

From linear to circular: EU and ASEAN inaugurate Stakeholder Platform Secretariat to boost region's circular economy

New ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform Secretariat to drive action and strengthen ASEAN's circular economy approach

BANGKOK, THAILAND, September 15, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) inaugurated today the ASEAN Circular Economy (CE) Stakeholder Platform Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand. It will support the ASEAN region to achieve sustainable consumption and production and accelerate a transition to a circular economy.



Organised by the secretariat's host institution, the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD), together with the ASEAN Secretariat and the Delegation of the European Union to ASEAN, the inauguration was attended by representatives from the public and private sectors, civil society and international organisations. This milestone event happened after a two-day strategic scoping workshop to operationalise the CE stakeholder platform.

"This new ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform Secretariat adds more value to the EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership by contributing to our common goal of accelerating the implementation of SDG 12 on Sustainable Consumption and Production," said H.E. David Daly, Ambassador of the European Union to the Kingdom of Thailand.

The ASEAN CE Stakeholder Platform Secretariat will host a platform for knowledge sharing and dialogue mechanisms where stakeholders from various sectors can share best practices and explore opportunities and obstacles to a shift to more circular practices in the ASEAN region.

ASEAN's journey to circularity

As a consumption and production powerhouse, ASEAN shows great potential for a circular

economy. However, rapid urbanisation and industrialisation saw a rise in waste pollution and greenhouse gas emissions with an alarming environmental impact. In October 2021, ASEAN adopted the Framework for a Circular Economy to scale up and accelerate the region's transition to a low-carbon economy.

"The ASEAN CE Stakeholder Platform Secretariat will be instrumental in accelerating the application of systematic solutions for Circular Economy in the region. With the collaboration of the ASEAN Member States and partners such as the EU, we can harness capabilities needed to advance the region's circular economy," stated Dr Vong Sok, Head of Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat.

Regional cooperation for sustainability

The EU and ASEAN, with their advanced regional integration, have a great potential to learn from each other's sustainability transition experiences and practices. The ASEAN CE Stakeholder Platform is inspired by the European CE Stakeholder Platform. The EU-funded Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) has facilitated the work and exchange of knowledge in preparation for the inauguration of the ASEAN CE Stakeholder Platform Secretariat today and continues to support the operationalisation of the platform.

"As we look into multi-sector approaches to solve the most pressing global social challenges, the platform the secretariat in the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue will host here in Bangkok can drive greater action and help unlock benefits we cannot realise individually," expressed Bolbongse Vangphaen, Deputy Director-General of Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A shift to a circular economy is expected to have multiple benefits, including lowering emissions, reducing waste generation and pollution, reducing the need for natural resource extraction, increasing employment opportunities, and contributing to several Sustainable Development Goals.

"We recognise the transformative potential of circularity, but to truly achieve this, a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral effort is imperative," said Chirachai Punkrasin, ACSDSD Executive Director. "We must ensure approaches are built together with the right stakeholders and around people's needs," he concluded.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. On 31 December 2015, the ASEAN Community was formally established. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta.

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 Member States, including (in protocol order): Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece,

Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

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