

1. Project overview

1.1 Background

The ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Project was initiated by the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation. The main goals of the AFSIS are to: facilitate food security planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in ASEAN countries through systematic collection, organisation, management, analysis and dissemination of food security data and information. The first phase of the operation began in 2003 and was completed by 2007. The Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand is the agencies responsible for execution, whilst funding is provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan via ASEAN Trust Funds.

Before the completion of the AFSIS's first phase, during the 5th Meeting of the ASEAN Plus Three Agriculture and Forestry Ministers on the 30th of September 2005 in the Philippines, the ministers expressed recognition of the AFSIS's contribution to promoting the concept of regional food security and the importance of continuing to provide and improving the availability of food security information throughout the ASEAN plus three member countries. Therefore, the ministers also agreed to continue the project beyond the 1st phase thus initiating a second phase from 2008 to 2012.

At the 12th ASEAN Plus Three Summit held on the 24th of October 2009 in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, the ministers, on the topic of ASEAN Plus Three food security and bio-energy, reemphasised a need for improving the food security situation in the ASEAN community and supported the AFSIS framework and the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN region (SPA-FS). The leaders agreed to strengthen the ASEAN Plus Three partnership by further developing the AFSIS project to assist the increase in food security through the regional mechanism of the ASEAN Plus Three agricultural cooperation framework.

Guided by the above leaders' policy to increase available food security information and the previous achievements of the AFSIS project, multiple consultations took place to clarify and make necessary preparations for the "Post-2012 AFSIS". These preparations aided the integration of AFSIS and its continued efforts to improve ASEAN Plus Three's regional food security.

Thus AFSIS has moved on to prioritising its transition into a permanent structure and its integration into the numerous ASEAN countries, this phase is intended to last from 2013-2015.

1.2 Objectives

The vision which the AFSIS aspires towards is to be able to provide accurate, reliable and timely food security information and to become the major hub of food security information in the ASEAN region. However, for the next three years, the project must focus on attaining self-reliance and thus its main objectives for this period are as follows:

- 1) To foster strengthening of national food security information organizations as well as promote and strengthen a regional food security information system as a basis for food security cooperation in the ASEAN Plus Three region;
- 2) To provide regular food security information reports and policy advisory services to APT countries with continuing core activities which have accomplished through AFSIS Phase 1 & 2 project and tackle new data needs;
- 3) To provide national and regional information for planning and policy making on food security and commodity price volatility;
- 4) To develop and implement of projects (e.g. research, capacity building, etc.) as well as promote cooperation among other dialogue partners, development partners (e.g. FAO, World Bank, ADB, APTERR) and other international/regional collaborative platforms in support of food security information and development of its systems in the APT region; and
- 5) To establish self-reliant mechanism through proper in-cash and/or in-kind contribution among APT member countries and introducing external contribution such as ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Fund, reward of information supply from APTERR.

1.3 Project Components

In order for the AFSIS to function effectively, it has been split into two main components for operation. This has been done to prevent these differing disciplines from hampering each other's progress. These components are: human resource development and information network development.

1.3.1 Human Resource Development

One of the projects main aims is to increase each member state's ability to collect, store and to some extent analyse agricultural information relevant to national and regional food security. To achieve this, the AFSIS organised and host regional seminars and workshops to provide relevant personnel with the training necessary to ensure that the project can be implemented to the required standard.

After the project entered its second phase of operation, the national seminars and training were replaced by mutual technical cooperation. The main procedure, therefore, transitioned from an instructional basis into a system focused on sharing of experiences, where more advanced member states are urged to assist the weaker states to improve the AFSIS's operational activities.

1.3.2 Information Network Development

This component is the heart of the AFSIS and has the intention of becoming the ASEAN community's primary source of food security information. During the first phase of operation, the information network was drafted and began being pieced together, so that member states will be able to gain access to the required data. Creation of the database and acquirement of computer hardware such as PCs, printers and software for each member state was also achieved.

After the initiation of the second phase, the project's focus has shifted from development and of the network infrastructure, to enhancement of the database and improving data analysis. The "Early Warning Information (EWI) Report" and The "Agricultural Commodity Outlook (ACO)" Report were put in place to monitor food security. In addition, necessary hardwares were also supplied to member states.

