

Ensuring the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze's (AATHP) Effectiveness: A Case Study of Riau Province's Haze Summary

ASEAN Briefs is a regular publications about current development on ASEAN regionalism, especially in the Political-Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

The Habibie Center
ASEAN Studies Program ASEAN Briefs

Project Supervisor:
Rahimah Abdulrahim
(Executive Director)
Hadi Kuntjara
(Deputy Director for Operations)

Head of ASEAN Studies Program/Editor:
A. Ibrahim Almuttaqi

Researcher:
Steven Yohanes P.
Fina Astriana
Wirya Adiweni

Finance and Administration:
Riesta Aldila

Design and Publication:
Rahma Simamora

The Habibie Center - ASEAN Studies Program
Jl. Kemang Selatan no.98, Jakarta 12560 Indonesia
(P): +62 21 7817211 (F): +62 21 7817212

SUMMARY

Land and forest fires in Indonesia have repeatedly caused trans-boundary haze pollutions affecting several other countries in ASEAN, namely Malaysia and Singapore. In many cases, the land and forest fires mainly originate from Indonesia's Riau Province where lands are usually cleared for palm oil plantations – Riau Province is the largest location for palm oil plantations accounting for 22% of land use in Indonesia and contributing to 31% of Indonesia's total palm oil production. Based on this fact, ASEAN has proposed to tackle such issues through the formation of a regional environmental regime as reflected in the ASEAN Agreement on Trans-boundary Haze Pollution (AATHP).

The main argument of this issue of *ASEAN Briefs* is that the regional haze problem cannot be resolved through the AATHP process alone. Instead, it would be more effective to resolve the issue at the national level because palm oil plantations contribute significantly to the land clearing that consequently cause haze pollution. In other words, focusing on managing domestic issues will be more better in ensuring the effectiveness of AATHP in addressing transboundary haze.

This issue of *ASEAN Briefs* concludes four important policy recommendation to tackle the regional haze pollution problem, namely: (1) Replacing the Indonesian farmers' slash and burn method for land clearing to more sustainable ways; (2) Involving more environmental approaches which include local people and the provincial governments; (3) Improving the quality and quantity of law enforcement instruments to address illegal land and forest clearing; and (4) Reducing peatland fires, which is the main causes of haze pollution, by focusing on ensuring the implementation of the ASEAN Peatland Management Initiative (APMI).

Introduction

Since the 1980s, the emergence of the haze problem has dominated the agenda of ASEAN member-states as one of their top priorities in addressing environmental issues in Southeast Asia. To this day, this situation has become the homework for ASEAN, both as an institution and for each of its member states (particularly for Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore), to solve the haze problem once and for all.

The cause of haze can be attributed to the land and forest fires and their consequent implications, both directly and indirectly. There are two main reasons that underlie the frequent occurrence of land and forest fires. *First*, is due to the purpose of land clearing that uses a slash-and-burn technique (Peh, 2014). *Secondly*, because of the extreme climate situation particularly during the dry seasons from June to October that was further impacted by the El-Nino (Pearl, 2014). After the 1997/1998 haze crisis in Southeast Asia, the first reason has made a more significant contribution to the cause of haze as opposed to the second reason. Nevertheless, these two reasons are correlated to each other and result in the expansion of forest and land fires that end up contributing to the haze pollution in Southeast Asia (McRae, 2012).

The occurrence of the haze problem in Southeast Asia has triggered regional cooperation that was expected to mitigate, prevent as well as to monitor land and forest fires in ASEAN. If traced by its history, the emergence of such cooperation began when the haze issue impacted the ASEAN member-states, mainly during the dry seasons in 1991, 1994, and 1997/1998 – the worst in haze history – which then led to the formation of the Regional Haze Action Plan (RHAP) in 1995 and further enshrined in the ASEAN Agreement on Trans-boundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) in 2002. Despite the existence of these various regional-level agreements and mechanisms to resolve the haze problem, land and forest fires still occur regularly in Indonesia, particularly in 2005, 2006/2007, 2010, 2013, and 2014 (Ardiansyah, 2013). Arguably, Riau Province is a significant contributor to the haze problem which spreads to Indonesia's nearest neighbors, Malaysia and Singapore.

