

**Joint Meeting of the Grow Asia Governance Councils
Minutes of the Meeting - 27 May 2025 10.30 – 16.40 (GMT+7)
Jamjuree, Banyan Tree, 21/100 South Sathorn Road,
Sathorn, Bangkok 10120, Thailand**

Time and Place

The Joint Meeting of the Grow Asia Business Council and Partners' Advisory Council was held on Tuesday, 27 May 2025, at 10:30 AM, at the Jamjuree Room of the Banyan Tree, Bangkok, 21/100 S Sathon Rd, Khwaeng Thung Maha Mek, Khet Sathon, Krung Thep Maha Nakhon 10120, Thailand.

The meeting was co-chaired by **Ms. Hataikan Kamolsirisakul**, Head, Strategy, Sustainability & Innovation, Head of New Business Group and Chief of Staff, Thai Wah, representing the Grow Asia Business Council; and **Dr. Kanchana Wanichkorn**, Director - Sectoral Development Directorate, ASEAN Secretariat, representing the Grow Asia Partners' Advisory Council.

Attendance: 67 participants

Business Council Members	
Organization	Representative
Bain & Company	Aadarsh Baijal
Bain & Company	Jenny Davis-Peccoud
Bayer Crop Science	Bayer Crop Science
Beanstalk AgTech	William Taing
Mars	Kalpesh Parmar
OCP Group	Daine Loh
OCP Group	Pluemkhun Bualuang
Olam Agri	Shailendra Mishra
Olam Food Ingredients (OFI)	Kulhans Singhvi
PISAgro	Insan Syafaat
PISAgro	Harry Hanawi

Business Council Members	
Organization	Representative
PISAgro	Bayu Krisnamurthi
Syngenta	Chris Argent
Syngenta	Christopher Amhoff
Thai Wah	Ren Hua Ho
Thai Wah	Hataikan Kamolsirisakul
World Economic Forum	Braulio Eduardo Morera
WRMS	Sarathy Srinivas
Apologies	
Acre	Greg Brittian
Terrascope	Lia Nicholson
Wavemaker Impact	Marie Cheong

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Partners' Advisory Council Members	
Organization	Representative
ASEAN Secretariat	Kanchana Wanichkorn
GIZ	Wolfgang Weinmann
GIZ	Pouchamarn Wongsanga
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	Reehana Raza
Save the Children	Thanapol Kheolamai
Save the Children	Elizabeth Teare
Stockholm Environment Institute	Niall O'Connor
Apologies	
Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia	Marlene Ramirez
Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)	Esther Penunia
CGIAR	Stephan Weise

Partners' Advisory Council Members	
Organization	Representative
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)	Fiona Lynn
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UK)	Rachael Kretsis
International Development Research Centre (Canada)	Julie Delahanty
International Finance Corporation (IFC)	Ernest Bethe
Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund	Naoki Minamiguchi
Mercy Corps	Ade Soekadis
Nanyang Technological University Singapore (NTU)	Wai Fong Boh
Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH)	Huynh Tien Dung
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Marylaure Crettaz
Viet Nam's Ministry of Agriculture and Environment	Hong Hanh Pham
Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN)	Nisha Onta

Observers/Guests	
AgriG8	David Chen
Amru Rice (Cambodia) Co., Ltd	Saran Song
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Kate Jarvis
Embassy of the Philippines	Annalyn Lopez
Enterprise Singapore	Sharon Tay
Enterprise Singapore	Eng Woon Lin
Heifer International	Pranjit Talukdar

Observers/Guests	
Nearth Global	Peter Levine
New Forests	Sanjiv Louis
PepsiCo	Surivassa Sattarujawong
Rothman Family Institute for Food Studies (RFI)	Jack Bobo
The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia	H.E. Rachmat Budiman
The Rockefeller Foundation	Deepali Khanna
Tilt Collective	Jacques-Chai Chomthongdi

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Observers/Guests	
Heifer International	Fabrice Carbonne
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Satrio Adi Wicaksono
Mae Fah Luang Foundation	Thanapong Duangmanee
Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA)	Grace Folts
Ministry of Commerce Kingdom of Cambodia	H.E. Sreyroth Kim

Observers/Guests	
UNESCAP	Marta Pérez Cusó
White Rook Advisory	Alexis Chua
World Food Programme (WFP)	Vera Meyer
World Food Programme (WFP)	David Thomas
Nearthú Global	Peter Levine

