



**THE FORTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE ASEAN MINISTERS  
ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY (The 44<sup>TH</sup> AMAF)  
26 October 2022, Lao PDR  
Video Conference**

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT**

(Final)

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1. The ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF), held our 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting virtually on 25 October 2022, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Dr. Phet Phomphiphak, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR.

***Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the food, agriculture and forestry sectors and recovery efforts***

2. The Meeting continued to express concern over the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the food, agriculture and forestry sectors and agreed to further exert efforts on implementing recovery measures to ensure sufficient and continuous food supplies and the functioning of business activities and services to the food and agricultural systems.

***Policy framework related to ASEAN cooperation in food, agriculture and forestry 2021-2022***

3. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of the key deliverables for the food, agriculture and forestry sector in 2022, and adopted 12 indicative deliverables across the livestock, crops, fisheries and forestry in 2023. These include one Priority Economic Deliverables (PED) of Indonesia's 2023 ASEAN Chairmanship namely, ASEAN Leaders Declaration on Strengthening Food Security, and two Food, Agriculture and Forestry Priority Deliverables 2023, namely: (i) The Roadmap for the Implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture, and (ii) Development of Project on Mangrove Ecosystem Management in the ASEAN Region.

***Food Security and Nutrition***

4. Considering the importance of achieving sustainable food security and nutrition for every individual to lead an active and productive healthy life, the Meeting encouraged the ASEAN Member States (AMS), ASEAN partners and other stakeholders to collaborate with the ASEAN Secretariat to identify and implement priority actions under the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Food Security (SPA-FS) 2021-2025. In this regard, the Meeting agreed to develop an ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Food Security in 2023 to take practical and concrete measures in unifying the roles of all relevant sectors in strengthening regional food supply chains and logistics systems to ensure food security to address the regional food crisis. The Meeting encouraged ASEAN Member States, ASEAN dialogue partners and stakeholders to support the implementation of

the ASEAN Guidelines on Home Yard Food Garden Area, as well as identify specific projects/programmes to promote urban farming for food security.

### ***Food Safety, Handling and Product Quality***

5. The Meeting commended the sectoral bodies for the efforts and achievements made in the harmonisation of standards and development of guidelines to support trade facilitation of agricultural products in ASEAN, and adopted the following documents, among others:

- Standard on ASEAN Good Aquaculture Practices for Food Fish;
- ASEAN Harmonised Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticide residue: i) abamectin in Mandarin, ii) acetamiprid in Chinese broccoli (Chinese kale), iii) deltamethrin in legume vegetable;
- Intra ASEAN Phytosanitary Guidelines for Importation of i) Coconut (for consumption and processing), ii) Dragon fruit, and iii) Shallot Bulb;
- ASEAN Guidelines on Agricultural Insurance Implementation: Lessons and experience from the ASEAN countries; and
- ASEAN Guidelines on Genetically-Modified Organism (GMO) Method Validation and Verification, GMO Proficiency Testing, and Collaborative Trial on GMO Analysis

### ***Sustainable Development of the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sector***

6. The Meeting commended the ASEAN Secretariat's efforts to support AMAF to ensure sustainable development in the ASEAN region across the food, agriculture and forestry sectors, by developing various regional policies, which include: (i) the ASEAN Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture, (ii) the Stocktaking paper on the use of agrochemicals in crop production, and (iii) the Study on Nature-based solutions in ASEAN across the forest, bare land and coastal ecosystems. These policy documents have been adopted by the 44<sup>th</sup> AMAF Meeting for practical implementation. The Meeting encouraged all ASEAN partners and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to collaborate with the ASEAN Secretariat and relevant Working groups under AMAF to implement these regional policies.

7. To support the practical realisation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture, the ASEAN Secretariat will work on selected pilot sites to test the implementation strategies identified in the guidelines, and provide evidence-based practices and learning experiences on transforming into more sustainable and circular agriculture. In this connection, the Meeting encouraged all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and international organisations to collaborate with the ASEAN Secretariat to select the pilot sites for promoting the application of sustainable and circular agriculture.

