

Japan's Proposal for Strengthening Cooperation with ASEAN
towards
Enhancing Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems
for Ensuring Regional Food Security
(Midori Cooperation Plan)

1. Background

In 2021, the United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit and its Pre-Summit were held in September in New York and in July in Rome, respectively. The summit took place in the context of increasing recognition of the importance of stable food supply and resilient and sustainable agricultural development. The concept of enhancing resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems while reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions has been positioned as a core concept in agricultural policy and government initiatives and was stated by many countries including some ASEAN Member States (AMS) at the summit and the pre-summit. On the Pre-summit in July 2021, the Joint Statement on Sustainable Agricultural Production and Food Systems (the Joint Statement) was agreed and announced by ministers in charge of agriculture from several AMS and Japan.

In the statement, it was confirmed that countries geographically located in the Monsoon Asia region shared several regional particularities in terms of agricultural production; high humidity and high temperature, abundance of paddy fields, and high density of small and medium-sized farmers. Taking into account these regional particularities, to achieve the goals of resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems as well as the SDGs, it was recognized that there was no “one-size-fits-all” solution leading to these goals. This important concept agreed by some AMS and Japan was clearly reflected in ‘The Secretary-General’s Chair Summary and Statement of Action on the UN Food Systems Summit’ released on 23 September 2021.

Further, the Joint Statement pointed out that international collaboration is important to introduce innovative and sustainable agricultural practices and technologies. It was agreed that collaboration through joint research projects and existing frameworks should be promoted and strengthened to achieve a balance between productivity and environmental protection. Thus, Japan’s initiatives for strengthening cooperation with ASEAN will be carried out by intensifying and strengthening this basic thought.

2. Direction of the cooperation

ASEAN has ‘The ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region (SPA-FS) 2021–2025’, ASEAN Strategy on

sustainable biomass energy for agriculture community and rural development in 2021 – 2030 as regional umbrella for initiatives to ensure regional food security and low-emission agriculture production. The AIFS Framework and SPA-FS, 2021–2025 which was adopted by the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) in October 2020, emphasized enhancing resilience to climate change and increasing sustainable agricultural production and productivity as the emerging challenges in food security. AMAF has also agreed to adopt the ASEAN Regional Guidelines for Sustainable Agriculture in ASEAN on 26 October 2022. The guidelines aim to guide AMS on the transition to the ASEAN agriculture that is highly productive, economically viable, and environmentally sound.

In Japan, a medium- to long-term strategy of the Measures for the achievement of Decarbonization and Resilience with Innovation (MeaDRI), was formulated in May 2021 to realize both increase in productivity and sustainability in the food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries through innovation. Currently the Japanese government and stakeholders are strongly implementing the related activities in the MeaDRI, that is expected to pave the way towards the development of resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems, more specifically, increasing productivity of food and agricultural production while reducing the environmental load by promoting innovation.

These policy and strategy directions of ASEAN and Japan indicate that the both parties clearly recognize the importance of resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems—specifically on improving agricultural production and productivity while reducing the environmental load.

In order to promote cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, which have similarity in weather and agricultural production conditions, the new ASEAN guidelines and MeaDRI of Japan should be recognized as a principal guidance and method for strengthening food security. Under this common recognition, Japan will intensify efforts to achieve resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems in ASEAN region through close collaboration with AMS, in contributing and ensuring the regional food security. Japan will also fully apply public-private partnership mechanisms to utilize the technical and financial capabilities of the private sector.

3. The scope of cooperation

Japan will promote the cooperation with ASEAN toward "building resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems through innovation" as stipulated in the MeaDRI as the core concept of future cooperation. Japan will focus on the suitability and necessity of technologies in pursuing resilient and sustainable farming in implementing the cooperation between ASEAN and Japan which commonly share the regional particularities such as high

humidity and temperature, abundance of paddy fields, and small- and medium-sized farmers. The specific scope of cooperation that Japan considers as important and should be addressed in each AMS are as follows:

- i) Development, demonstration and dissemination of technologies for building resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems through innovation, such as technologies enhancing smart /digital agriculture, circular economy, biomass energy, reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emission and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- ii) Human resource development for building resilient and sustainable agriculture, forestry and food systems, and
- iii) Other supports for the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines for Sustainable Agriculture in ASEAN.

Currently implemented ASEAN-Japan cooperation projects are shown in Annex 1. The fields of projects, which are not included in current cooperation, but will be initiated in coming years, are shown in Annex 2. To ensure the effective project management as well as the transparency of progress, clear and specific deliverable and timeframe will be set for each project.

In promoting these cooperations, Japan will make full use of the public-private partnership mechanisms.

