



Grow Asia Business Council Meeting

Tuesday 11 September 2018

Meeting Summary

The Grow Asia Business Council is comprised of global and regional business leaders to serve as an anchor in shaping the Grow Asia agenda, and to demonstrate and deliver the private sector's leadership and commitment to strengthening a sustainable and inclusive agriculture sector in ASEAN. Following the Grow Asia Forum in Hanoi, the in-person meeting of the Grow Asia Business Council shared updates and defined next steps on the joint action agenda to be taken through this multi-stakeholder platform. Key points are summarized below, as an input to the Business Council's on-going discussions.

Key Points from the Discussion

1. **Grow Asia Forum.** There was general agreement from the Business Council that the Forum was interesting, provided good learnings, enabled multiple new networks and had attracted a high-level audience.
2. **Future Funding.** Grow Asia presented an update on funding-raising and communication with prospective donors. The Council discussed the possibility of Grow Asia concurrently raising funding from the private sector for the regional Secretariat. Not only does it tangibly demonstrate that the private sector values the work of Grow Asia, but it also sends a positive signal to potential donors that would like to see private sector support. The consensus around the table was that this was acceptable. Some members commented that the access and introductions that the Grow Asia network are providing represent an excellent value offering and a type of access beyond traditional corporate communications/government affairs department. In addition, there were multiple areas where the network could/should raise issues, often around regulation and policy. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that private sector contributions will raise expectations on results and Grow Asia's capacity to deliver on commitments.
3. **Country Partnerships.** The Country Partnerships are individually aiming to be self-financing, with the Indonesian partnership already fully self-financed, while the Philippines, Vietnam and Myanmar partnerships potentially becoming fully self-financing over the next 3 years. As the Country Partnerships primarily rely on raising membership fees to support themselves, the private sector may focus on supporting the Country Partnerships while the Singapore-based secretariat might rely more on public funding. The Country Partnerships are also the main nexus of interactions around policy dialogue or PPP initiatives at a national level. Council members observed that in even in the more mature Country Partnerships, the country platforms can still become better in terms of engagement and ensuring diversity of participating stakeholders.
4. **Sharper Focus.** As a regional network, Grow Asia needs to differentiate itself from other agricultural partnership platforms and alliances. Members expressed a need to focus and would like to see Grow Asia demonstrate value addition and relevance vis-à-vis other platforms.



Grow Asia's Response and Action

1. **Future Funding.** Grow Asia will continue to work with the Country Partnerships to put them on the path towards financial independence. At the regional level, Grow Asia's articles of association as a non-profit permit the raising of funds, provided that the income is spent on furthering the aims of the network—namely improving productivity, profitability and environmental sustainability of the region's smallholders. Grow Asia will explore options for raising a portion of the central Secretariat's running costs from the private sector. This may involve fees, charges for learning events and co-funding of other activities. To-date, Grow Asia has reached out to 27 potential donors, including 6 private foundations.
2. **Country Partnerships.** The Grow Asia network and the Country Partnerships are taking on increasingly sectoral and policy issues. However, rather than specific policy advocacy, the Country Partnerships will focus on enabling a policy dialogue to take place, and for multiple sectors to be able to have their voice heard on issues that improve smallholder productivity, profitability and environmental sustainability.

Meeting Participants

- Harry Hanawi, Director, Corporate Affairs, Sinar Mas Agribusiness & Food – on behalf of Co-chair Franky Widjaja, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Sinar Mas Agribusiness & Food
- Kohei Sakata, Managing Director, Bayer Vietnam – on behalf of Co-chair Jens Hartmann, Regional Head of Asia Pacific, Bayer (South East Asia) Pte Ltd
- Donald Chen, President, Asia Pacific, Archer Daniels Midland Co.
- Bruce Blakeman, Vice President, Cargill
- Pham Van Loi, Country Managing Director, Corteva Agriscience Viet Nam
- Colin Taylor, Agribusiness Advisory Services Regional Lead East Asia Pacific, International Finance Corporation
- Dharnesh Gordhon, President Director, PT Nestlé Indonesia
- Felicia Tang, Deputy Head, External Affairs, RGE Pte Ltd
- Thomas Haller, Head South East Asia & East Asia, Swiss Re Asia Pte Ltd
- Maneesh Oberoi, Business Head - South East Asia, UPL
- Marion Martinez, Managing Director, Yara Vietnam Ltd
- Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia
- Paul Voutier, Director, Knowledge and Innovation, Grow Asia
- Reginald Lee, Director, Partnerships, Grow Asia
- Somang Yang, Manager, Partnerships, Grow Asia
- Jim Riordan, Centre for Global Public Goods, World Economic Forum