national strategies so the rice waste to energy will correspond with the national strategies. Mrs. Åsa should be a speaking partner with Mr. Thu regarding policy review. The draft should be presented in May and presented to People's committee in the beginning of July and in the end of July it will be on the desk for approval. Mr. Thu has the overall responsibility.
 - *Information and Communication Center*
Mr Giang has the overall responsibility for the common web site and is also working with the GIS data base. Before November 15 , they will submit the work to Mrs. Ha for review. The provincial People's committee will support IC with extra funds for the web.
 - *Next MC meeting*
MC will meet in Piteå in late July or early August 2014
 - The core group will meet in Piteå in May 2014 in order to start the work with a new proposal. Proposed dates, the week started May 12.
 - Wrap up meeting for the project in January 2015.
 - Master student. An Giang will receive a master student from Umeå who will make his studies in an area related to this or the coming project if he can find funding.

Party at Mr. Nang's house



In the evening we had a very nice party at Mr. Nang's house who even sang a couple of traditional love songs.



Wednesday

This day Krister Vikström and Bo Wiberg arrived. They were going to work together with people both from the IT department and the University. They worked together for three days (Thursday – Saturday) and Mr. Bo says:

“The result we got from the questionnaires from the farmers gave us enough with information in order to do the analyses regarding impact on the climate but I want to make a quality check with FAO before we release the results.

The last day we had a meeting at the University with Mr. Toan, Mr. Phong and Mr. Chau Thi Da, who has got his training at SLU in Sweden. During the meeting I gave the presentation I did in Chau Than and explained how they can use Ex- Ante. I promised to give them further guidance from home. After a while they will have enough knowledge to use the tool.

We had discussions about possible actions and we also discussed how to use the straw. One possibility is to use it for bio gas but also look into the possibilities of burning it for making electricity. There are possibilities of making pellets out of it. Maybe this can be something for the students at LTU to look deeper into.

I don't know which role these gentlemen from the university will in the project, have but they have both experiences and a lot of knowledge in the area and they would absolutely be a great resource. Dr. Da for instance has his Ph.D. in the area of reducing negative impact on the climate when it comes to fish farming.

I also think Krister is happy with the work that had been done. It was possible to extract a lot of information from the questionnaires and visualize it on the maps. The analyses remains still to be done but they could look at different examples.”



A newly arrived Krister

and Bo



SIDA



Bo Netz, Director General at SIDA and Maria Selin, counsellor at the Swedish Embassy in Hanoi were heading the delegation

Our project is financed by SIDA through ICLD. SIDA is pulling out of Vietnam at the end of this year. During this year SIDA is working on getting a full picture of the results from all the projects that have been carried out during decades of cooperation. Through ICLD it is though possible to continue to cooperate and apply for further funding. SIDA wants to continue to work and broaden the relations between Sweden and Vietnam but it should be based on business relations instead of aid.

So by coincidence SIDA and the Swedish embassy visited An Giang at the same time. The cooperation between An Giang and Sweden (SEA, Växjö municipality and Piteå municipality) had aroused their curiosity and they wanted to know more.



Professor Van Ha made a great presentation about the cooperation between An Giang and Sweden. It was a presentation which started in 2010 when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed, through the process with SEA, Växjö and Piteå. Some of the results mentioned by Mrs. Ha in the collaboration between Piteå and An Giang are; increasing awareness on the program turning waste into energy, set up a network for this area, conduct the survey and data analysis to determine the emission factors from rice cultivation and

assess potentials of biomass. In order to summarize the lessons learnt from our cooperation she stressed the 5 F; fruitful, fair, faithful, fun and forward. Peter Roslund also made an excellent presentation from Piteå's point of view which endorsed the points Mrs. Ha had raised and added some new ones.



The following day part of the Piteå delegation (not Åsa, Bo and Krister) joined the SIDA/Embassy delegation and visited a modern rice factory where they have a holistic perspective where also farmers have a possibility to influence. The farmers buy their seeds/fertilizers/pesticides from the factory, they have a book where they keep track of input/output and they can decide when they want the crops to be sold. The farmers can store for free for one month and the rice factory pay for the transport. Sida seemed very interested in what happened in An Giang and pointed at possibilities how to proceed.



Mr. Jan Dahl



Ms. Xuan and Mr. Peter



Ms. Maria Selin



Ms. Carina Ingesson

While we were there Åsa was working with Mr. Thu and later Ms. Xuan regarding the plan and Krister and Bo with the GIS data base.

Friday

On Friday morning we went to Chau Than to give feed back on the questionnaires. 50 of those who had been interviewed were invited and most of them turned up- only men. Mrs Xuan said that the invitation had been addressed to the family but in all cases the family was represented by the husband.



Mr. Phong, University



Mrs. Xuan



Mr. Bo



Farmer from Chau Thanh



After introduction, presentation about the project and feedback of the survey the farmers could ask. It was questions that were related to the project and how to improve the farming, it was questions about improving methods in the farming, if it was safe to eat mushrooms and beef from the cows that eat rice straw, pollution related to lack of possibilities to take care of the waste properly and if there are technologies to reuse rice straw?

It was a big interest from the farmers and good discussions. After this session all except Mr. Bo and Mr. Krister left for HCMC. They stayed until Sunday to work with the GIS database.

Reflections;

In An Giang they have very clear goals for the cooperation with Sweden, they want to build a pilot plant where they can utilize the rice husk, improve the environment and reduce poverty for farmers. In order to do that a lot of work needs to be done and the cooperation with the three Swedish partners contributes towards these goals, through capacity building on different levels and practical work.

As always it feels very good to meet with the people from An Giang. For each time more and more people are familiar with the project and involved in one way or another. The awareness has increased during the years, due to active work in An Giang and visits in Sweden.

People from different areas are involved, from the Province, the district, the commune, two universities and enterprises.

When you make a project proposal it is hard, maybe impossible, to foresee what will happen during the process and there is a need to revise the plans/budget for each year. For now it is important that we can do the necessary activities in order to reach the objectives we have set in the project.

It was good to combine the MC meeting with work groups meetings, which was necessary in order to proceed.

In February we had a work group meeting outside An Giang in order to be able to fully concentrate on the project and that was a good idea. Many, who are involved in the project, are very busy people and when we are in An Giang they have many different obligations which mean that they not always fully can participate in our meetings which are a disadvantage.

It was really good to be there at the same time as the representatives from SIDA, which I think can contribute to a positive response for a second project in An Giang.

Both in Luleå and Umeå there are master students who want to do their exam work in Vietnam, related to the project. I think the project will benefit from that but it will mainly be in cooperation between the Universities but we will be involved.