Haze in Riau Province

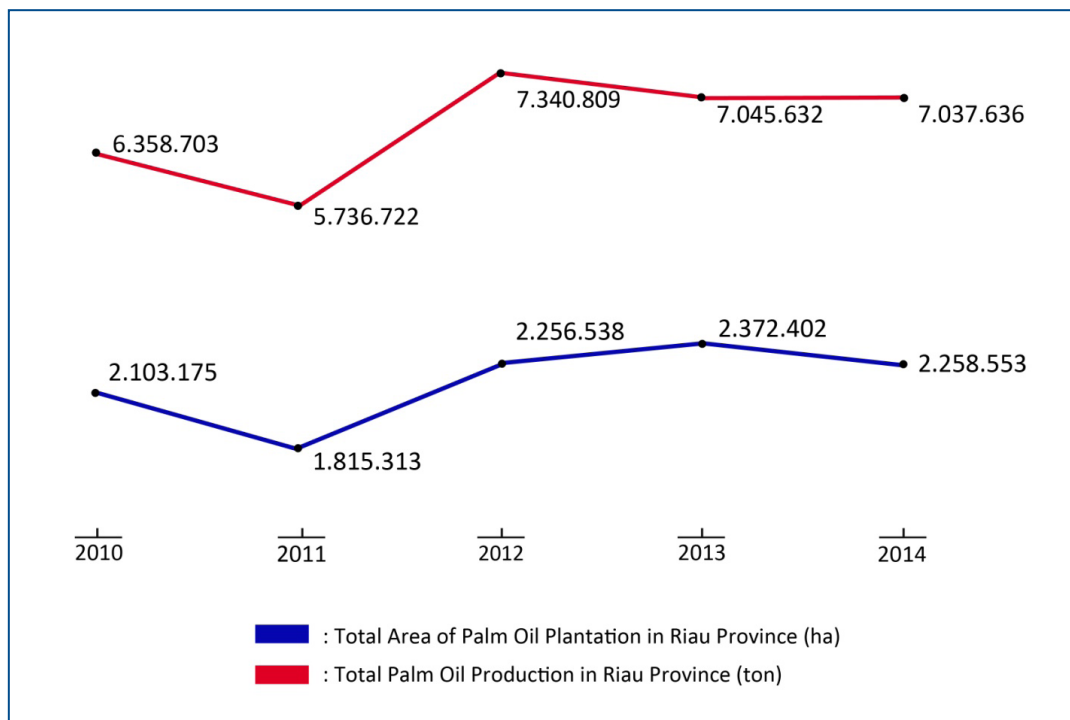
Riau Province is located in the eastern part of Sumatera Island. Being relatively close to Indonesia's neighbouring countries that are prone to the impact of haze pollution, namely Malaysia and Singapore, the province's location is in a highly strategic geographical area. Riau Province is also an important region accounting for 5% of Indonesia's total land area. Most of this is covered by forest areas – accounting for 41.31% of the province's total area (Kemhut, 2002) – and in which 48% of its total

forest is peatland area (Mongabay, 2013). Unfortunately, Riau Province is also a 'fire prone area', where forest and land fires regularly occur and lead to the problem of haze pollution in the region.

The land and forest fires, that consequently produce haze pollution, was largely caused by land clearing methods; commonly conducted via slash-and-burn techniques. The slash-and-burn technique serves as a traditional tool adopted by Indonesian farmers for the purpose of land clearing and/or land conversion. Experts have argued that there are three underlying causes why farmers choose slash-and-burn technique, namely in order to prepare the planting seasons, the socio-economic factors of increasing number of population, and high economic incentives that farmers received (WWF, 2007). Conversely, the slash-and-burn method also received a so-called 'positive' response from plantation companies because the technique can significantly reduce the cost of land conversion for plantation instead of using mechanical excavators or bulldozers, particularly for the purpose of palm oil plantation.

Palm oil has become one of the main drivers for the economy of not only Riau Province but also Indonesia as a whole. 10% of the total national budget revenue – or Rp 200 billion – was sourced from the palm oil industry. Moreover, palm oil has become a strategic non-oil and gas commodity as it is now an alternative source for the national budget's revenue, especially at a time when global palm oil prices are increasing (Burgers, 2012). Moreover, Indonesia is the top producer of palm oil in the world with total production reaching 28.4 Million Ton or a 23% share of global production (ESG, 2015). In addition to palm oil's strategic position in Riau Province, palm oil has effectively created more jobs for local people compared to other sectors in the province (Burgers, 2012). According to the World Growth Report, palm oil companies have helped as much as 12.9% of the poor population in Riau Province (Growth, 2011).

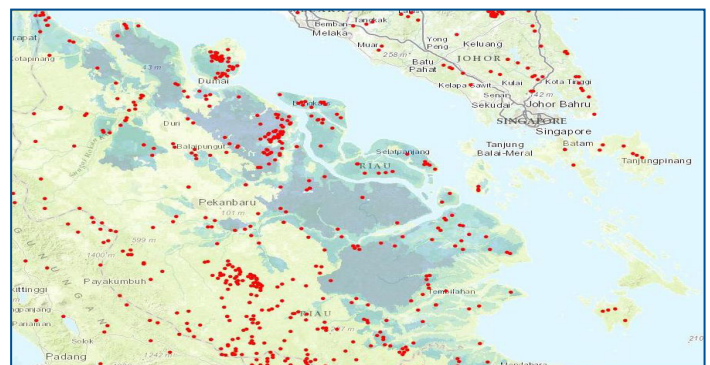
These figures appear to justify the vast and rapid development of palm oil plantations in Riau Province. Until 2010, Riau Province was recorded as the largest location for palm oil plantations in Indonesia, with 22% of land use or 1.801.210 Ha dedicated to the sector. Furthermore, the province contributes to 31% of Indonesia's total palm oil production (or 6.064.391 ton) (Pwc, 2012). By 2014, these numbers have increased with the province's land use up to 40% (or 2.258.553 Ha) and production amounting to 37% of Indonesia's total production (or 7.047.221 ton) (BPMPD, 2014). In addition to these facts, from 2001 to 2010, there were hike in the number of new palm oil plantation areas with total percentage of new area increasing to 185% in Riau Province (Polhaupesy, 2014). According to Indonesia's Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM), there were increasing numbers of total palm oil plantation areas in Riau Province that are relevant with the increased production of palm oil in the region (see Graphic 1).