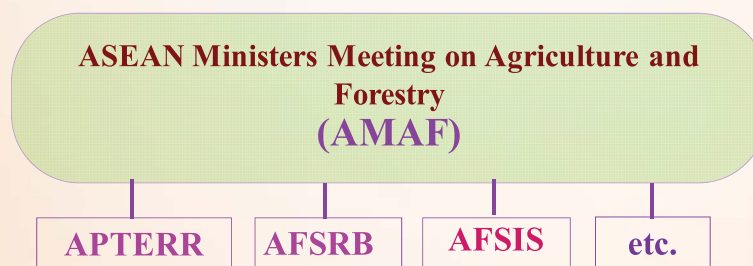
1.4 Institutional Administration

The ASEAN Food Security Information System Project will be transformed into a series of "AFSIS Network Centres (AFSIS NCs)" in each member state, which will be governed by the AFSIS Board through coordination with the AFSIS secretariat.

The AFSIS NCs will be an evolution of the 10-year ASEAN Food Security Information System Project, which will be established under the

ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Framework – as a subsidiary body under the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Plus Three (AMAF+3) and the Senior Officials' Meeting of AMAF Plus Three (SOM-AMAF+3), through a phased approach towards becoming a permanent body.

Status of AFSIS



as Subsidiary body under AMAF and AMAF+3

Structural Body of AFSIS



1.5 Project Financing

The Project was implemented under financial support provided by a Trust Fund, which the MAFF Japan has agreed to provide through the ASEAN Secretariat over the Project period. Member States are entitled to make contributions to the Project by designating the Focal Points and staff to work on the Project. They also provide facilities such as computers and telecommunication equipment and other necessary arrangements to ensure the efficient implementation of the Project. Other contributing organisations are the ADB, FAO and GIZ (German government).

2. Implemented Activities and Achievements in 2012

The following are the major activities implemented in year 2012

2.1 Administrative Activities

1) The sixth Director-General of Agricultural Statistics and Information in ASEAN Plus Three Countries (DG-ASI) Meeting and the 10th Focal Point Meeting (FPM)

The joint annual meeting between the DG-ASI in ASEAN Plus Three countries meeting and the FPM, which was held on February in Japan, focuses on the post second phase plan and direction. The main objective of the meeting was to provide policy guidance on the implementation of the AFSIS as a self-sustained mechanism under the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation.

The meeting has discussed mainly on the future plan of the AFSIS. The statistical experience on provision for natural disaster assessment were also discussed among country members in particular in Thailand and Japan. Thailand faced difficulties in food distribution due to the flood near the end of 2011 while Japan also had to cope with the Great East Japan Earthquake and large-scale typhoons in the same year. This led to the discussion on the prevention mechanism. The meeting also took note that the information derived from AFSIS allows better damage assessment and recovery planning. Therefore, the meeting sought out for an enhancement of the Early Warning Information System of the AFSIS as the countermeasure in dealing with natural disaster. After this there was a discussion on AFSIS's future structure, products and services. The meeting agreed that AFSIS's structure will consist of network centers in each of the ASEAN Plus Three nations, a secretariat hosted in Thailand and a board comprised a representative from each member nation which nominated by DG-ASI. However, it was also agreed at the meeting that the structure needs to be made clearer in the near future. As for the products and services provided, the AFSIS must remain competitive and provide a unique product in comparison to the already existing external data services. The AFSIS will also be made to link with other ASEAN initiatives in the area of food security. Lastly, the financing of the new self-sustaining AFSIS must be covered by the AMS in kind and in cash. The Plus Three nations will support only the new initiatives of the AFSIS. However, the whole of the ASEAN Plus Three

agreed to pay their share in order to make the AFSIS operation successful.

The FPM's objectives are to discuss and prepare work plans on both national and regional level including matters relevant to the project. The new AFSIS website and database need to be improved as the existing website was outdated and the database was lacked of an ability to relate the information. The lack of ability to relate data was overcome by adding the relational database management system (RDBMS) to the existing database. Members of the meeting were also urged to use social networking to promote the AFSIS. The AFSIS learning program's upcoming changes and new programmes to be implemented were also detailed. Furthermore, the Agricultural Land Information System (ALIS) which had been piloted in Lao PDR and Cambodia and is used to estimate land usage statistically was also discussed. The ALIS has great potential and AFSIS plans to update and use ALIS in the rest of 2012. Lastly, the 2012 work plan, the AFSIS structure, the products and services were then discussed and agreed upon. However, a need for further development was noted.



