



PRESS RELEASE

New Milestone for Grow Asia: Acceptance of Regional Guidelines on Responsible Agricultural Investment in the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectors by ASEAN Ministers

- The ASEAN Secretariat requested Grow Asia's support in coordination of stakeholders, obtaining project funds and participation and conducting of consultations
- 10 individual Responsible Agricultural Investment Guidelines provide a holistic view on what constitutes responsible investing

Singapore, 5 November 2018 – Grow Asia has announced a new milestone as the Regional Guidelines on Responsible Agricultural Investing were accepted during the 40th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) on 11 October 2018 in Ha Noi. Grow Asia played a significant role in the development of these Guidelines, through providing expertise, securing funding and coordinating stakeholders to bring a wider range of voices to ASEAN's consensus-driven processes.

In October 2017, Grow Asia was approached by the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) to provide expertise, funding and to bring a wider range of voices to the development of the Guidelines – especially within the private sector. Project funding was raised from The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), a World Bank trust fund, and expertise was brought in principally from the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Geneva.

The Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division (FAFD) of the ASEAN Secretariat worked closely and efficiently with Grow Asia and was responsible for the overall management of the project. Over the course of six months, Grow Asia facilitated a public consultation – convening the public sector from ASEAN member states, the region's private sector and civil society. The consultation consisted of two face-to-face meetings in Bali and Singapore and the collection of over 250 detailed comments from groups, associations and individual organizations. The Guidelines went through four iterations before receiving approval by the ASEC, Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) and AMAF on 11 October 2018.

The focus and scope of the Guidelines are that they are consistent with the Committee on World Food Security, Principles for Responsible Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI) but adapted to the ASEAN region, reflecting research findings of the Inter Agency Working Group (World Bank, Conference of Trade and Development, UN Food and Agriculture Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development) and factoring in unique ASEAN perspectives. The 10 individual guidelines provide an overarching view on what constitutes responsible investing. The guidelines lay down in one consolidated document the best agricultural practices. The intention is that they will become the foundational approach to larger scale investments.

“We are honoured to have worked with the ASEAN Secretariat, FAFD and our partners SDC, The World Bank and IISD on the development of these ASEAN Guidelines for Responsible Agricultural Investing” said **Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia**. “Part of our work also included an outline for an action plan to roll out the Guidelines, and our intention is to convene a roundtable to discuss and agree on next steps among ASEAN member states and support the ASEAN Secretariat in seeking funding for the implementation of the action plan.”

“With Grow Asia's knowledge and expertise in convening multi-stakeholder partnerships, we are very proud to have the regional guidelines accepted by AMAF,” said **Dr Tran Dong Phuong, Director Sectoral Development Directorate, ASEAN Economic Community Department, ASEAN Secretariat**. “We encourage ASEAN member states to adopt these Guidelines and promote greater investment in the areas of food, agriculture and forestry, and ultimately contributing to greater regional economic development, food and nutrition security and the sustainable use of natural resources.”



The guidelines are publicly available online here: <http://exchange.growasia.org/asean-guidelines-promoting-responsible-investment-food-agriculture-and-forestry>

Ends

Media Contacts

Spurwing Communications
Emma Thompson / Jessica Bridges / Clarinda Ng
T: +65 6340 7287
E: growasia@spurwingcomms.com

The Grow Asia Partnership

Grow Asia is a multi-stakeholder partnership platform that aims to reach 10 million smallholder farmers by 2020, helping them access knowledge, technology, finance, and markets to increase their productivity, profitability, and environmental sustainability by 20%. Grow Asia brings together South East Asia's smallholders, governments, companies, NGOs, and other stakeholders, to develop inclusive and sustainable value chains that benefit farmers. It launches and supports locally-driven Country Partnerships, helping them define their strategy, engage new partners and develop innovative solutions.

Grow Asia enables stakeholders from different disciplines to leverage one another's expertise, share insights and learn from regional experiences. Today Grow Asia collaborates with over 480 partners across five Country Partnerships, reaching nearly 700,000 smallholder farmers.

Grow Asia was established by the World Economic Forum, in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat, to convene, facilitate, and help scale action-focused partnerships. Grow Asia builds on the experience and success of the Forum's New Vision for Agriculture (NVA) initiative, which facilitates multi-stakeholder partnerships across the world focused on agriculture development to deliver food security, environmental sustainability, and economic opportunity.