Graphic 1
Total Palm Oil Plantation Areas and Total Production in Riau Province 2008 – 2014
Source: Indonesia Investment Coordinating Body & Riau Province Plantations Services

Unfortunately, the growing significant number of palm oil plantations in Riau Province and its hike in production has also led to the haze pollution problems following the upward trend. The National Disaster Mitigation Body (BNPB) claimed that 99.9% of total land and forest fires were produced by combustion for land conversion via slash-and-burn techniques (BNPB, 2015). In the context of Riau Province, forest and land fires are caused by the implementation of slash-and-burn techniques in peatland area. Peatland has contributed for more than half of fires in Riau Province. Indeed, according to Mongabay, Riau Province accounts for 75 percent of all peatland fires in the country even though it only represents 5 percent of Indonesia's land mass (Butler, 2014). Arguably, peatland becomes the critical factor in addressing the haze pollution since it is the source of 'unspontaneous combustion'. Peatland is known for being highly combustible with fires smouldering underground long after a fire has been extinguished on the surface (Economist, 2013). Moreover, peatland could go down to a depth of 4m in Riau Province (Wetlands, 2003). In light of this, peatland contributed more than 50% of hotspot images and burning (WWF, Hotspots Highlight and Analysis, 2007). The image below shows that there is a relevant relationship between hotspots that are located in peatland area and its contribution to fires.

The red dots in picture 1 indicate hotspots for fires while the blue colored-area depicts peatland areas in Riau Province. Based on Picture 1, it can be seen



Picture 1
Hotspots in Peatland Area in Riau Province
Source: Global Forest Watch, 2015

that hotspots were detected mostly in peatland areas in Riau Province. Forest fires that occurred in peatland areas of Riau Province have also worsened especially when they occur in the palm oil plantations areas. According to World Research Institute (WRI), the average number of forest and land fires occurring in peatland areas and palm oil plantations in Riau Province reached 35% (Niger Sizer, 2014). Thus it can be seen that peatland areas are prone areas for fires on a regular basis.

In addition, the situation becomes worse when the burning occurs in the area of peatland where palm oil plantations also reside.

DPR) which initially refused to ratify the AATHP since it was considered to threaten Indonesia's territorial sovereignty. However, many environmental activists argued that Indonesia's reluctance to ratify the AATHP was driven by the interests of the palm oil industry (Times, 2013).

Interestingly, the momentum of major haze pollution in 2013 together with diplomatic tensions between Jakarta and its counterparts in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur would act as the main forces pushing the ratification process in Indonesia. As such, despite the distribution of power relations among ASEAN member states, the momentum created since 2013 saw the three key sides meeting together in the shared interest of solving the haze pollution problem. Despite this, the ratification process in Indonesia was nonetheless criticized for what was perceived as the Government's half-heartedness. As noted by Mongabay (2014), Indonesia's ratification process was caused by a haze bill being discussed in Singapore that sought to apply for extraterritorial law in Indonesian territory. Singapore's Law Minister, K. Shanmugam even criticised the Indonesian Government by reminding Jakarta that, *"countries are obligated under the international agreements to ensure that their (Indonesia) economic activities within their borders do not result in spill-over damage to their neighbours"* (The Straits Times, 2013). Singapore played a significant role in pushing Indonesia to ratify AATHP. This was demonstrated by Singapore's Minister of Environment and Water Resources, Vivian Balakrishnan, who stated that Singapore would push for accurate land concession maps from Indonesia so that the early warning system can be implemented effectively in the hotspots (The Straits Times, 2013). Malaysia too, pushed for the haze agenda to be institutionalized at the ASEAN Environmental Ministers' Meeting, arguing that concession maps will provide accurate and official data to track the concessions violators so that there would be no pinpointing accusations blaming Malaysian or Singaporean palm oil companies operating in Indonesia (The Straits Times, 2013). As a result of this pressure, Indonesia was arguably pushed to eventually ratify the AATHP in spite of the Indonesian Parliament's strong concerns about the threats posed to Indonesian territorial sovereignty.

In the case of Indonesia, the uncertain relationship among stakeholders in domestic politics - such as between the Government and private sectors/companies; the Government and the local people in Riau Province; and between the private sector and local people in Riau Province - was also an underlying factor that led to the AATHP's ratification. Moreover, the slash-and-burn method has also been significantly adopted as a form of land clearing 'culture' for farmers in Riau Province farmers.

