


Message from the President



Prof. Hidetoshi Nishimura
President





We are proud of our achievements in 2021, but we will not be complacent. ERIA will be more vigilant in helping to address the challenges of pursuing deeper economic integration and development in ASEAN and East Asia in the years to come.

In fiscal year (FY) 2021, 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 FY2021 reveals that ERIA has deepened its activities to help promote the economic integration and development of East Asia. As part of a study on 'The Impact of Covid-19 on Business Activities and Supply Chains in the ASEAN Member States and India', ERIA conducted an extensive questionnaire survey via Internet from November 2020 to February 2021. Effective responses were received from 1,789 firms – comprising local businesses, including large and small and medium-sized enterprises and multinational firms in all 11 countries. A significant number of firms – particularly those that

were adaptive to the Covid-19 shock in terms of quickly rearranging their supply chains – have taken advantage of the growth opportunities and have a better outlook. Almost half of them experienced positive sales growth in 2020 and more than half of them expect to expand their workforce in the next few years. The survey observed plenty of robust (not reduced) supply chain links between firms and firms' resilient supply chain responses were also observed. Many firms responded quickly to the COVID-19 shock and reconstructed their customer and supplier relationships and adapted their production locations to a non-negligible degree. The geographic diversity of customers and suppliers creates resilience of supply chains. Furthermore, the resilience of supply chains, particularly those with customers, results in improved performance in the long run.

Another important field is energy-related issues. In FY2021, ERIA conducted various studies on energy policy based on the EAS Mid-Term Energy Policy Research Roadmap. ERIA has carried out a variety of projects such as studies on the feasibility a Transmission Highway in ACMECS, Public Attitudes Towards Energy Policy and Sustainable Development in ASEAN Countries, Future Mobility Fuel Scenarios Considering the Sustainable Use of Biofuels and Other Alternative Vehicle Fuels in EAS Countries, and a flexible LNG market. ERIA also conducted projects on the low-carbon energy transition scenario in ASEAN. ERIA reported the progress of each project to the EAS Energy Ministers Meeting of September 2021. Together with Brunei Darussalam, ERIA hosted the 4th East Asia Energy Forum, which discussed low-carbon energy transition and carbon neutrality in ASEAN and East Asia. And together with the Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry of Japan, ERIA also launched the Asia CCUS network to facilitate the CCUS technologies in the region.

During FY2021, ERIA's Healthcare Unit completed one book and three research project reports, including 'Older People and COVID-19 in Indonesia (2022 edition)', which reports the results of a telephone survey to identify the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on older people's lives. This survey was proposed by Indonesia's Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS). Another memorable event handled by the Healthcare Unit was the announcement event of the winners of the second Healthy Ageing Prize for Asian Innovation Award, which was co-organised with Japan Center for International Exchange. Four winners were selected from ten countries by the international advisory committee which consists of leading experts on population ageing

throughout the region. The Healthcare Unit has been expanding its research focus from population ageing to healthcare topics in the region, such as clinical trials. As one of those activities, since July 2021 the unit has had an expert on secondment with the World Health Organization.

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 under the Regional Knowledge Centre on Marine Plastic Debris (RKC-MPD) as part of the ASEAN Plus Three framework. RKC-MPD has established an online platform titled 'Private sector initiatives to reduce plastic waste and marine plastic debris.' This private sector platform (PSP) highlights best practices of tackling marine debris issues in the region. RKC-MPD held several PSP workshops with Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand in FY2021.

Regarding agriculture, ERIA has conducted a project on developing 'the ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting the Utilisation of Digital Technologies for ASEAN Food and Agricultural Sector', together with the ASEAN Secretariat. The guideline was endorsed at the 43rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry held in October 2021.

ERIA has also kept good relations with several external partners such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). OECD and ERIA renewed their Memorandum of Understandings and had a signing ceremony in April 2021. ERIA participated in the OECD South East Asia Regional Programme (SEARP) Ministerial Meeting held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in February 2022 and highlighted the cooperation between

OECD and ERIA for developing the ASEAN region. ERIA also attended the 42nd ASEAN Inter Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) General Assembly in September 2021 and has strengthened the cooperation with AIPA based on the MoU to develop AIPA's capacity on matters concerning ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN economic integration.

The 16th Chairman's statement of the East Asia Summit mentioned, 'We encouraged ERIA to continue providing for the Chair of the ASEAN Summit and the EAS its support and targeted high-quality research and actionable policy recommendations that highlight and address the ERIA's paper on 'Supply Chain Resilience and Post-Pandemic Recovery in the East Asia Summit region' to EAS Economic Ministers.'

The 38th and 39th ASEAN summit leaders also acknowledged the contribution of ERIA to ASEAN in the summit statement: '[ERIA's] support to the development

of Brunei Darussalam's two (2) PEDs, namely the Framework on Circular Economy for the AEC; and the NTM Toolkit in cooperation with UNCTAD. We also appreciated ERIA's assistance and support through research and studies that contribute to ASEAN's economic priorities, including but not limited to the upgrade of the ATIGA, addressing issues pertaining to the mobility of professionals in ASEAN Member States especially in relation to the 4IR, the follow-up work on the ASEAN Seamless Trade Facilitation Indicators – Trade Transactions Cost (ASTFI-TTC II), and supply chain resilience.'

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