The 6th DG-ASI and 10th FP meeting during 14-16 March 2012, Tokyo, Japan

2) The Consultation Meeting

The Consultation Meeting on “ASEAN Plus Three Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Mechanism” was held on 22-24 October 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Meeting was attended by the Focal Points and their delegates from ASEAN Member States (AMS), Japan and Republic of Korea. The objectives of the Meeting were to discuss issues related to AFSIS database and activities as well as transitional preparation and arrangement of the ASEAN Food Security Information System Project to a self-sustained AFSIS mechanism.

The meeting focused on transitional preparation and arrangement of the ASEAN Food Security Information System Project to a self-sustained AFSIS mechanism under the implementation of work plan 2013- 2015 of AFSIS comprising: i) structure and management; ii) products and services; iii) financial modality; and iv) TOR and ROP. Furthermore, It included AFSIS collaborations implemented in ASEAN region, and progress of AFSIS activities as well.





The Consultation Meeting during 22-24 October 2012, Bangkok, Thailand

2.2 Information Network Development

The database must be updated on an annual basis and requires regular validation. The Project ensured that the quality of the data meets its international standard and that the project website is thoroughly maintained in order to use it as a major communication and distribution channel. Other major activities included under this category are :

- 1) EWI Development** : Every ASEAN Plus Three member state were asked to submit EWI country reports to the AFSIS Secretariat for analysis in order for the AFSIS to be able to produce regional EWI reports on rice, maize, sugarcane, soybean and cassava for bi-annual publication on March and September. The information include in this report are planted and harvested area, production, yield and damaged area as well as crop condition.
- 2) ACO Development** : In much the same manner, the AFSIS project will analyse data provided by member states to produce regional reports on rice, maize, sugarcane, soybean and

cassava. These reports will also be released bi-annually except the ACO reports will be published on June and December. The data content in ACO report are similar to EWI report with the balance sheet of each commodity, import and export, food security ratio, self - sufficiency ratio and FOB/ CIF prices are included. There will also be meetings of ACO Committee prior to publications so that member states are able to scrutinize the data and information for its accuracy and consistency.



The 9th ACO meeting 18-19 December 2012, Kanchanaburi, Thailand

2.3 Human Resource Development

1) Mutual Technical Cooperation : In 2012 Thailand and Vietnam were paired together which Thailand is the resource country while Vietnam is the recipient country. The objectives of this program were to: provide the participants with general information on Thailand's current national and agricultural statistical systems; provide the participants with sample survey design, data collection technique, data analysis and related knowledge; provide the participants with the real practice in agricultural survey which were conducted in Thailand.

There was also a 5 day follow-up site visit after the training with the intention of allowing the participants to observe the National Statistical Office (NSO), practice in a real agricultural survey and to visit some of Thailand's local statistical offices of NSO and OAE.



Vietnam-Thailand Mutual Technical Cooperation

2) Training Course/Workshops

- **Preparing Food Security Policy Briefs**

AFSIS in partnership with the EC-FAO Food Security Programme organized a training course on "Food Security Policy Briefs" at Grand Mercure Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand during 28-31 August 2012. The workshop provided participants with the basics knowledge on how to prepare a Food Security Policy Brief.

- **Advanced Learning Programme for ASEAN Food Security Professionals - Year 2**

AFSIS in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) organized workshop for participants who successfully completed the 2011 e- Learning Programme. The workshop consist of 2 parts which are

- a) Online Workshop : The online Workshop started from 24 September to 12 October 2012. This online format is equivalent to 10 hours a week, for a total of 30 study hours.

b) Face-2-Face Workshop : The Workshop was open for participants who passed the online workshop. The Workshop was organized at the Office of Agricultural Economics, Bangkok, Thailand during 20-29 November 2012.



Training on Advanced Learning Programme for ASEAN Food Security Professionals - Year 2 during 20-29 November 2012, Bangkok, Thailand

2.4 Activity of the Japanese Expert

The activities of the Japanese expert during 2012 are as follows:

- 1) Continued study into the feasibility of the application of the ALIS program in Lao PDR and Cambodia.
- 2) ALIS program verification based on the performance in Lao PDR and Cambodia feasibility study.
- 3) Sample area verification based on the Lao PDR and Cambodia study.
- 4) Modification of the ALIS program based on previous studies.
- 5) Attending AFSIS related meetings and seminars.
- 6) Writing the ALIS program studies as a professional report.

