



THE 44TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
5-11 AUGUST 2023
Jakarta, Indonesia

Responsive Parliaments for a Stable and Prosperous ASEAN

(Res. 44GA/2023/Eco/03)

RESOLUTION ON
ENCOURAGING THE APPLICATION OF THE ASEAN GUIDELINES
ON PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT IN FOOD,
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SECTORS

Sponsored by Viet Nam

The Forty-fourth AIPA General Assembly:

Recognizing the Strategic Plan of ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025 that defines the vision and goals for the food, agriculture and forestry sector;

Considering that food and agriculture are one of the five strategic areas in the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021 to 2025), and remains a key priority in ASEAN Economy Community pillar, as indicated in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025;

Recalling the adoption of the ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectors (ASEAN RAI) by the Fortieth Meeting of ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (40th AMAF) in October 2018, and followed by the adoption Action Plan to Promote and Implement the ASEAN RAI by the Forty-First Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (41st AMAF) in October 2019;

Recognizing the Action Plan to Promote and Implement the ASEAN RAI that maps out the roles and responsibilities of the government officials, parliamentarians, investors, civil society, and other stakeholders responsible for the integration of the ASEAN RAI principles into national laws and policies;

Acknowledging the crucial role of the AIPA Parliamentarians in the integration of the ASEAN RAI into the legal, policy, regulatory, and institutional frameworks of the member states at the national level for its operationalization;

Considering that increased investment in food, agriculture and forestry will drive sustainable economic growth and achieve food and nutrition security in the region;

Taking into account the launch of the handbook on “*Promoting the Adoption of ASEAN Guidelines on Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry: A Practical*

handbook for ASEAN Parliamentarians" made at the 14th AIPA Caucus Meeting in Phu Quoc, Viet Nam, which serves as guidance for AIPA Parliamentarians;

Appreciating the efforts and initiatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) in developing a practical handbook for AIPA Parliamentarians.

Hereby resolves to:

Call upon the AIPA Member Parliaments to support the ASEAN RAI in line with their national laws and regulations;

Encourage AIPA Member Parliaments to assess the consistency of policies, laws, and institutions with the ASEAN RAI and consider the suggestions provided in the Handbook to develop appropriate legal, policy, and institutional frameworks to attract and accelerate the implementation of responsible investment in food, agriculture, and forestry;

Encourage ASEAN Member States and AIPA Member Parliaments to work together and encourage smallholder farmers as well as small and medium enterprises to support the implementation of the Guidelines and meet their obligations specified in the Guideline;

Advise the AIPA Member Parliaments to promote sufficient budgetary allocations for the implementation, enforcement and monitoring of national laws and reforms that promote responsible investment in food, agriculture, and forestry sector, including the budget of institutions promoting the application of the ASEAN RAI;

Support the capacity development and knowledge enhancement program of the AIPA Member Parliaments for the effective parliamentary oversight in monitoring the implementation of laws and regulations related to responsible investments in food, agriculture, and forestry;

Recommend AIPA Member Parliaments to engage civil society organizations and the public in monitoring the implementation of the Guideline;

Recommend AIPA Member Parliaments to enhance communication and collaboration with other development partners, such as FAO and IISD, to assist and support necessary measurement and assessment for the implementation phase.

Adopted on the ninth day of August 2023 in Jakarta Indonesia.



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EXPLANATORY NOTE

**DRAFT RESOLUTION ON ENCOURAGING THE APPLICATION OF
THE ASEAN GUIDELINES ON PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE
INVESTMENT IN FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SECTORS**

Agriculture in ASEAN provides many opportunities for investments and is a major part of the economy in several ASEAN Countries. Agriculture remains important as a share of the gross domestic product (GDP) in Cambodia (21.9%), Indonesia (12.4%), Lao PDR (14.6%), Myanmar (20.3%), the Philippines (9.5%), and Viet Nam (11.9%)¹, also considering the percentage of the population working in the sector (out of total employment): Cambodia 39%, Indonesia 29%, Lao PDR 58%, Myanmar 46%, Philippines 24%, Viet Nam 29%.²

Data from the [ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2022](#) presents that ASEAN has total of 439,453,600 Ha of total land area, with 31.8% of land area used for agriculture. However, and even though ASEAN Member States have experienced rapid economic growth in recent decades, and the proportion of the population living below national poverty lines declined between 2005 and 2018 across all ASEAN Member States, , hunger and malnutrition remain significant challenges in ASEAN. The *2021 ASEAN Food Security and Nutrition Report* highlights that 63.4 million ASEAN people are malnourished, an estimated 46 per cent of the population in the region is unable to afford a healthy diet, and faces economic, physical, social, and cultural barriers to accessing nutritious, safe, and affordable foods, with an estimated 15 million children under five suffering from stunting, and more than 4 million suffering from wasting.

The global population is expected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050, with ASEAN's population growth around 800 million, making it one of the most populous regions in the world, with consequent issues vis-à-vis food security³. As shown in "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023", increasing urbanization, with almost seven in ten

¹ [Agriculture, forestry, and fishing, value added \(% of GDP\) | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

² Employment in agriculture: [Employment in agriculture \(% of total employment\) \(modeled ILO estimate\) | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

³ See background [ASEAN-RAI Guidelines](#)

people projected to live in cities by 2050, is driving changes in agrifood systems across the rural-urban continuum. These changes represent both challenges and opportunities to ensure everyone has access to affordable healthy diets⁴.