Many cases can be pointed out as the justification for these reasons. Corruption remains a major problem, particularly at the provincial level, and is one of the

reasons as to why relations among the stakeholders in Indonesia's palm oil industry are chaotic. In this sense, the weakness in law enforcement either at the national or provincial level to punish actors behind land and forest fires - including companies and local farmers - is a problem that needs to be addressed. Additionally, the involvement of palm oil companies in land clearing also worsens haze pollution, as noted by then-Indonesia's Minister of Environment, Balthazar Kambuaya, who highlighted the involvement of foreign companies from Malaysia (BBC, 2013). Interestingly, the Indonesian Government is now focusing on law enforcement as a critical point in managing, preventing, and monitoring forest fires (Tempo, 2015). Improving law enforcement is seen as critical by the Indonesian Ministry of Environment since tackling palm oil companies also relates to the limitations on human resources, accessibility for land and forest area that burn, and the reluctance of witnesses to provide informations (KLH, 2015).

The dry seasons and El-Nino weather pattern also exacerbate land and forest fires. The dry seasons that regularly occur from June until October have now become a regular period where the number of hotspots increase significantly. In fact, dry seasons also contribute to posing challenges and difficulties for the Indonesia to extinguish fires. Meteorologists further argue that the El-Nino weather pattern has made Southeast Asia drier and extends the possibility of a long drought (Harry Pearl, 2014). Related to the El-Nino, the peatland areas are prone to forest fires. Indonesia's Ministry of Environment has particularly cited Riau Province, in which more than 67% of fires occurred in peatland areas (KLH, 2015).

Nevertheless, Indonesia also gains other advantages by ratifying the AATHP. In the context of ASEAN, Indonesia gains momentum to show their leadership in responding to significant problems faced by ASEAN member states, including haze pollutions. Furthermore, remembering that ASEAN will soon turn into an ASEAN Community by the end 2015, ASEAN member states will be expected to focus on mapping regional priorities for sustainable development goals. Included in this will be environmental measures to address haze pollution if ASEAN is to show itself as serious in formulating a sustainable development agenda. Beyond the regional advantages gained by Indonesia, ratifying the AATHP also provides domestic advantages for the country. As argued by experts on environmental law in Indonesia, Deni Bram, the ratification process require synergy between domestic political institutions among the Government, Parliament and court system to ensure proper law enforcement on haze issues (Mongabay, 2014).

The underlying causes for the ratification indicate that the formation of the AATHP regional environmental regime is important from an Indonesia perspective not only to achieve the goals of preventing as well as monitoring

haze pollutions, but also as it is related to important domestic interests. However, the effectiveness of the AATHP should be measured through three important driving forces namely: the level of collaboration among the parties within the AATHP framework; legal framework liability; and perfect sharing information among the parties within AATHP.

The level of collaboration within the AATHP has actually achieved some effective points even before Indonesia ratified the agreement into its national law. For instance, Singapore has provided satellite imagery to detect hotspots occurring in Indonesian territory since 2006, while Malaysia followed by providing technical assistance (Polhaupesy, 2014). Those two earlier cooperation among ASEAN member-states could be assessed as a success in the context of collaboration level among the parties of the AATHP. It should be expected that now that Indonesia has ratified the agreement, cooperation among the parties will be greatly improved, such as with Indonesia joining the ASEAN Coordinating Center for Transboundary Haze Pollutions and being helped by the ASEAN Transboundary Haze Pollution Control Fund (Tempo, 2015).

The legal framework liability for the parties of the AATHP should be taken seriously as the future consideration for AATHP regime effectiveness. For instance, within the AATHP regime, the articles in the agreement mostly discuss cooperation. In other words, the kind of cooperation the AATHP entails are limited to that which does not breach ASEAN's non-interference norm and which respects each states' sovereignty. In addition, no articles discussed the possibility of punishing parties that did not honor their obligations under the AATHP.

Regarding the perfect sharing information, this is important in order to ensure that the AATHP regime will be effective, particularly to reduce haze pollution. The involvement of land and forest satellite hotspots provided by the Singaporean Government and other environmental organizations such as World Resource Institute have helped information sharing for AATHP regime parties. Nevertheless, the crucial information that needs to be shared concerns land concessions map that depict the presence of palm oil companies and their plantations.

At present, the AATHP's effectiveness as a regional environmental regime cannot be measured since it has only come into full force in March 2015 following Indonesia's ratification. However, the regime effectiveness can be measured to an extent using the above criteria.

Policy Recommendations

It is clear that the the AATHP regional environmental regime cannot resolve the haze pollution problem on its own. The complexities present in the case of Riau Province - particularly where the slash-and-burn method and palm oil companies constructed synergy that regularly stimulate haze pollution – indicate the importance of making improvements at the national level and provincial level. This issue of *ASEAN Briefs* showed the underlying factors behind the Government of Indonesia's ratification of the AATHP as well as touched on why the regime's effectiveness will be the next important step for ASEAN. In this context, national and provincial-level improvements in tackling the haze problems will be more important than ensuring greater AATHP cooperation because the main problem lies with the lack of law enforcement from Indonesia.