3. AFSIS 10 Year Achievements

3.1 AFSIS Database Development

The database is comprised of information on production, trade and domestic consumption of staple foods which are important to food security. The crop include are rice, maize, sugar, cassava and soy bean. The database also includes information on demographics, labour, GDP and land use as well as several other topics. The information contained within the database starts from 1985 up to the present year.

3.2 AFSIS Website Development

The AFSIS website can be found at www.afsisnc.org. The website was created for concerned official relate to food security analysis in AMS and general public to gain easy access to the database and to provide a more user friendly interface with which to do so. The department concerned of AMS was urged to utilize the social networking as a means of increasing user traffic and spreading knowledge of the department to the outside world.

3.3 Early Warning Information (EWI) Reports

The EWI report published twice a year in March and September. Nine reports have been released to date. The report is made available through the AFSIS website.

3.4 Agricultural Commodity Outlook (ACO) Reports

The ACO reports is published bi-annually in June and December. There have been 9 releases to date. This report can be accessed through AFSIS website.

3.5 Agricultural Land Information System (ALIS)

In order to improve the data provided by Lao PDR and Cambodia and to equalise with all the other ASEAN member states, the AFSIS project has assigned the Japanese expert, Mr Shoji Kimura, to review the data collection and processing procedure in these two countries since March 2011. This activities has been carried out with the cooperation between the Focal Points and the officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry from each country. The project created a program which was adapted from map application software as a framework for conducting agricultural survey in order to reach satisfactory standards at a low cost.

3.6 Training Courses

The training courses were organised under the human resource development program of AFSIS for agricultural statistics officers and information system staff of ASEAN member states in order to make them more effective and high capability in food security data collection and analysis. Since 2003 the AFSIS has provided 24 training courses to 510 different people.

3.7 Mutual Technical Cooperation

As already mentioned, this cooperation has the aim to raise the technological ability and capacity of ASEAN member states through a means of training course and technical visit. ASEAN member states are set into pairs, one with higher capability in the interested field is called resource country while the other side which has lower skill is called recipient country. Two activities of mutual technical cooperation are as follows :

- 1) Training Courses

An expert from the resource country is dispatched to the recipient country to instruct relevant staff members on the subject that is required.

- 2) Technical Visits

After the training course is completed the recipient country sends their staff members to visit the resource country for a short period to observe the real practice and follow up on what they have learned from the training course.

Since 2009 the AFSIS has organised 7 mutual technical cooperation.

4. Future Work Plan

4.1 Work Plan 2013

Apart from the old activities that were implemented during the 2nd Phase of the AFSIS, the new activities will be added. Among others, the “Development of mid to long term food supply and demand forecasting” will be carried out in 2013. The development of food supply and demand forecasting in the mid to long run is very important as the outcome of the model allows us to predict which area could potentially be at risk of food insecurity and can promote smooth workflow in other agricultural projects. To achieve the goal of this scheme, data collection and enlarging the existing database will be needed for model formulation. This scheme will be implemented after a series of meetings, workshops, training sessions, and seminars throughout the year.

In the first quarter of the year there will be a meeting and a workshop held in Bangkok. The objective of the meeting is to examine estimation formulas and modelling for the scheme. They will also target the data items used for mid-long term food supply and demand forecasting models that will be used by the concerned authorities of AMS. While the workshop aims to increase understanding of supply and demand forecasting technique within the ASEAN Plus Three member states. There will also be a secondary focus for the workshop, which will be the expansion and creation of new commodity forecasts and to ensure that the necessary data can be collected.

In the second quarter there will be a training session held in either Japan or Bangkok, where the participants will have a chance to study the methodology used for mid-long term forecasting. The target commodity for the first year will be rice, which is the main staple food in the region.

In the third and fourth quarters of the year, a support session will be held to provide individual guidance for model building in each member state; look over estimation equations and its results and modify them if necessary. There will also be a seminar held to consider the results of each individual country's forecasts. The final activity of the year will be to rebuild the model and collate all the data collected from each country needed for forecasting model.

In summary for the year 2013, the AFSIS will have to broaden the data items necessary for creating the mid-long term supply and demand forecasting; create and distribute the mid-long term supply and demand forecast; provide specialised training to each member country's

agricultural statistics offices. Finally, the secretariat will also produce an activity report and an accounting report made available to the concerned parties.

