

Upscaling experiences from the ClimaRice project



Two recent spin-offs from the work carried out in ClimaRice projects demonstrate the direct project outcomes and its impacts. These new initiatives show that the projects are paying off, and upscaling of certain measures will be done, like the Azolla propagation.

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Several of the ClimaRice measures and technology has drawn attention from funding agencies for upscaling. The Agricultural Finance Corporation of India has offered a project to Dr. Geethalakshmi (TNAU), a member of the ClimaRice project team, to work out the pay-out structure for compensating farmers affected by climate change and extreme weather.

Another initiative under ClimaRice that is now being followed up is Azolla propagation. Ratan Tata Trust (a private donor agency in India) has agreed to support a project to Dr. A. Lakshmanan, scientist at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) and member of the ClimaRice project team, to promote work on Azolla with a grant of around 500,000 NOK. The progress made on Azolla propagation under the ClimaRice project is a reason for this spin off.



Azolla

Azolla cultivation has been promoted as one of the eco-friendly dissemination technologies for minimizing the impacts of climate change in ClimaRice I and II. Azolla is a water fern that is considered as a prime component in an Integrated Farming System. Azolla harbors a blue green alga that fixes atmospheric nitrogen and farmers use azolla as a biofertilizer to provide nitrogen to rice and other crops. As a result the farmers can minimize the application of chemical fertilizer. In rice cultivation, Azolla minimizes the emission of methane by enhancing the dissolved oxygen content of the water impounded in the paddy field. Azolla is also used as a sustainable feed substitute for livestock especially dairy cattle, poultry, piggery and fish. Among farmers, the interest for cultivating Azolla has been high as it needs only a minimum of inputs in terms of land, water and manpower.



Project team visiting field trials with azolla. Women self help groups have established Azolla nurseries in the ClimaRice project.