Unemployment touches 220 million people globally⁵, and 80% of the extreme poor live in rural areas⁶; 40 percent of the population earns its income from agriculture⁷: investing in agriculture and rural areas is three times more effective at reducing poverty than investing in other industries⁸.

At the same time, agriculture is the sector most impacted by climate change and also among the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, together with urbanization. The *Asia and the Pacific – Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2022* stressed that climate change will have increasingly profound impacts on food security and nutrition over time. Temperatures in Asia and the Pacific have trended higher in the past 40 years, in both averages and extremes, the region is highly vulnerable to natural hazards, and it is widely forecast that climate change will lead to more frequent floods, droughts, cyclones and other extreme weather events, with impacts on the entire food supply chain.⁹ In terms of climate change, while the region must pay heed to likely dangers and risks, the scale and diversity of its agricultural and forest wealth can be an asset, if well managed, in combatting GHG emissions and protecting endangered environments, fauna and flora”.¹⁰ As indicated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), investments that are economically, socially and environmentally responsible can contribute to mitigate and recover from the effects of external shocks and build food systems that are more resilient to future crises, promoting the progressive realization of the right to food”.¹¹ “ASEAN is home to a very large number of major agribusinesses and forestry companies – including some of the world’s largest multinational enterprises (MNEs). Many are active internationally; and most are significant investors in other AMS. Indeed, for ASEAN as a whole, 80 per cent of all foreign direct investment (FDI) in agriculture and forestry is from other ASEAN Member States. ASEAN has a unique situation among developing regions as both a source and host of FDI in agriculture and forestry. Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR and the Philippines (and, to a lesser extent, Viet Nam) are especially dependent on other ASEAN economies for FDI in agriculture and forestry”.¹²

⁴ [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World \(fao.org\)](#)

⁵ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/goal-08/>

⁶ [FAO - News Article: Agriculture and rural development are critical for the eradication of poverty, as the world’s poor fight the impact of COVID-19, says FAO Director-General](#)

⁷ [https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/dime/brief/agriculture#:~:text=The%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals%20\(SDGs,of%20small%2Dscale%20food%20producers.](https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/dime/brief/agriculture#:~:text=The%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals%20(SDGs,of%20small%2Dscale%20food%20producers.)

⁸ [Ending poverty and hunger through investment in agriculture and rural areas \(fao.org\)](#)

⁹ [Asia and the Pacific – Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2022 \(fao.org\)](#)

¹⁰ ASEAN-RAI Guidelines

¹¹ [Policy brief: The right to food and responsible investment in agriculture and food systems \(fao.org\)](#)

¹² ASEAN-RAI Guidelines background

“ASEAN Member States have been very successful in boosting investment in manufacturing and services by attracting overseas investors and encouraging domestic enterprises. However, their performance in terms of agriculture and forestry has been less satisfactory in both absolute and per capita terms. It is essential to raise investment in FAF sectors to achieve sustainable economic development”.¹³

But for all their potential benefits, investments in the food, agriculture and forestry sectors, especially large-scale land acquisitions, present risks for the rights and livelihoods of local communities and for the environment. To mitigate these risks and ensure maximum benefits from investments in these sectors, ASEAN’s Member States should take steps to ensure that the investment they attract is responsible.

Responsible investments in food, agriculture and forestry are critical to supporting sustainable and inclusive economic development, reducing poverty, improving food security and nutrition, creating new job opportunities, fostering gender equality, and at the same time protecting biodiversity and natural resources, and enhancing transfers of knowledge and technologies. The promotion of responsible investments will also contribute to the achievements of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) adopted [*The ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture, and Forestry \(ASEAN RAI\)*](#) in 2018 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam. These guidelines, based on the [*Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*](#) endorsed¹⁴ by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in 2014, provide guidance to ASEAN Member State governments, investors and other stakeholders on how to promote responsible investment in food, agriculture, and forestry in ASEAN that contributes to food security and economic growth, while at the same time conserving the environment and natural resources and respecting the rights of local communities.

On 11 July 2023 at the 14th AIPA Caucus in Phu Quoc, Viet Nam, a practical handbook for ASEAN Parliamentarians on [*Promoting the Application of ASEAN Guidelines for Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture, and Forestry*](#) was officially launched. This handbook was developed by FAO and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), with feedback and technical support from AIPA. It provides guidance for ASEAN’s parliamentarians on how to contribute to creating an enabling environment for responsible investment in food, agriculture, and forestry in their countries, including through passing appropriate laws, ensuring adequate financing for the implementation of needed reforms, and providing parliamentary oversight. It highlights five concrete actions parliamentarians can take to support the application of the ASEAN RAI:

1. Assess the consistency of domestic laws and regulations with the ASEAN RAI;

¹³ ASEAN-RAI Guidelines background

¹⁴ <https://www.fao.org/3/au866e/au866e.pdf>

2. Champion and enact legislative changes to promote responsible investments in food, agriculture, and forestry, in line with the ASEAN RAI;
3. Ensure sufficient budget is allocated to the food, agriculture, and forestry sectors and to reform for promoting responsible investment in these sectors;
4. Provide oversight of the implementation of laws and regulations to promote responsible investment;
5. Communicate the importance of responsible investment in food, agriculture, and forestry to a wider national audience.

Parliamentarians, especially in this context AIPA Member Parliaments, indeed play an essential role in promoting and incorporating the guidelines into national legislation, monitoring their implementation, and ensuring accountability. It also reaffirms AIPA's commitment in the effort to mitigate food insecurity, malnutrition, and to protect the livelihoods of the people of ASEAN.