4.2 Work Plan from 2014 to 2015

Before transforming into a full operational stage in 2016, the AFSIS will have to carry out a three year “Establishment” phase from 2013-2015. This phase will focus on the following areas: Institutional Administrative Arrangement, Products and Services and Financial Modality. This work plan has already approved and endorsed by the 12th AMAF+3 Meeting in Vientiane.

4.2.1 Institutional Administrative Arrangement

As previously stated, the AFSIS will comprise of a system of network centres, a secretariat, a board and focal points. The Board members will be the Directors-General of the Agricultural Statistics and Information departments of every member state.

The Network Centres will comprise of a single network centre in each member state. Each network centre shall coordinate and manage AFSIS activities in consultation with the secretariat and the MAFF of Japan. This requires that the network centres keep open and consistent lines of communication with the aforementioned parties. The NC's will be overseen by the Secretariat, the MAFF of Japan and also the SOM-AMAF leader of each country.

The AFSIS secretariat will remain attached to the OAE of Thailand, but will require expansion in order to achieve the goals set. It will be responsible for: assisting the AFSIS activity implementation and services ; coordinating with local NCs and other agencies ; publishing and producing related reports and forecasts.

Finance will be provided in-kind by Thailand, in cash through international organisations, the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation fund and the Plus 3 countries through ASEAN Trust Fund as well as in cash and in-kind contribution from AMS.

4.2.2 AFSIS Products and services

AFSIS will be focusing on four main products though the cooperation with ASEAN Plus Three which are:

- Food Security Database
- Integrated Food Security Information
- Training and Capacity Development
- Cross Cutting and New Areas

1) Food Security Database

The Database will be maintained by the secretariat and NCs will provide the secretariat with yearly updates through the AFSIS website. If there is a need to revise the data, the NCs are permitted to make the required changes to the database. These activities will be supported in-kind by Thailand and server location will be provided through international organisations and the ASEAN Plus Three

cooperation fund or the Plus 3 countries through ASEAN Trust Fund.

2) The Integrated Food Security Information

The Integrated Food Security Information comprise 5 products as follows :

2.1) Early Warning Information (EWI)

The regular EWI will be published twice a year, March and September. The information will be sent by each NC to the secretariat who will then analyse and aggregate it to provide the regional report on the AFSIS website. This activity will be a priority during the three years establishment period and will build on existing initiatives to help expand on key early warning indicators. EC-FAO will provide technical support and organise a workshop.

2.2) Agricultural Commodity Outlook (ACO)

ACO country report will be forwarded to the Secretariat continuously and regularly by AMS countries for producing a regional report. The first ACO committee meeting will be held in 2014 and will be funded by the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation fund. ACO information that agreed upon after the meeting will be posted on the AFSIS website. In the year without a meeting, an expert will be dispatched

to each member state to scrutinise the data if necessary.

2.3) Food Security Forecasting Model

During the establishment period, Japanese expert will generate a mid-long term supply and demand forecasts for those countries who are able to supply the necessary information. The AFSIS Secretariat intend to hire a consultant to help in data collection and model development and then to hold a workshop after one year to check the accuracy of the forecasting results produced by the models. The cost of the consultant will be covered by international organisations and dialogue partners.

2.4) Food Security Policy Briefs

Preliminary arrangements with key data sources are already made to produce food security policy brief. So the next step is to determine the report frequency. The information will be reported to the SOM-AMAF+3 and AMAF+3 meetings regularly. The EC-FAO will support by providing technical guidance.

2.5) ASEAN Food Security Analysis Report (AFSAR)

The AFSIS Secretariat will prepare AFSAR alongside of a consultant by using statistical data gathered from various agencies throughout the year. The first report is intended for publication in 2014. The cost of the consultant will be covered by the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation fund or the ASEAN Trust Fund.

3) Training and Capacity Development

Training and capacity development will be conducted by holding at least one training course per year in either China or Korea with financial and in-kind support by the country hosting the course. The EC-FAO will provide a technical training. When the forecasting model is tested successfully, there will be a workshop to standardise with the international sources and to provide a training for related staff of AMS. The ASEAN Food Security Knowledge Sharing Platform will be established to be a learning platform for ASEAN food security professionals.

