



Grow Asia Business Council Meeting

Thursday 6 August 2020

Meeting Summary

The Grow Asia Business Council comprises 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. The virtual meeting 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.

Synthesis of Grow Asia Key Progress Points

Grahame Dixie articulated the following major areas of progress for Grow Asia in the last twelve months:

- Launch of the 6th Country Partnership, Grow PNG, with support from Australia's DFAT
- Continuation of funding from Australia's DFAT, with a second tranche of funds coupled with new funding from Switzerland for the ASEAN Responsible Agricultural Investing (ASEAN-RAI) program
- Nearly 1.8 million farmers reached and 970,000 participating in the network's projects. The numbers continue to increase, with an aggregate incremental income increase now more than US\$80 million per annum
- Close engagement with the ASEAN Secretariat - now accredited as an Entity Associated with ASEAN, and coordinating a regional response on COVID-19 and pest and diseases

Key Points from the Discussion

1. Regional Response to COVID-19. Business Council members acknowledge that action is critical as responsible partners in the food system and to ensure that a health crisis does not become a food security crisis. Partners acknowledged Grow Asia's leadership in convening multi-stakeholder Working Groups to work with governments and reach out to farmers in the most effective ways possible. Private sector members shared their challenges with the initial lockdowns and pointed to ways that more information sharing and better coordination could ensure that seeds/feeds/inputs are part of essential infrastructure and be exempted from restrictions. Partners also shared about efforts they took to ensure health/well-being of staff.

Action: Grow Asia will continue to convene the multi-stakeholder Working Groups, and their preliminary outcomes have been shared with the SOM-AMAF and will be shared at the Grow Asia Forum with an aim towards an ASEAN endorsed event by 4Q2020. Grow Asia has been consolidating views from stakeholders as learnings for the future: how green lanes can work, how to run trucking to minimize health consequences for workers, how to support digital marketplaces, investments needed to improve broadband in the rural space, building a registry of farmers, etc. Grow Asia is also proactively seeking donor support for some of these initiatives (e.g. World Bank) at the country level.

2. Digital Program. Private sector partners continue to see digital as an important medium of reaching smallholders and have supported Grow Asia's digital program in various ways over the last 2 years. Connectivity in rural areas is seen as a major constraint for smallholder digital



adoption and may persist given the lack of investment by major companies. Partners also shared new approaches of engaging youth in agriculture (virtual field days/farmer days).

Action: Grow Asia is exploring ways to tap Universal Service and Access Funds (USAFs) financed primarily through contributions made by mobile network operators and telecom companies for expanding communications services to underserved areas and populations.

- 3. Gender.** Council Members noted Grow Asia's increased focus on gender and identifying opportunities for gender mainstreaming at the farmer-, partner- and network-level.

Action: Grow Asia will conduct a mapping exercise to survey what partners are already doing in this space and in-country training (especially to understand the business case for being more gender inclusive). As Grow Asia seeks new partnerships with donors and other partners, we invite partners to share current projects that they are doing around gender and explore ways to collaborate in this workstream.

- 4. Partnership Opportunities and Engagements.** Private sector partners shared some of their initiatives of working with smallholders to protect livelihoods while also incorporating new approaches (e.g. water management and irrigation systems). Members acknowledged Grow Asia's role in spearheading action around the Fall Armyworm, Responsible Agricultural Investing (RAI), and serving as an interlocutor especially with ASEAN and the public sector.

Action: Grow Asia will continue to focus on the Country Partnerships (Track 1) and follow-up with private sector partners who expressed interest in specific countries, commodities or cross-cutting issues. Grow Asia will also continue to support fundraising for the Action Plan on Fall Armyworm. On RAI, Grow Asia will develop case studies and a learning program under the new SDC project to guide partners. Grow Asia will leverage the increased comfort with technology to support international knowledge exchange.



Meeting Participants

- Co-chair Jens Hartmann, Head of Commercial Operations Asia Pacific, Bayer Crop Science
- Co-chair Sumeth Pinyosnit, CEO, Charoen Pokphand Produce
- Mun Pew Khong, Head, Public Affairs, Science and Sustainability, Bayer Crop Science
- Pote Jarupanich, Vice President, Charoen Pokphand Produce
- Colin D'Silva, Vice President, Cargill
- Elizabeth Hernandez, Head of Government Affairs and Sustainability, Asia Pacific, Corteva Agriscience
- Mary Ann Sayoc, Public Affairs Lead, East West Seed
- Norberto Chingcuanco, Vice President for Corporate Planning, Feedmix Specialist
- Anita Neville, SVP, Group Corporate Communication, Golden Agri-Resources
- Ernest Bethe, Principal Operations Officer, International Finance Corporation
- Moray McLeish, Vice President, Olam
- Archawat Chareonsilp, Environmental Sustainability Policy and Innovation Director, PepsiCo
- Harjan Kuiper, CEO, Rabobank Singapore
- Thefan Kurniawan, Sustainability Head, Seger Agro Nusantara
- Harry Hanawi, Director, Sinarmas Agri
- Biggy Nguyen, Senior Client Manager, Public Sector Solutions, Swiss Re
- Sean de Cleene, Head of Food System Initiative and Member of Executive Committee, World Economic Forum
- Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia
- Reginald Lee, Director, Partnerships, Grow Asia
- Pranav Sethaputra, Manager, Partnerships, Grow Asia
- Erin Sweeney, Manager, Sustainable Business & Investment, Grow Asia
- Nadia Soerjanto, Manager, Innovation, Grow Asia