



Message from the President





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In fiscal year (FY) 2019 ERIA expanded the scope of its activities to help chart the future direction of ASEAN and East Asia.

A review of ERIA's deliverables for FY2019 reveals that ERIA widely expanded its field of activities to help clear the path for the economic integration and development of East Asia. One such deliverable is the 'ASEAN Vision 2040' project. Based on its cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, ERIA provided a four-volume set of publications on the prospects of ASEAN and East Asia in 2040 from political-security, economic, and socio-cultural perspectives. In it ERIA proposed a message of collective leadership of the East Asia region, which means ASEAN centrality, for it to become the institutional hub for regional integration and economic and social development. The 34th ASEAN summit statement commended ASEAN Vision

2040 and provided recommendations on how to most effectively prepare ASEAN for the future, and in particular for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

As for economic research, ERIA, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), launched a Non Tariff Measures Database on the occasion of the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in September 2019. ERIA collected and classified NTMs in the ten ASEAN countries plus the six East Asia Countries. Both organisations collected data on all regulations from official documents including international conventions adopted by countries. ERIA has shared the raw or more detailed ASEAN data of the NTMs database to ASEAN Member States (AMS) to assist in developing their respective national trade repositories. The Database aims to (i) collect, validate, and store NTM data from official sources; (ii) improve

the general understanding of these measures and their impact on world trade; and (iii) provide insights on NTMs in 16 countries. ERIA also provided the East Asia Summit Economic Ministers Meeting (EASEMM) with Discussion Papers that identified three key challenges to the further economic integration of the region in the current period of global uncertainty, as well as on innovation.

Another important field is energy-related issues. About 30%–40% of research projects undertaken by ERIA relate to energy issues. In FY2019, ERIA conducted various studies on energy policy based on the EAS Mid-Term Energy Policy Research Roadmap. First, projects related to the demand and supply potential of Hydrogen Energy in East Asia. Second, issues concerning the Biomass Supply Chain for Power Generation. Third, the utilisation of Electric Vehicles for CO₂ reduction. Fourth, the social benefit of clean coal technology. ERIA reported the progress of each project to the EAS Energy Ministers Meeting of October 2019. ERIA, together with the ministry of energy in Thailand, hosted the 2nd East Asia Energy Forum, which discussed future energy issues in the ACMECS region. ERIA also developed the Cambodia Basic Energy Plan in cooperation with the government of Cambodia.

The scope of ERIA's activities is continuously expanding and deepening to tackle the key regional issues. Based on the experts' network on population ageing and long-term care, ERIA's Healthcare Unit undertook several studies, participated in forums and conferences, and organised several events. The activities of the Healthcare Unit are implemented in line with the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN), which was launched by the Government of Japan and aims to create vibrant and healthy

societies where people can enjoy long and productive lives. ERIA completed a longitudinal survey of ageing and health in the Philippines and Viet Nam and a report on the survey in the Philippines was presented to the focal Secretaries of the country. ERIA also hosted the AHWIN Forum in October 2019 to discuss the important elements in the approach to population ageing in Asia. In the area of the environment, ERIA conducted several studies on waste management as well as the issue of marine plastic debris in the region. In 2019, ERIA established a Regional Knowledge Centre on Marine Plastic Debris (RKC-MPD) as the ASEAN Plus Three framework. The Knowledge Centre will be a hub for the collecting of data on marine plastic debris, sharing best practices, as well as supporting capacity building programmes in the region. ERIA produced three publications on food value chains in the ASEAN region: Overview of Agri-food Industries in ASEAN – Basic Information on the Food Value Chain; Food Value Chain in ASEAN – Case Studies Focusing on Local Producers; and The Cold Chain for Agri-food Products in ASEAN. The key messages were reported at the 19th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry Plus Three meeting in October 2019.

ERIA has also kept good relations with several external partners such as the ASEAN Inter Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) with which ERIA is now cooperating. ERIA attended the 40th AIPA General Assembly on August 2019 and submitted a draft resolution on 'Establishing AIPA-ERIA Joint Dialogue to Support the Waste Management for Sustainable Development.' The resolution was adopted by all AIPA member countries at the second plenary session of AIPA-GA. Based on the resolution, ERIA and AIPA will set up a Joint Dialogue.

In 2019 ERIA's efforts and activities continued to expand and received unabated recognition from regional leaders. Leaders 'encouraged ERIA to continue providing support for the Chair of the ASEAN Summit and the East Asia Summit and targeted high-quality research and actionable policy recommendations on topics that highlight and address the region's challenges to EAS Economic Ministers,' in the Chairman's statement of the 14th East Asia Summit on November 2019. In addition to the several ASEAN related conferences, in 2019 ERIA attended three G20 ministerial meetings on Agriculture, Trade, and Digital Economy, as well as Energy and the Environment, which were hosted by Japan in May and June. ERIA presented several policy challenges on these topics in ASEAN and the East Asia region, which need to be addressed in collaboration with G20 member countries.

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We are proud of our achievements in 2019, but we will not be complacent. ERIA will be more vigilant in helping to address the challenges of deeper economic integration and development in ASEAN and East Asia in the years to come.



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President