



Association of
Southeast Asian
Nations



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

OECD-FAO-ASEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON POLICIES TO ENABLE FOOD SECURITY, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION

Background

Food security and improving nutrition remain key challenges for the region and for the world. Improving food security and nutrition are key areas focus of ASEAN, the OECD and FAO. At a global the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out an ambitious set of targets that will require ongoing and renewed policy efforts. The SDGs specially recognise that without rapid progress to reduce and eliminate hunger and malnutrition by 2030, the full range of SDGs cannot be achieved. The SDG related to zero hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition recognizes the importance of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in providing nutrition for all.

To date, agricultural policy makers have focused predominantly on managing risks associated with temporary shocks such as food prices spikes, natural disasters and economic crisis rather than a focus on long-term reductions in chronic food insecurity. Most of the countries in the region have established self-sufficiency targets, most often for rice production, with these to be achieved through subsidies linked to production complemented by trade barriers. The building of long-term food security in the region will depend largely on investment in infrastructure, human capital and innovation systems, building more transparent and reliable regional commodity markets, and sustainable resource management.

Food systems are becoming more diverse and changing rapidly, with significant implications for diets and nutritional outcomes. Food systems influence the availability of and access to a diverse variety of foods, and thus, the ability of consumers to choose healthy diets. The challenge is to improve national nutrition and food system governance and capacity to ensure more nutrition-enhancing food systems. Nutrition-enhancing agriculture and food systems are those that effectively incorporate nutrition objectives, concerns and considerations to improve diets and raise levels of food and nutrition security. Interventions that consider and affect food systems as a whole can potentially achieve more widespread nutritional outcomes than single uncoordinated actions.

Objectives and Expected Outcomes

The OECD-FAO-ASEAN Regional Conference on Agricultural Policies to Enable Food Security, Agricultural Productivity and Improved Nutrition will draw together policy research and policy experience from around the region, the FAO and across the OECD countries to discuss the challenges and opportunities for policies to better enable food security, agricultural productivity and improved nutrition. The Conference will provide a venue for the sharing of views and research with the aim of improving the evidence base available to ASEAN policy makers.

The conference will explore a number of issues related agriculture, food security and nutrition. Specifically, the conference will examine the enabling environment for agricultural productivity growth, policies to build resilience to food insecurity risks. These themes are subject to ongoing work of the OECD under OECD's ASEAN wide project on "Building Food Security and Managing Risk: A Focus on Southeast Asia".

The conference will also discuss making nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food system policies that provide a more coherent approach to improving nutrition in the region. Eradicating hunger and improving food security and nutrition requires a multisectoral approach that begins with food and agriculture and includes complementary interventions in public health, rural development, education and social protection.



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This conference will provide a step in the better coordination between the agricultural policy makers and those in health and rural development, including in helping the alignment of objectives and resources, which are important for addressing the multidimensional causes of hunger and malnutrition.

This conference gives effect to the ongoing engagement between the OECD and ASEAN as outlined in the 36th SOM-AMAF and 35th AFSRB meetings, building on the work discussed at the OECD-ASEAN Regional Conference on Policies to Promote Food Security and Agro-Forestry Productivity held in Seoul in October 2015 and the follow up to the ASEAN Inter-Sectoral Consultative meeting on Food Security and Nutrition held in Bangkok in February 2016, supported by FAO, GIZ and WHO. This engagement focuses on developing regionally integrated agricultural policies that enhance food security and nutrition, along with exploring issues related to the trade of agricultural and forest products between ASEAN and OECD members.

Venue and timing

The meeting will take place on 14-15 June 2016 in Naypyidaw, Myanmar, back-to-back with AFSRB meeting.

Target audience

The conference will bring together high level officials of SOM-AMAF, SOMHD, SORDPE and SOMWSD involved in the implementation and design of agriculture and food security policies; rural development, nutrition and social policies in ASEAN countries, including experts from OECD member countries and the OECD Secretariat; experts from the FAO, ADB. The total number of participants is expected to be around 70 persons. Financial support for travel and accommodation will be provided to ASEAN senior officials.