

X. Supporting Activities towards the Establishment of ERIA

JETRO has conducted supporting activities for the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) aimed at the Asian economic integration, for contributing to policy implementations of Japan's "New Economic Growth Strategy Revision" approved by the Cabinet on September 19, 2008.

1. Objective of Activities

The objective of the activities is to contribute to policy efforts to promote both comprehensive development of the Asian economy and Japan's growth in collaboration with the relevant organizations such as the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), by supporting the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), an international institute established by the 16 East Asia Summit member countries to make policy research and policy recommendations towards the wider East Asian economic integration.

In FY2008, ERIA research projects were conducted under the research pillars of "Deepening Integration," "Narrowing the Development Gaps" and "Sustainable Development." Specifically, these projects studied on deepening economic integration, development of East Asia Industrial Corridor, development strategy for the CLMV countries, and environment & recycling. Also, ERIA capacity building programs were carried out for policy-makers and researchers of the CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) to strengthen their policy-research and policy-proposing capabilities. Another activity was to organize ERIA-related events to disseminate its research findings and to encourage the exchange among industry, government and academia in the region. In addition, JETRO served as a secretariat of the Research Institutes Network (RIN), which consists of the institutes from the 16 countries to support ERIA.

The establishment of ERIA was officially agreed at the 3rd East Asia Summit in Singapore on November 21, 2007. On June 3, 2008, ERIA was successfully brought into being at the Inaugural Governing Board Meeting of ERIA in Jakarta, with attendance of the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the representatives from the countries in the region, to start its full-fledged activities.

2. Activities in FY2008

In close linkage with the 15 research institutes of the region and in consultation with METI, IDE-JETRO has been working on various activities including research projects, capacity building, dissemination of research findings and secretariat for RIN, with JETRO Bangkok Research Center as a local administrative office for such activities and in cooperation with JETRO's Overseas Research Department and overseas offices.

1) Research Project

With collaboration from the research institutes of the 16 countries (ASEAN 10 plus Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand) including IDE-JETRO, a series of research projects were conducted under the three research pillars of "Deepening Integration," "Narrowing the Development Gaps" and "Sustainable Development." Four policy research projects with five research agendas were contract researches sponsored by ERIA towards the East Asian economic integration, and the other four independent research projects in Bangkok etc. were to promote regional economic integration in line with the national interests of Japan.

At the ASEAN Economic Ministers Plus Six Working Lunch in Singapore on August 28, 2008, a summary of 2007 ERIA research projects, major findings, policy recommendations and issues for further research was presented to the region's ministers.

<ERIA policy research projects sponsored by ERIA>

- (1) Deepening East Asia Economic Integration
- (2)-1 Development of Regional Production and Logistic Networks in East Asia
- (2)-2 Mekong-India Economic Corridor Development
- (3) Research on Development Strategy for CLMV Countries
- (4) 3R Policies in Southeast and East Asia

<Independent research projects for the national interest of Japan>

- (1) Facts Findings, Policy Recommendations, and Future Research Issues from FY2007 ERIA Research Projects
- (2) Major Industries and Business Chance in CLMV Countries from the Viewpoint of the Japanese Private Sector

(3) China/Japan Comparison of its Influences on CLMV Countries

(4) Food Security in East Asia and Japan's Role – New Approach for Greater Mekong Sub-region Cooperation

2) Capacity Building

Capacity building programs with various curriculums were designed, focusing on practical issues such as economic integration, trade & investment and industrial policy, in accordance with the needs and requests from the countries in the region. These activities aimed at improving policy-research and policy-proposing capabilities of policy-makers and researchers of the region, in particular the CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) in the face of manpower shortage of researchers.

IDE-JETRO conducted the three programs; domestic programs of “2-week course in Japan” and “Short course in Japan” and overseas program of “Dispatch of Lectures in CLMV countries,” in which 340 people participated from 5 countries, mainly from the CLMV countries.

3) Seminar / Symposium

Seminars and symposiums were held 5 times in 4 cities of the region in collaboration with ERIA, ASEAN Secretariat, JETRO overseas offices and others, with the aim of encouraging East Asian economic integration, nurturing a sense of community in the region, promoting ERIA's activities and disseminating its research findings. These events were to encourage the exchange among industry, government and academia and to develop mutual understanding with the civil society of the region.

On December 5, 2008, ERIA held a large symposium in Tokyo titled, “Energy and Food Strategy for Sustainable Economic Growth in East Asia,” co-organized by JETRO and the ASEAN Secretariat, and supported by METI, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), and Nikkei Inc..

4) Secretariat of the Research Institutes Network

The Research Institutes Network (RIN) was formed by the research institutes from the 16 countries, in order to support ERIA's activities through providing ERIA with research outcomes and information as well as giving advice to ERIA's research agenda and policy recommendations. JETRO has played a leading part in handling the Research Institutes Network Meetings, as IDE-JETRO is a member

of RIN representing Japan and JETRO Bangkok Research Center has served as RIN's administrative office. The meetings were held twice in Bangkok on August 9, 2008 and February 24, 2009.

On November 10, 2008 in Jakarta, ERIA and JETRO organized a policy proposal discussion titled, “The ERIA Food Meeting on Asian Food Strategy for Sustainable Economic Growth,” inviting experts on food issues from the 16 research institutes, World Bank and Asian Development Bank. The discussion outcome was released as “ERIA Policy Brief.”