From the point of domestic measures, Indonesia should focus on three things. *Firstly*, focusing on how to change the mindset of local farmers and their preference for slash-and-burn methods to one that are more sustainable and environmentally friendly. In addition to this, the provincial government could provide excavators or bulldozers as the incentive for companies or farmers who want to do land clearing. *Secondly*, the Government should involve the local people and coordinate with the private sectors to prevent burning or fires in the peatland area in Riau Province. In this context, prevention of clearing peatland area are same as prevention of fires, particularly because Riau Province consists of 80% of peatland areas. *Thirdly*, improving the quality and accountability of law enforcement against illegal land clearing. This can be done by providing the better quality and quantity of human resources and institutions who will be responsible for forest and land fires.

In the context of the AATHP, which has come into full force in March 2015, the Indonesian Government should follow the obligation that is stated in the AATHP and ensure that coordination with other parties, particularly with the ASEAN Coordination Centre on Transboundary Haze which it mandated to focus on prevention measures. Furthermore, the parties of AATHP should consider paying more attention to peatland initiative strategies so that can prevent them from being burned, such as within the sub-region cooperation context of the ASEAN Peatland Management Initiative (APMI). The APMI can contribute significantly to reduce the incidence of peatland fires in ASEAN, which is particularly relevant for Riau Province. In doing so, the ASEAN Transboundary Haze Pollution Control Fund can finance the implementation of peatland management initiative in respective countries, not limited only to Indonesia.

Bibliography

Book

Edward L. Miles, A. U. (2002). *Environmental Regime Effectiveness*. Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Keohane, R. O. (1983). The Demand for International Regimes. In S. D. Krasner, *International Regimes* (pp. 141-172). Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Journal Article

Peh, D. L.-H. (2014). South-East Asia Forest Fires: Blazing the Policy Trail. *Oryx*, 1-6.

victor, R. O. (2011). The Regime Complex for Climate Change. *Perspectives On Politics*, 7-23.

Report

Burgers, A. S. (2012). *Oil Palm Expansion In Riau Province, Indonesia: Serving People, Planet, and Profit?*. Brussels: European Report on Development.

ESG. (2015). *Earth Security Index 2015*. London: Earth Security Group.

Growth, W. (2011). *The Economic Benefit of Palm Oil to Indonesia*. Vancouver: World Growth.

Kemhut. (2002). *Data dan Informasi Kehutanan Propinsi Riau*. Jakarta: Kementerian Kehutanan.

Pwc. (2012). *Palm Oil Plantation: Financial Landscape, Regulatory and Financial Overview*. Jakarta: Pws.

Shahrin, R. R. (2006). *Development of Palm Oil and Related Products in Malaysia and Indonesia*.

Wetlands. (2003). *Maps of Area of Peatland Distribution and Carbon Content in Sumatera*. Bogor: Wetlands International.

Article In Periodical

Polhaupesy, S. Y. (2014, October 14). Masalah Utama Asap. *Koran Kompas*, p. 7.

WWF. (2007, January 18). End of Year Special Edition. *Fire Bulletin*, p. 3.

WWF. (2007, August 27). Hotspots Highlight and Analysis. *Fire Bulletin*, p. 1.

Website

Ardiansyah, F. (2013, July 8). *Indonesia's Fires: A Hazy Challenge for Southeast Asia*. Retrieved March 2, 2015, from www.eastasiaforum.org: <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2013/07/08/indonesias-fires-a-hazy-challenge-for-southeast-asia/>

BBC. (2013, June 22). *Perusahaan Malaysia Terlibat Pembakaran Hutan*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from www.bbc.co.uk: www.bbc.co.uk/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2913/06/130621_singapura_asap_sumatera.shtml

BNPB. (2015, Februari 23). *Siaga Darurat Kebakaran Hutan dan Lahan di Riau*. Retrieved March 9, 2015, from www.bnpb.go.id: <http://www.bnpb.go.id/berita/2386/siaga-darurat-kebakaran-hutan-dan-lahan-di-riau>

BPMPD. (2014). *Agro Industries*. Retrieved March 7, 2015, from www.bpmpd.riau.go.id: <http://bpmpd.riau.go.id/index.php?m=potensidet&id=3>

Butler, R. A. (2014, May 28). *Indonesia's Haze From Forest Fires Kills 110,000 People Per Year*. Retrieved March 3, 2015, from www.mongabay.com: <http://news.mongabay.com/2014/0528-riau-fires.html>

Economist. (2013, July 7). *Why is South-East Asia's Annual Haze So Hard to Deal With?* Retrieved March 7, 2015, from www.economist.com: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2013/07/economist-explains-3>

Harry Pearl. (2014, July 3). *El Nino, Indonesian Peatland Conversion Add Up to Haze Risk*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from www.thejakartaglobe.com: thejakartaglobe.com/beritasatu.com/news/el-nino-indonesian-peatland-conversion-add-haze-risk/

KLH. (2015). *Penanganan Kasus dan Upaya Pengendalian Kebakaran Hutan dan Lahan (KARHUTLA) KLH*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from www.menlh.go.id: www.menlh.go.id/penanganan-kasus-dan-upaya-pengendalian-kebakaran-hutan-dan-lahan-krhutla-klh/

McRae, J. J. (2012). *Transboundary Haze In Southeast Asia: Challenges and Pathways Forward*. Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies for NTS-Asia.