4) Cross Cutting and New Areas

Cross cutting and new areas consist of four main topics as follows:

4.1) Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis Tool (FAPDA)

AFSIS will collaborate with EC-FAO to incorporate FAPDA as a part of AFSIS information, which AFSIS will use this tool to analyse and monitor the various effects of policies such as price stability and production promotion on food security in each member state. This is another attempt to alleviate the negative impact of disaster and economic crisis through the use of all sources of information. EC-FAO will provide technical support for the database improvement and organising of the training courses.

4.2) The AFSIS Website and Integrated Knowledge Sharing Platform

The AFSIS Website and Integrated Knowledge Sharing Platform, which will be used to promote and share knowledge on food security, will be established. Main focus points during the next three years will be : conducting a needs assessment; determination of a technical tool to be used for the

network and facilitation requirements ; developing the web-based platform.

4.3) Global Food Security Information Network (FSIN)

AFSIS will collaborate with FAO as an alliance of the which network aim to build capacities on food and nutrition security information network, strengthen the link between data collection and analysis, information dissemination, and decision making on food and nutrition security as well as promote food and nutrition security information as a global network.

4.4) The Climate Change and Food Security

AFSIS will coordinate with the ASEAN working group on climate change and will support and update as well as share information on the impact of climate change on food security as a means of disaster management.

4.2.3 Financial Modality

When transforming into a permanent mechanism, the Plus Three countries intend to support initially for the AFSIS while the ASEAN member states will also provide in-kind and in-cash contributions to allow AFSIS to be a self-sufficiency mechanism. During the establishment period, rules and procedures will be developed and agreed upon by member

states to make the AFSIS operate smoothly when shifted to the permanent mechanism. During the transition period while the rules are unclear and AFSIS operations are not yet well set up, contributions are expected from international organisations, the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation fund and the Plus 3 countries through ASEAN Trust Fund. Operational costs covered by the above sources will include the cost related to organising the meeting such as air fare and DSA for participations.

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Content

	Page
1. Project Overview	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Objectives	2
1.3 Project Components	4
1.3.1 Human Resource Development	4
1.3.2 Information Network Development	5
1.4 Institutional Administration	5
1.5 Project Financing	7
2. Implemented Activities and Achievements in 2012	7
2.1 Administrative Activities	7
2.2 Information Network Development	11
2.3 Human Resource Development	13
2.4 Activities of the Japanese Expert	15
3. AFSIS 10 Year Achievements	16
3.1 AFSIS Database Development	16
3.2 AFSIS Website Development	16
3.3 Early Warning Information (EWI) Reports	16
3.4 Agricultural Commodity Outlook (ACO) Reports	16
3.5 Agricultural Land Information System (ALIS)	17
3.6 Training Courses	17
3.7 Mutual Technical Cooperation	17

Content(cont.)

	Page
4. Future Work Plan	18
4.1 Work Plan 2013	18
4.2 Work Plan from 2014 to 2015	20
4.2.1 Institutional Administrative Arrangement	20
4.2.2 AFSIS Products and Services	21
4.2.3 Financial Modality	26
 Annex	
1. List of Director Generals of Agricultural Statistics and Information (DG-ASI) in ASEAN Plus Three Countries	28
2. List of Focal Point (FP) Persons of AFSIS Project	31

Preface

The ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Project was implemented through cooperation with the ASEAN Plus Three with financial backing provided by the Japanese government. The Project's major objective is to ensure the increase in food security throughout the ASEAN Plus Three region through a systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of food security information. The 1st Phase of the Project began in 2003 to 2007 and was extended into a 2nd Phase of operation from 2008 to 2012. Due to the project's success and potential, the AMAF endorsed the project's transitional period to become a permanent mechanism. This annual report will detail the procedure by which the project will transform into a permanent structure and its achievement throughout 2012. The information contained in this report is intended to keep the concerned ASEAN Plus Three parties abreast of the AFSIS's activities and success. From 2013 to 2015 the project must meet certain prerequisites in order to be properly accepted as a self-reliant structure.

The AFSIS Project was once again recognised for its achievement during the 12th meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry plus Three (AMAF+3) held on September 2012 in Lao PDR. During the meeting, the ministers also gave their endorsement for the AFSIS's transition into a self-reliant and permanent structure. The AFSIS Secretariat would also like to take this opportunity to express its sincere appreciation to all Member States, the Government of Japan, the ASEAN Secretariat, Asian Development Bank and other partnership concerned parties especially the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand and Dr. Apichart Pongsrihadulchai, AFSIS Consultant for their kind support and participation in the implementation of the Project.

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