4. Conclusion -towards the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation-

ASEAN-Japan Friendship and cooperation will celebrate its 50th anniversary in the year 2023. To mark the memorable event, Japan will use this good opportunity to further strengthen its cooperation with ASEAN in establishing resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems based on technologies suitable for each AMS.

Japan will elaborate the contents of cooperation with ASEAN, promote the demonstration and dissemination of Japanese technology in AMS, and contribute to strengthening food security in ASEAN. Through these efforts, Japan intends to further strengthen and deepen the cooperative relationship with ASEAN, aiming for prosperity of the ASEAN food and agriculture sector by increasing agricultural productivities while reducing environmental load and enhancing accessibility of safe, affordable, diverse, and nutritious food for all ASEAN people.

Annex 1

- i) Development, demonstration and dissemination of technologies for building resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems through innovation, such as technologies enhancing smart agricultural or digital agriculture technology, circular economy, biomass energy reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emission and Integrated Pest Management (IPM),
- ✓ Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund Capacity Development Program for ASEAN Rice Net
 - ✓ Greenhouse Gas Mitigation in Irrigated Rice Systems in Asia (MIRSA)
 - ✓ Accelerating application of agricultural technologies which enhance resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems in the Asia-Monsoon region
 - ✓ Japan-MAFF funded FAO Project to enhance capacities on soil carbon sequestration and methane emission reductions
 - ✓ Public-Private Partnership for the Development of Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture and Food systems in Southeast Asia
 - ✓ Smart Agriculture pilot Project in Southeast Asia
 - ✓ Project for Promotion of Sustainable Fisheries in Southeast Asian Region
 - ✓ ASEAN-JICA Capacity Building Project on IUU Fishing Countermeasures in Southeast Asia
 - ✓ JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program: Practice Plant Quarantine Techniques for Export of Agricultural Products (Thermal Treatment for Disinfestation of Fruit Flies)
 - ✓ Capacity Development of protection against introduction and spread of transboundary plant pests in the Asia and the Pacific Region
 - ✓ Improved Coordination and Strengthened Capacity to Deal with the Invasive Insect Pest *Tuta absoluta* in Mainland Southeast Asia
- ii) Human resource development for building resilient and sustainable agriculture , forestry and food systems.
- ✓ Japan-MAFF (Forestry Agency) funded ITTO Project on Sustainable Wood Use Promotion in Timber producing countries
 - ✓ Japan-MAFF (Forestry Agency) and MoFA funded ITTO Project on Capacity Building for Sustainable Forest Management in Timber producing countries
 - ✓ JICA technical cooperation projects on sustainable forest management
 - ✓ East Asia Plant Variety Protection Forum
 - ✓ Project for Enhancing the Understanding of GAP by Japan-ASEAN Partnership (ASEAN MAFF GAP Project)
 - ✓ Capacity Building Project for Farmer's Organizations to Support the Development of Food Value Chain in ASEAN Countries (CBF Project)
 - ✓ Human Resource Development Project in Food-Related Areas through Partnership Program with Universities in ASEAN Region (Japan) - Phase 3
- iii) Other supports for the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines for Resilient Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in ASEAN.

- ✓ Project on the Development of Circular Economy with Bioenergy and Coproducts
- ✓ Building stable food systems and developing climate change adaptation and mitigation measures on irrigation and drainage facilities
- ✓ Mangrove Ecosystem Management in ASEAN Region
- ✓ Regional Collaborative Research and Capacity Building for Monitoring and Reduction of Marine Debris from Fisheries in Southeast Asia
- ✓ Creation and Testing of Learning and Accreditation Programme to Implement ASEAN RAI Guidelines
- ✓ Data Collection Survey on Food Value Chain Development in with/Post-COVID-19 Society in the South-east Asia Region
- ✓ Sharing Best-practices on the Development and Promotion of On-Farm Irrigation Management among the Water-User Groups in CLMV Countries
- ✓ Research Project on Building and Enhancing Resilient Sustainable agriculture and Food Systems in ASEAN Countries

ANNEX 2

1. Development, demonstration and dissemination of technologies for building resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems through innovation, such as technologies enhancing smart/digital agriculture, circular economy, biomass energy ,reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emission and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

- ✓ Increased private sector engagement and investments in climate-resilient agriculture and low-carbon food systems
- ✓ Information sharing of modern, green and clean technologies for resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems in ASEAN region
- ✓ Activities for postharvest loss reduction and agricultural mechanization
- ✓ Activities for digital and precision agriculture
- ✓ Improved the access to technologies for modern biomass energy use.

2. Human resource development for building resilient and sustainable agriculture , forestry and food systems

- ✓ Activities for development and operation of Food Innovation Hub for ASEAN region

3. Other supports for the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines for Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture and in ASEAN

- ✓ ASEAN JICA Food Value Chain Development Project
- ✓ Activities for facilitated private sector in assisting the AMS to achieve resilient and sustainable agriculture sector