Mongabay. (2013, September 27). *Jaringan Masyarakat Gambut Riau: Investasi Bisnis di Lahan Gambut Dorong Munculnya Konflik*. Retrieved March 7, 2015, from [www.mongabay.co.id: http://www.mongabay.co.id/2013/09/27/jaringan-masyarakat-gambut-riau-investasi-bisnis-di-lahan-gambut-dorong-munculnya-konflik/](http://www.mongabay.co.id/2013/09/27/jaringan-masyarakat-gambut-riau-investasi-bisnis-di-lahan-gambut-dorong-munculnya-konflik/)

Mongabay. (2014, September 17). *Ratifikasi Setengah Hati Undang-Undang Penanganan Bencana Asap Lintas Negara*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.mongabay.co.id: www.mongabay.co.id/2014/09/17/ratifikasi-setengah-hati-undang-undang-penanganan-bencana-asap-lintas-negara/](http://www.mongabay.co.id/2014/09/17/ratifikasi-setengah-hati-undang-undang-penanganan-bencana-asap-lintas-negara/)

Morales, A. (2010, November 18). *Malaysia Has Little Room For Palm Oil Expansion*. Retrieved March 17, 2015, from [www.bloomberg.com: http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2010-11-18/malaysia-has-little-room-for-palm-oil-expansion-plantation-minister-says](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2010-11-18/malaysia-has-little-room-for-palm-oil-expansion-plantation-minister-says)

Niger Sizer, A. L. (2014, June 11). *Mencegah Kebakaran Hutan Di Indonesia: Fokus Pada Provinsi Riau, Lahan Gambut, serta Pembakaran Ilegal*. Retrieved March 11, 2015, from [www.wri.org: http://www.wri.org/blog/2014/06/mencegah-kebakaran-hutan-di-indonesia-fokus-pada-provinsi-riau-lahan-gambut-serta](http://www.wri.org/blog/2014/06/mencegah-kebakaran-hutan-di-indonesia-fokus-pada-provinsi-riau-lahan-gambut-serta)

Pearl, H. (2014, July 3). *El Nino, Indonesian Peatland Conversion Add Up to Haze Risk*. Retrieved March 2, 2015, from [www.thejakartaglobe.com: http://thejakartaglobe.com/news/el-nino-indonesian-peatland-conversion-add-haze-risk/](http://thejakartaglobe.com/news/el-nino-indonesian-peatland-conversion-add-haze-risk/)

Tempo. (2015, January 22). *Ini Kata Menteri Siti soal Perjanjian Asap ASEAN*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.tempo.co: www.tempo.co/read/news/2015/01/22/206636814/Ini-Kata-Menteri-Siti-soal-Perjanjian-Asap-ASEAN](http://www.tempo.co/read/news/2015/01/22/206636814/Ini-Kata-Menteri-Siti-soal-Perjanjian-Asap-ASEAN)

Tempo. (2014, September 26). *Musibah Besar, 3 Gubernur Riau Berakhir di KPK*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.tempo.co: http://www.tempo.co/read/news/2014/09/26/078609868/Musibah-Besar-3-Gubernur-Riau-Berakhir-di-KPK](http://www.tempo.co/read/news/2014/09/26/078609868/Musibah-Besar-3-Gubernur-Riau-Berakhir-di-KPK)

The Straits Times. (2013, July 8). *Extra-Territorial Laws on Haze Being Considered: Shanmugam*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.straitstimes.com: www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore/story/extra-territorial-laws-haze-being-considered-shanmugam-201307](http://www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore/story/extra-territorial-laws-haze-being-considered-shanmugam-201307)

The Straits Times. (2013, July 17). *Legal Obstacle to Sharing of Maps to Fight Haze*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.straitstimes.com: www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore/story/legal-obstacle-sharing-maps-fight-haze-201307](http://www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore/story/legal-obstacle-sharing-maps-fight-haze-201307)

The Straits Times. (2013, July 8). *S'pore Will Push For Accurate Land Concession Maps at ASEAN Meeting: Dr. Balakrishnan*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.straitstimes.com: www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore-will-push-accurate-maps-asean-meeting-kl-dr-balakri](http://www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore-will-push-accurate-maps-asean-meeting-kl-dr-balakri)

Times, T. S. (2013, June 30). *Haze Update: ASEAN Urges Indonesia to Ratify Treaty Tackling Haze Problem*. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from [www.straitstimes.com: www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore/story/haze-update-asean-urges-indonesia-ratify-treaty-tackling-haze](http://www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/the-haze-singapore/story/haze-update-asean-urges-indonesia-ratify-treaty-tackling-haze)

About ASEAN Studies Program

The ASEAN Studies Program was established on February 24, 2010, to become a center of excellence on ASEAN related issues, which can assist in the development of the ASEAN Community by 2015. The Habibie Center through its ASEAN Studies Program, alongside other institutions working towards the same goal, hopes to contribute to the realization of a more people-oriented ASEAN that puts a high value on democracy and human rights.