Secretariat Staff	
Beverley Postma	Grow Asia
Michelle Leong	Grow Asia
Chrissa Marey Borja	Grow Asia
Jade Herera	Grow Asia
Cindy Lim	Grow Asia
Bryan Wang	Grow Asia
Dr.Kishor Chandran	Grow Asia
Norhidayah Omar	Grow Asia
Noradila Kurdi	Grow Asia
Chahana Ramesh	Grow Asia

Secretariat Staff (cont.)	
Erica Sale	Grow Asia
Dicky Zulkarnain	Grow Asia
Cherry Mae Tadeo-Cunanan	PPSA Philippines
Monica Milano	PPSA Philippines
Kimna Leav	CPSA Cambodia
Boreth Sun	CPSA Cambodia
Thuy Cam Nguyen	PSAV Vietnam
David Stewart	GrowPNG
Ruthy Kusak	GrowPNG

1. Call to Order

The Co-Chairs opened the meeting, introduced themselves, and welcomed all members, and declared a quorum was present.

All participants are reminded of Grow Asia's Anti-trust policy and read aloud the Competition Law Statement:

"All meetings of the Grow Asia Business Council, including this one, shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant competition and antitrust laws. Members shall not enter any discussion, activity or conduct that may infringe any applicable law."

2. Welcome Remarks

The co-chairs expressed their enthusiasm and gratitude for the successful gathering, Dr Wanichkorn thanked Thai Wah for hosting the event for the third successive year and highlighted the importance of regional collaboration and the diverse participation from member organizations, including new members and observers.

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The Co-Chairs emphasized the significance of this meeting in shaping sustainable food systems and fostering partnerships across Asia. They underscored the milestone of Grow Asia's 10th anniversary, noting its growth from a regional convening platform to an ASEAN-accredited implementing partner with active chapters in multiple countries. The co-chairs pointed to the vital role of the network in driving innovation, sharing best practices, and supporting smallholder farmers through field-level programs and initiatives.

The remarks highlighted the region's strategic focus on addressing key challenges like climate change, food security, gender equality, and financing gaps. The co-chairs emphasized the need for integrated, scalable solutions, including blended finance mechanisms, policy support, and coordinated technical assistance, to accelerate sustainable agriculture and resilient food systems across Southeast Asia.

3. Approval of agenda

The [agenda](#) was duly approved without amendments.

4. Approval of minutes from previous meetings

The minutes of the 11 February 2025 Business Council meeting and the 13 February 2025 Partners' Advisory Council meeting, having been previously circulated were approved unanimously with no amendments.

5. Executive Director's Report

Grow Asia's Executive Director, Beverley Postma, thanked the Co-Chairs and provided a comprehensive update on developments and activities since the last meetings and shared updates on governance, membership, and progress on program impact.

Celebrating a Decade of Impact

Since its inception in 2015 by the World Economic Forum, Grow Asia has marked a significant milestone—celebrating ten years of multistakeholder collaboration and region-wide impact. Over the past decade, the organization has experienced substantial growth and achieved remarkable milestones.

Membership Expansion and Collaboration

From its humble beginnings, Grow Asia's community has expanded considerably, now comprising over 700 partners, with recent reports indicating a total of 775 members. This growth reflects a broadening network of organizations, institutions, and stakeholders committed to advancing sustainable development and agricultural resilience. The addition of new members has infused fresh perspectives and resources, further strengthening collective efforts.

Transformative Impact on Smallholders

Grow Asia's programs have reached an impressive 3.68 million farmers worldwide, including 1.78 million women—highlighting a strong focus on inclusive development. Through these initiatives,

over 633,000 smallholders have gained access to vital technologies and financial services, empowering them to improve productivity and livelihoods. The active engagement of 775 partners has driven the implementation of diverse programs, fostering innovation and scaling solutions that address the complex challenges faced by small-scale farmers.

None of this could have been possible without the dedication of Grow Asia's regional staff and Country Chapters, who have risen to the challenge of building a region-wide network of 42 public-private working groups to address the most urgent challenges in the field.

Overall, a decade of dedicated work has positioned the organization as a pivotal player in transforming agricultural landscapes and uplifting communities, with ongoing commitments to expand its reach and deepen its impact in the years to come.

