

well as other related information, such as scientific knowledge about marine plastic pollution. The website has recently also launched a platform to promote efforts by the private sector (<https://rkcmpd-eria.org/story>), in which companies can showcase their products, services, and technologies that contribute to the reduction of plastic waste and marine plastic debris.

The RKC–MPD has published research on various topics related to plastic waste and marine plastic debris, such as regional waste management, waste management during the pandemic, and plastic bag bans. In the future, the centre plans to expand its research publications to other topics such as extended producer responsibility, impacts of plastic pollution on the marine ecosystem, and a life cycle assessment of plastic.

Agriculture Unit



ERIA's research activities related to the food and agricultural field had been conducted as needed since ERIA's establishment in 2008. Although the contribution of the agricultural sector to

overall economic growth is not necessarily large, its importance in the socio-economics of each country remains unchanged especially in the ASEAN region – the food and agriculture sector is a major

source of employment and income for a large proportion of the population, and ensuring food security and food safety is of critical importance for human beings. Given the importance of the food and agriculture sector, the Agriculture Unit was established in 2016 as one of ERIA's Research Departments to intensively and constantly address various emerging topics in the food and agriculture sector. Since its establishment, emerging issues such as the food value chain, the cold chain, and the

digitalisation of agriculture were addressed through research works as well as capacity building activities such as knowledge sharing workshops. As its first priority, the Agricultural Unit aims to contribute to the development of policies for the ASEAN food and agriculture sector. Hence, the Agricultural Unit has provided inputs for ASEAN official meetings such as AMAF plus Three and other AMAF related sectoral working group.



In 2020, the Agriculture Unit initiated two research projects: 1) Realisation of higher value added of agricultural products in ASEAN countries through development of an effective cold chain; and 2) Enhancing Food Supply Chain Resilience and Food Security in ASEAN with Utilisation of Digital Technologies. These projects focus on cold chain development and digitalisation of the food value chain in the ASEAN region and continue in 2021. At

the meeting of the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministers of Agriculture of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea in October 2020, the President of ERIA reported the outline and progress of projects to the ministers and ERIA's project received appreciation in the Joint Statement of the meeting. The Agricultural Unit will continue its practical research and related activities to support the region's policy development in this field.