The objective of the ASEAN Studies Program is not merely only to conduct research and discussion within academic and government circles, but also to strengthen public awareness by forming a strong network of civil society in the region that will be able to help spread the ASEAN message. With the establishment of ASEAN Studies Program, The Habibie Center aims to play its part within our capabilities to the ASEAN regional development.

About Talking ASEAN

Talking ASEAN is a monthly public dialogue held at The Habibie Center in Jakarta. Covering a wide array of issues related to ASEAN, Talking ASEAN addresses topics of: Economic Integration, Socio-cultural, & Democracy, human rights and regional peace, among others. Featuring local and visiting experts, Talking ASEAN is one of a series of twelve dialogues regularly held each month and open to a target audience consisting of ASEAN officials, foreign ambassadors & diplomats, academics, university students, businesses, and the media.

WEBSITE



[ABOUT US](#)
[ASEAN VOICES](#)
[NEWS](#)
[PUBLICATIONS](#)
[GALLERY](#)
[CONTACT US](#)

SEARCH



Talking ASEAN on Illegal Fishing

Talking ASEAN on "Regional Impact of Indonesia's New Policy Towards Illegal Fishing"



Talking ASEAN on Jokowi's Trade Policy

Talking ASEAN on Jokowi's Trade Policy: Determining Indonesia's Position on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the Trans-Pacific Partnership

ASEAN VOICES



Celebrating A New Myanmar

Myanmar has become a country with notable economic performance



16 February 2015

Talking ASEAN on Illegal Fishing

Talking ASEAN on "Regional Impact of Indonesia's New Policy Towards Illegal Fishing"



25 January 2015

Talking ASEAN on Regional Developments and Challenges in Southeast Asia

Talking ASEAN on "Regional Developments and Challenges in Southeast Asia"



16 December 2014

Talking ASEAN on Youth Perspective

Talking ASEAN on "Embracing ASEAN Community: Youth Perspective"

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

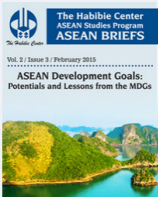
Flyer "Post-ASEAN Community 2015 - The Role Of Indonesia And The EU"

load more articles

share on facebook

share on twitter

ASEAN Briefs



Discussion Reports



Gallery



18th TALKING ASEAN : Regional Impact of Indonesia's New Policy Towards Illegal Fishing

Talking ASEAN : Regional Developments and Challenges in Southeast Asia, The Habibie Center, Jakarta - January 15, 2015

© 2014 The Habibie Center ASEAN Studies Program, Kamang Selatan No 98, Jakarta, Indonesia, 12560

Contact | Term of Use | Privacy Policy



The Habibie Center was founded by Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie and family in 1999 as an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organisation. The vision of The Habibie Center is to create a structurally democratic society founded on the morality and integrity of cultural and religious values.

The mission of The Habibie Center are **first**, to establish a structurally and culturally democratic society that recognizes, respects, and promotes human rights by undertaking study and advocacy of issues related to democratization and human rights, and **second**, to increase the effectiveness of the management of human resources and the spread of technology.

Cover Image : Green Peace



ASEAN STUDIES PROGRAM

The Habibie Center Building
Jl. Kemang Selatan No.98, Jakarta Selatan 12560
(P.) 62 21 781 7211
(F.) 62 21 781 7212

www.habibiecenter.or.id
www.thcasean.org

facebook.com/habibiecenter [@habibiecenter](https://twitter.com/habibiecenter)

OUR PUBLICATIONS



Issue 3/April 2014
Migrant Workers Rights
The AEC 2015 and Free Movement of Labor: Case Studies of Indonesia and the Philippines

ASEAN Briefs is a bi-monthly publication about current developments in ASEAN region, especially in the Political Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

SUMMARY

This issue of ASEAN Briefs examines the issue of the ASEAN Economic Community 2015, the free movement of labor and migrant workers' rights. In particular, it addresses the concerns that the upcoming ASEAN Economic Community which is premised on the free movement of labor, will bring about a boom in the number of migrant workers moving in the region. However with the vast majority of ASEAN's migrant workers operating in the informal sector (and very little to indicate that this will change once the ASEAN Economic Community is in place), there are serious worries that incidents of migrant workers' abuse will worsen.

As such this issue of ASEAN Briefs seeks to explore how ASEAN intends to cope with these serious worries, what progress it has made towards addressing those worries, and how, as its member-states, we can help in addressing these policy issues as well as the labor issues that have resulted in this.



Issue 4/May 2014
Small and Medium Enterprises' Access to Finance in ASEAN Countries: Innovations and Regional Cooperation

ASEAN Briefs is a regular publication about current developments in ASEAN region, especially in the Political Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

SUMMARY

Access to finance for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is vital for development. State-led programmes in Southeast Asia countries have been a common practice in microfinance and built a foundation especially in agriculture sector. However, many of the government initiatives in SMEs financing have not been sustainable, since state budgets were allocated for many programmes and not just for SMEs financing. Besides that, governments have limitations on projecting business sustainability on those initiatives were not efficient and profitable in their operations. Therefore, innovations are needed for responding to these problems.