Grow Asia Program Highlights

GrowVentures

Recent developments in agri-innovation programs highlight a strong commitment to fostering sustainable and climate-smart agriculture across Southeast Asia. The GrowVentures initiative, supported by the Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA), is accelerating the adoption of digital and climate-smart solutions among smallholders in Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Philippines.

Interventions by **IFAD** emphasized integrating innovative technology to empower farmers from the ground up, ensuring trust and understanding are central to adoption. Supporting these innovations promotes a more sustainable and competitive industry, creating jobs and boosting income for rural communities.

GrowHer

Support for women farmers remains a pivotal focus within Grow Asia's programs, with initiatives like GrowHer led by Grow Asia and Save the Children making significant strides. In South Sulawesi, over 4,000 women farmers and SME entrepreneurs have received tailored training in gender-sensitive community planning, climate-smart practices, and financial management. Women champions trained through this program are cascading knowledge to their communities, fostering local leadership and advocacy for gender equality. **Save the Children** noted that empowering women as catalysts for change creates a ripple effect, strengthening community resilience and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

GrowRight

The importance of harmonized investment practices is underscored by GrowAsia's GrowRight fund, which promotes opportunities for sustainable and responsible agricultural investments in Southeast Asia. In a new collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation, Grow Asia is pioneering initiatives that embed regenerative agriculture into national school meal programs, aiming to restore soil health, enhance nutrition, and ensure climate resilience while uplifting farming communities through sustainable procurement policies. The **Rockefeller Foundation**

highlighted that transforming food systems through sustainable practices not only secures food security but also empowers smallholder farmers economically.

Both IFAD and The Rockefeller Foundation emphasized that strategic investments and policies that prioritize sustainability, inclusiveness, and climate-smart practices are essential for long-term agricultural development and resilience in the region.

Grow Asia's strategic focus is on bridging gaps in climate, nutrition, gender, and finance, while supporting key regional initiatives such as the ASEAN Action Plan, and 2045 Vision. Grow Asia will continue to leverage its role as an Accredited Entity of ASEAN to enhance intra and inter-regional collaboration, to foster sustainable development across the region. A commitment was lodged, in response to a request from the ASEAN Secretariat to include Timor Leste in future Grow Asia activities and events.

6. Vision for Sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture in ASEAN

Dr. Kanchana Wanichkorn outlined ASEAN's frameworks that relate to a role for regenerative agriculture —ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Responsible Investing (2022), ASEAN Action Plan (2023), and the Strategic Framework for Food, Agriculture & Forestry (2026-2030), which includes references to regenerative practices.

Key discussion points centered on soil health, biodiversity, water management, and climate resilience as core pillars of sustainable agriculture. Participants recognized that a significant challenge lies in integrating regenerative agriculture into existing policies and funding mechanisms to ensure effective and coordinated implementation.

Thai Wah emphasized the importance of sustaining yields through biofertilizers and improved water management techniques. **IFAD** highlighted the potential of school meals programs—taking India as an example—as catalysts for adopting regenerative practices at the community level.

GIZ shared ongoing projects in coffee cultivation across Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia, involving approximately 20,000 farmers, demonstrating practical efforts to promote regenerative methods. **Olam Agri** stressed the need to scale these initiatives using the 4Ps model—ensuring the right source, rate, time, and place for inputs.

The council also discussed the necessity of establishing clear metrics to measure the impact of regenerative practices and underscored the importance of adopting farmer-centered approaches to ensure adoption and sustainability.

High-level Advisory Council for Regenerative Agriculture

A consensus emerged on creating a dedicated advisory group to develop baseline assessments, promote farmer-centric supply chain models, and mobilize blended finance for regenerative agriculture. The formation of the high-level advisory group on regenerative agriculture was approved via a show of hands, with all organizations supporting the initiative.

The group's terms of reference will be drafted and circulated electronically by the Secretariat for further input. The group will report to the Joint Councils and help shape regional policy recommendations to ASEAN.

Participants were encouraged to volunteer for the advisory group, with the understanding that the initial focus will include baseline assessments, farmer supply chain models, and regional policy engagement. A caution was acknowledged by the Secretariat about the risk of diluting other projects if Grow Asia took on too many new projects and initiatives. To this end, the work on regenerative agriculture would be integrated where possible into existing projects and harness the expertise of partners, rather than creating any standalone workstreams.

