

## ***Cambodian Government reinforced the commitment to promote SRI***

During his opening speech of the Annual Conference of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) on 4 April 2010, the Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Chan Sarun, emphasized the importance of SRI in contribution to increasing rice production in Cambodia. Then during the closing ceremony of the conference on 6 April 2010, Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen spoke highly about the benefits of SRI for rice production in Cambodia, especially in term of high productivity and lower requirement of seeds.

During the event, five ‘best farmers’ were given awards by the Prime Minister for their outstanding work with SRI. For the 2009 season, the best SRI farmer was Mr. Tuy Phan from Tasourn village in Tramkok District of Takeo Province.

SRI was introduced to Cambodia by CEDAC in 2000. At first, only 28 farmers participated in the SRI experimentation. Due to the early successes of SRI, the Cambodian government, especially its Minister of Agriculture, H.E Chan Sarun, officially started endorsing and promoting SRI in 2005. Since then, SRI has been promoted in all provinces of Cambodia.

According to the official report released by MAFF at the Annual Conference, the number of SRI farmers in Cambodia in 2009 was reported to be 104,000 farmers, covering 58,000 ha of cultivated area, around 2.6 percent of the total cultivated rice area in the wet season. Average SRI yield was 3.53 tons per ha, compared to a national rice yield average in the wet season of 2.62 tons per ha.