Innovations in providing more financial services in the ASEAN region should focus on those following issues: private sector development in exploring the potential market in SMEs' financing; sufficient government intervention on regulatory and supervisory framework; focus on export financing partnerships with social organizations; and providing financial literacy to consumers.



Issue 5/June 2014
The Bali Concord III: Towards a More Common ASEAN Platform on Global Issues

ASEAN Briefs is a regular publication about current developments in ASEAN region, especially in the Political Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

SUMMARY

This issue of ASEAN Briefs examines the Bali Concord III which was adopted by the ten member-states of ASEAN in 2001. One of the key documents produced during Indonesia's 2011 Chairmanship of ASEAN, the Bali Concord III pledged ASEAN to a number of commitments to be achieved by 2025. Chief among them was to: (a) increasingly speak in a common voice on international matters of mutual concern at related international forums; and (b) to enhance ASEAN's capacity to respond and contribute solutions to those global matters.

However, the commitments raised some question marks given the extreme diversity that exists in the ASEAN region. ASEAN countries are divided not only in terms of history, culture, geography, economic development, and language but crucially also in their political systems. How possible is it to get all ten ASEAN member-states, each with their own individual national interests, to adopt a common regional position and implement a unified policy on global issues?



Issue 6/July 2014
The AICHR and NHRI Effectiveness in Its Implementation of Human Rights Protection in The Region. Case Studies: The Philippines and Thailand

ASEAN Briefs is a regular publication about current developments in ASEAN region, especially in the Political Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

SUMMARY

This edition of ASEAN Briefs examines the effectiveness of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the importance of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) and the implementation of human rights protection in ASEAN Member States. This ASEAN Briefs addresses the current situation and development of human rights protection in ASEAN, which is premised on the presence of a human rights body at the regional level and human rights commission at the national level to bring better protection of human rights in ASEAN. However with existence of various unresolved cases of human rights violations such as enforced disappearance, use of violence by the military and police against civilians, and extrajudicial killings, etc., there are concerns that human rights violations in the region will continue to take place.

As such this issue of ASEAN Briefs seeks to explore how ASEAN deals with these serious human rights violations, whether the regional human rights mechanism can work effectively per states sought to human rights at the regional level, and the role of ASEAN Briefs.



Vol. 2 / Issue 1 / September 2014
Strengthening Regional Security Architecture: Ensuring ASEAN Centrality through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

ASEAN Briefs is a regular publication about current developments in ASEAN region, especially in the Political Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

SUMMARY

Strengthening regional security architecture by ensuring ASEAN centrality is a major agenda for Asia-Pacific's stability. The changing nature of power distribution in the region becomes a major underlying factor to form a solid security platform to create regional stability. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is one such security platform in the Asia-Pacific. Accordingly, ASEAN as the driver of the ARF wants to form the regional security architecture with ASEAN Centrality being the core equilibrium.

Yet, this ASEAN Briefs found the ARF still faces several weaknesses in shaping the regional security agenda. First, the ASEAN approach in leading the ARF as a multilateral diplomatic process still heavily relies on consensus. Second, the ARF has structural problems, where such ARF members have their own perception of the security agenda in the region. Third, there is scepticism among the ARF members about ASEAN leadership itself.

In order to ensure ASEAN Centrality within the ARF, this ASEAN Briefs conclude three main policy recommendations: (1) ASEAN should focus more on strengthening and improving the "ASEAN Way", moving beyond its comfort zone of non-interference and "the pace comfortable to all"; (2) ARF should focus on pursuing a problem-oriented agenda that could lead to the formation of Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms in the ARF; and (3) ARF should have leadership consistency, in which the establishment of a permanent ARF Secretariat becomes one of the concrete options.



Vol. 2 / Issue 2 / October 2014
Removing Infrastructure Bottlenecks to Increase Indonesia's Competitiveness towards the ASEAN Economic Community

ASEAN Briefs is a regular publication about current developments in ASEAN region, especially in the Political Security, Economic as well as Socio-Cultural Pillars.

SUMMARY

Facing the ASEAN Economic Community, which takes into effect on December 31, 2015, requires high competitiveness in order to gain the benefits from it. Among ASEAN member countries, Indonesia is one of the countries which have low competitiveness. This is due to insufficient infrastructure in Indonesia. The government of Indonesia is facing many obstacles in developing infrastructure. This edition of ASEAN Briefs shows that there are at least four main problems hindering infrastructure development in Indonesia, namely: financing issue, land acquisition problem, lack of capacity in implementing projects, and lack of coordination. If the upcoming government does not resolve these problems, Indonesian companies will struggle to compete with other ASEAN member-states when the ASEAN Economic Community takes place.

Therefore, this ASEAN Briefs will (1) examine Indonesia's current state of readiness ahead of the ASEAN Economic Community 2015 in terms of infrastructure and competitiveness, (2) the obstacles and challenges facing the new government in developing infrastructure, and (3) give possible recommendations to the new government in order to increase Indonesia's infrastructure and competitiveness ahead of the ASEAN Economic Community 2015.