7. Signing of Collaboration Agreement between PISAgro and Grow Asia

The formal collaboration between Grow Asia and PISAgro presents significant opportunities to advance regenerative agriculture in Indonesia. By leveraging Grow Asia's expertise and PISAgro's local knowledge, the partnership will build on a decade of work together to promote sustainable farming practices that improve soil health and increase productivity.

The signing of the agreement signifies a commitment to fostering innovation and knowledge sharing among Indonesian farmers and stakeholders. This collaboration can help scale regenerative techniques, contributing to environmental sustainability and economic resilience in the agriculture sector. It represents a strategic step toward transforming Indonesia's agricultural landscape through sustainable practices.

The Collaboration Agreement was signed by Grow Asia's Executive Director, Beverley Postma, and Dr. Bayu Krisnamurthi, Board Member of PISAgro. It was witnessed by leading representatives from both Grow Asia and PISAgro Secretariats and members.

8. Leaders' Roundtable: Defining and Financing Regenerative Agriculture in ASEAN

In the session titled "**Defining Regenerative Agriculture in the ASEAN Context**," Grow Asia's Cindy Lim moderated a panel discussion featuring Dr. Shailendra Mishra, Global Head of Sustainability at Olam Agri; Dr. Kanchana Wanichkorn, Director of Sectoral Development at the ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Secretariat; and Dr. Bayu Krisnamurthi, Board Member of PISAgro.

The panelists highlighted several critical insights, emphasizing the importance of soil health, biodiversity, productivity, water sustainability, and resilience in regenerative practices. They discussed the current focus on pilot projects, risk mitigation strategies, and solutions that are centered around farmers.

There was a note of skepticism regarding the measurable impacts of regenerative agriculture, with a consensus favoring incremental approaches to implementation. Additionally, the panel stressed the value of learning from past practices and integrating indigenous knowledge to enhance outcomes.

The second session, titled **"4P" Financing Solutions for Regenerative Agriculture,** was moderated by Beverley Postma and featured panelists; Kate Jarvis from the Asian Development Bank; David Chen, CEO of AgriG8; and Sanjiv Louis, Director of Investments at New Forests.

The discussion centered on blended finance models, which combine grants, investor capital, and risk-sharing mechanisms to support regenerative initiatives. Panelists identified several challenges, including de-risking loans for farmers, the high costs associated with aggregation, and the need for strengthened stakeholder collaboration.

They shared practical examples, such as AgriG8's efforts to connect farmers to financial services, ADB's seed funding initiatives, and the role of cooperatives as key aggregators. The emergence of certification labels for regenerative finance was noted as a developing trend but remains in early stages. The panel underscored the critical importance of robust farmer cooperatives and scalable models to ensure the sustainability and expansion of regenerative agriculture financing solutions.

9. Events Calendar – Grow Asia Investment Forum 2025

This year's Grow Asia Investment Forum will take a prominent position as part of Singapore's inaugural IMPACT WEEK in collaboration with TPC and NO.17 Foundation. Scheduled for 17 September 2025, this year's Forum will offer a dynamic platform for impact-driven conversations, bringing together over 250 delegates from the Grow Asia Network spanning a diverse breadth of sectors—including, public, private, development finance, and country-level implementation—to discuss and advance sustainable agricultural investments and innovative financing models.

As part of IMPACT WEEK, the Grow Asia Investment Forum will maintain its traditional format, serving as a crucial space for stakeholders to explore how blended finance models—such as GrowBeyond—can be effectively scaled and aligned with global climate financing and nature capital frameworks. The goal is to ensure these financial models not only foster growth but also contribute meaningfully to global climate goals, integrating development efforts with environmental priorities.

The event aims to foster strategic partnerships, promote innovative financing solutions, and inspire collective action among delegates. With limited spots available, the Grow Asia Investment Forum 2025 is set to be a pivotal gathering that advances sustainable development and climate resilience through impactful investment strategies.

10. Close

The co-chairs summarized the outcomes of the meeting and thanked all Members and speakers for their valuable insights and contributions. They stressed the importance of using platforms like Grow Asia to challenge the prevalence of siloed approaches by defragmenting terminology and aligning efforts.

There being no other business, the Co-chairs thanked the Secretariat for their efforts in delivering another successful meeting and declared the meeting closed at 16:30 PM.