

## Flash Report

The ASEAN-EU Year of Science, Technology and Innovation 2012 was officially launched on 16th November 2011 in Hanoi, Vietnam, by **EU Ambassador Designate, Franz Jessen**, and **Vietnamese Deputy Minister of Science and Technology, Lê Đình Tiễn**, in presence of several EU Member States Ambassadors and high-level officials from ASEAN Member States.

The overall objective of the "Year" is to **highlight, promote and extend EU-Southeast Asia STI cooperation**. The "Year" is the first of its kind, in which our bi regional cooperation with an emerging region will be highlighted. It should ultimately be driven by a wide range of stakeholders from the two regions. These would include S&T policy makers, universities and research organizations, as well as technology-based companies from Europe and Southeast Asia. Information on the "Year" activities will be regularly updated [here](#).

ASEAN<sup>1</sup> is today the **EU's second largest trade partner in Asia**. ASEAN economies enjoy impressive growth rates. The ASEAN economy is today the third largest in the region after China and Japan. During the last three years, ASEAN has implemented an ambitious programme of institutional and financial reform with the aim of forming an **ASEAN Community by 2015**. At the same time, ASEAN is clearly emerging as the motor for multilateral co-operation in the wider region of East Asia, as testified by its central role in the region's prominent groupings of ASEAN Plus Three (China, South Korea and Japan).

The "Year" was initially proposed by the **INCO-NET "SEA-EU-NET" project** as a core activity of SEA-EU-NET's work programme (2011-2012). Another interesting deliverable of the project is an analysis paper on national priorities to inform the policy dialogue between the two regions and to develop a greater understanding of ASEAN research strengths and priorities as well as of current patterns of cooperation between Europe and Southeast Asia.

DG RTD will be involved in a series of activities in support of the "Year" including at the occasion of the **visit of Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn to Singapore** in March 2012. Some of these activities will be supported by DG DEVCO through the Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (READI facility). A meeting with the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta prior to the conference in Hanoi has allowed to discuss and agree on the modalities of READI support to these activities.

The **bi-regional S&T policy dialogue with ASEAN** was engaged in 2008 and formalised in 2010 through the signature of Terms of Reference. It provides today tangible results in terms of joint priority setting and increasing ASEAN participation in FP7 (181 ASEAN participants in mainlisted proposals to date, representing about 20% of total Asian participation). Bi-regional cooperation is a developing feature of our strategy for international STI cooperation. The "Year" will provide more visibility to our cooperation with ASEAN in a non conventional way. The **closing event** of the "Year" will take place in Europe in November 2012 where the importance of EU-ASEAN STI cooperation will be measured and put in a longer-term perspective.

Laurent Bochereau

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<sup>1</sup> The Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 by the five original Member Countries, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam joined on 8 January 1984, Vietnam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999.