

# Strategic Plan for the Sustainable Rice NDC Alliance

## Premise

Rice, a staple for nearly half the world, contributes significantly to global methane emissions and requires abundant irrigation. Adopting sustainable practices can reduce these emissions, save water, and improve livelihoods. Over 30 countries use these practices to fulfil their rice-related NDC commitments. The Sustainable Rice NDC Alliance, with SRI-2030 as the Secretariat, facilitates knowledge-sharing and collaboration among its member nations and organisations. It is not a funding or research entity, but a platform where members, including research organisations, alliances, the private sector, civil society, and donor agencies, contribute as per their abilities. Coordinating efforts among members helps the Alliance assist countries to meet their mitigation and adaptation NDC commitments by focusing climate finance on impactful plans for increased food systems resilience and reduced rice-related GHG emissions. No membership fee is required, only active participation in Alliance activities.

The Alliance is focussed on any and all sustainable rice practices where greenhouse gas emissions are reduced, but has a particular interest in the System of Rice Intensification because of its multiple co-benefits.

## Goals

- To support countries in implementing their existing sustainable rice commitments.
- To assist rice-producing countries in increasing their aspiration for their next NDC iteration.

## Objectives

- Catalyse climate finance for the implementation of sustainable rice practices and the achievement of rice-related NDC commitments.
- Facilitate exchange of technical knowledge for the implementation of sustainable rice practices and the achievement of rice-related NDC commitments.
- Take stock of the sustainable rice activities in member countries and learn what is needed to achieve existing NDC commitments.
- Build capacity and promote synergies for the upscale of sustainable rice practices and the achievement of rice-related NDC commitments by promoting learning between members.

## Expected Participation

Member countries are expected to select representatives from the ministerial departments dealing with rice-related NDC commitments. The representatives are encouraged to join the virtual Alliance meetings and contribute with information regarding their ongoing activities and the future plans on sustainable rice production. Also, representatives of member countries are expected to participate in events to showcase their experiences and needs to the international community. In coordination with member organisations and the Secretariat, member countries may wish to prepare concrete and fundable plans to achieve their rice-related NDC commitments.

Member organisations are expected to engage with member countries and collaborate according to their capacity on the definition of concerted plans for achieving rice-related NDC commitments.

SRI-2030 acts as a secretariat of the Alliance, convening meetings and events while also supporting selected members in participating in high-level events. SRI-2030 is committed to collaborate with UN agencies and other regional and sectoral bodies seeking to promote sustainable rice production. If requested, the Secretariat will seek to support the delineation of concrete plans for achieving countries' NDC commitments. SRI-2030 also leverages its global network of expertise, research and practice to facilitate the implementation of member countries' plans to achieve their rice-related NDC commitments.

## Outcomes

In the first year, the Sustainable Rice NDC Alliance will have achieved the following outcomes:

- Facilitated a community of government officials from over 15 countries, promoting action and exchange of strategies and experiences on sustainable rice practices.
- Member countries are implementing robust and verifiable strategies to achieve their NDC rice objectives.
- Public and/or private finance has been secured for expansion of sustainable rice practices.
- At least 40 rice-producing countries will have drafted plans to include the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) or other sustainable rice practices in their updated NDCs (post 2025).
- The Alliance's member network, notably the SRI-Rice group at Cornell University, has provided member countries access to information, technical assistance, and training resources related to sustainable rice implementation.

## Event Milestones

To ensure effective progress, there will be monthly working meetings of the Alliance members to discuss the necessary steps towards the objectives of the Alliance and the progress and planning of key events including:

### Inaugural Alliance Virtual event (8<sup>th</sup> of August 2023)

The Sustainable Rice NDC Alliance inaugural event will involve understanding countries' projects, barriers, and needs concerning sustainable rice commitments, strategising on climate finance access, and agreeing a joint roadmap for the next 3, 6, 9 and 12 months.

### Second Alliance Virtual event - Focus on Finance (September/October 2023)

Present success stories of accessing climate finance for sustainable rice implementation and learn from the private sector about the crossover of sustainable rice and carbon credits, specifically how the public sector is utilising this approach to advance sustainable rice implementation.

### Side event(s) at COP28 Dubai (30<sup>th</sup> of November - 12<sup>th</sup> of December)

In partnership with a committed organisation, the Alliance will facilitate selected member country representatives to present their motivations for committing to more sustainable rice production in their NDCs, discuss their progress on achieving these commitments, outline future plans, and, most importantly, address barriers to meeting their rice-related NDC goals.

### General Alliance stocktake (virtual or face to face) meeting (Spring 2024)

## Delivery Mechanisms

Objective	Delivery Mechanism
Launch of the Alliance	The Secretariat will host an online event, inviting representatives of member countries and organisations to discuss sustainable rice practices, challenges, and needs for achieving rice-related NDC commitments.
To have a baseline of rice agriculture for each member country.	Each country will provide its best available estimates of rice cultivation areas and statistics together with the present barriers to upscaling sustainable rice farming.
Form the Alliance as a key community and platform for the rice sector, fostering stakeholder collaboration and action plan development.	Representatives of the Alliance country members will attend high level events to discuss rice-related commitments, progress, future plans, and challenges related to sustainable rice production under their NDC commitments.  The Secretariat will engage key stakeholders (primarily implementers and funders), and coordinate with other sectoral alliances.
Catalysing climate finance to achieve country NDC commitments.	The Secretariat will engage with funding agencies such as IFAD, FAO, GIZ, AKF, FCDO, USAID, World Bank, Regional Development Banks, CACC, GEF and the GCF. For these funding agencies, the Alliance will represent a source of country-led plans for achieving specific rice-related NDC commitments which have multiple co benefits on top of the climate mitigation and/or adaptation gains. Strategies will also involve public-private blended finance and carbon credits agencies.
Provide technical support for sustainable rice implementation.	The Secretariat will leverage its global network of rice experts including the Cornell University group - SRI-Rice for technical support. Collaborations among Alliance stakeholders (i.e. research institutions, implementing agencies, member countries, etc.) will enhance in-country capacity and knowledge dissemination.
Enable co-learning	The Secretariat will hold regular meetings for members to share policy-related successes and failures, fostering mutual learning and collaborative action plan development.
Facilitating Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV)	The Alliance, or its network partners, will aim to facilitate frequent MRV of each country's rice sub sector to maintain progress.
Assistance with designing policies supportive of sustainable rice implementation.	A policy portal will be established, detailing potential interventions and providing direct access to expert advice.
Supporting non-member countries in committing to sustainable rice in their NDCs	High-level events and select Alliance meetings will actively engage and invite non-member rice-producing countries.