8. Recognising that banned agrochemicals are still used in the ASEAN region, the Meeting agreed to come up with a Joint Statement or Declaration calling for coordinated actions to prevent and eventually eliminate the use of banned harmful agrochemicals in the region, and to promote more sustainable and safe alternatives such as the application of biological control agents. The Meeting tasked relevant Working groups to collaborate with the ASEAN Secretariat in formulating the Declaration in 2023 for adoption.

9. The Meeting noted that various projects have been developed by ASEAN such as: (i) project proposals on the Soil Health Card Programme to support AMS in reducing the over-fertilisation of agricultural land, (ii) project on Capacity Building on the Application of Biological Control Agents to reduce antimicrobials use in animal husbandry and aquaculture, (iii) project proposal on Circular Rice Straw, which aims to provide circular solutions to reduce open rice field burning, plastic waste, greenhouse gas emissions, and the use of chemical fertilisers, and (iv) international training programme for AMS on the prevention, reduction and recycling of Abandoned, Lost, or otherwise Discarded Fishing Gears (ALDFG). These projects play an essential role in realising the ASEAN Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture in the years to come. In this connection, the Meeting also looked forward to the conclusion of the project on Promoting Safety in Livestock Production and Food Animal Trade that has been supported by the Canadian Trade and Investment Facility for Development.

10. The Meeting stressed the importance of the Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Community, which set out an ambitious long-term vision to realise a circular economy in ASEAN and looked forward to the successful implementation of the Implementation Plan (2023-2030), which outlines specific actions that could be taken by the food, agriculture and forestry sectors.

11. The Meeting welcomed the development of the ASEAN Carbon Neutrality Strategy that will guide AMS in accelerating their efforts to meet the carbon-neutral goals, and looked forward to the practical implementation of the Strategy to reduce carbon emissions in the agriculture and forestry sector.

12. The Meeting was pleased to adopt the Guidelines for Sharing, Access to, and Use of IUU Fishing-Related Information, which outlines the common information-sharing principles to support the operation of the ASEAN Network for Combating IUU fishing.

13. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of the forestry sector to ensure the sustainability of natural resources through enhancing sustainable forest management, strengthening forest law enforcement and governance and its role to address the adverse impact of climate change and social-economic development. The Meeting recognised the important contribution of forests in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing solutions for a better environment. In this regard, the Meeting adopted the ASEAN Strategy for Preventing Zoonotic Diseases Transmission from Wildlife Trade and agreed to submit the Strategy to the ASEAN Summit for notation.

14. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the on-going efforts of strengthening the sectoral collaboration on conservation agriculture, climate-smart agriculture, sustainable mangrove ecosystem management and sustainable soil management initiatives to ensure the sustainability of the agroecological system in the region.

15. The Meeting noted the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (ASEAN RAI) with the launching of the pilot project to assist selected ASEAN Member States in the alignment process of their national policy investment frameworks with the ASEAN RAI, and the ASEAN RAI Academy Learning and Accreditation Programme.

### ***Moving together with Dialogue Partners and International Organisations***

16. The Meeting acknowledged and thanked ASEAN's Partners, particularly Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, European Union, Germany, India, Japan, New Zealand, the

Republic of Korea, Russia, Switzerland, and the US for their valuable contribution and support in advancing cooperation in food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry in the ASEAN region through close collaboration in various areas.

17. The Meeting appreciated the support extended by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Canadian Trade and Investment Facility for Development (CTIF), Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), Grow Asia, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025.

***The 45<sup>th</sup> AMAF Meeting***

18. The Meeting agreed to convene the 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry in Malaysia in 2023.

19. The Meeting expressed our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government and People of Lao PDR for hosting the 44<sup>th</sup> AMAF Meeting and for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.