

Concept note

Webinar on A stronger ASEAN response to potential transboundary haze events in the wake of pandemic

4 August 2020 | 09:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M. (GMT+7)

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has been changing the world, creating enormous impacts on communities in urban and rural areas. From immediate response to contain the spread of the virus and efforts to strengthen health systems, the discussion on the pandemic has shifted to possible impacts to other sectors outside of the health systems and innovative ways of adapting to the “New Normal”. The notion that the COVID-19 pandemic has been good for the environment due to air quality improvements may be temporary. With lockdown easing, there is risk of more pollution and worsen climate change as the economy recovers. In the context of land and forest fires and the wake of the pandemic, calls for increased concerted effort and preparedness of authorities, communities and private sector in preventing haze events that would exacerbate the health of COVID-19 infected patients are being emphasised.

Despite restrictions on movements in most of the ASEAN region amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the ASEAN Secretariat with support from the Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia (MAHFSA) continue to engage relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and the general public in its agenda to increase awareness and preparedness on transboundary haze events within and across sectors and disciplines through online platforms.

In line with the SOCA-endorsed Webinar Series on the Impacts of COVID-19 on ASCC Sectors and Post-COVID19 Strategies, aimed to unpack the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations, and taking into consideration the upcoming dry season in the southern ASEAN region (estimated to peak in August – September 2020); the ASEAN Secretariat, in partnership with the MAHFSA Programme, will host a webinar via Zoom entitled “**A stronger ASEAN response to potential transboundary haze event in the wake of pandemics**” which will be held on **4 August 2020 at 09:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M. (GMT+7)**.

Objectives

1. Inform relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and raise awareness on the impact of pandemic on fire and haze management and the potential risk of post pandemic pressure on peatland ecosystem;
2. Promote concerted response between different actors (authorities, communities and private sector) in the possible event of fire and haze while combating the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. Discuss innovative ways in preventing/responding to fire and haze events and enhancing regional cooperation, and learning from the Mekong countries' experience during the 2020 dry season and experience of ASEAN Dialogue Partners dealing with large scale forest fires.

Target participants and audience

The following will be the target participants:

- Committee under the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (COM AATHP)
- ASEAN Task Force on Peatlands (ATFP)
- ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Forestry (ASOF)
- Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM AMAF)
- Senior Officials Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD)
- ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM)
- Dialogue Partners (Australia, ROK, Russia, United States, Canada, Germany, etc.)
- ASEAN Peatland Partners (IFAD, CIFOR, GEC, EU, GIZ, WRI, TRCRC, IDH, IUCN)
- Private sector (Sinar Mas Asia - Pulp and Paper, etc.)
- Other invited participants and research institutions/ knowledge partners of ASEC (CSOs, CSIS, Singapore's NTU, Cambridge University, etc.)



Webinar Format

Experts from various disciplines and organisations are invited as resource speakers who will present and discuss specific topics in accordance with the objectives. There will be a moderated open forum where questions and recommendations will be

accommodated. Participants may ask their questions and share their comments by writing on Zoom's chat box. The moderator will read the questions and the resource person/s will respond accordingly during the open forum. The session will be recorded for ASEAN documentation.

Indicative Programme

Time	Activity	Speakers
09:00 A.M. – 09:10 A.M.	Opening Remarks	H.E. Kung Phoak Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Dr. Srey Sunleang Chairperson of the Committee under the Conference of the Parties to the AATHP (COM) Cambodia Mr. Ivan Cossio Cortez Country Director, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
09:10 A.M. – 09:40 A.M.	Session 1: Setting the tone: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of the pandemic situation on ASEAN response to potential fire and haze event• Weather and haze outlook for the second half of 2020	Mr. Ravi Prabhu Director CIFOR-ICRAF Mr. Raizan Rahmat Deputy Principal Research Scientist, ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC)
09:40 A.M. – 10:10 A.M.	Session 2: Exacerbated impacts and potential risk of haze events in the midst of the COVID-19: Lessons from the 2020 Mekong dry season and 2019 Australia bushfire crisis	Ms. Siwaporn Rungsiyanon Director, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand Mr. Brian Foo Director, Australian Government Crisis Coordination Centre Operations Crisis and Security Management Branch, Emergency Management Australia (EMA), Department of Home Affairs.
10:10 A.M. – 10:35 A.M.	Session 3: Contingency plan and options for fire and haze management in the ASEAN Region during the pandemic.	Ir. R. Basar Manullang, M.M. Director of Forest and Land Fire Management, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia Ms. Norlin binti Jaafar, Director General, Ministry of Environment and Water, Malaysia
10:35 A.M. – 11:20 A.M.	Discussion <i>(ASEAN sectoral bodies are invited to make 3-5 minutes intervention.)</i>	Moderated by Mr. Ky-Anh Nguyen ASCC ASEAN Secretariat ASEAN Sectoral Bodies All Participants
11:20 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Synthesis/ Closing	Prof. Dr. Daniel Murdiyarso Principle Scientist, CIFOR