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TRADE INTEGRATION WITHIN ASEAN: THE ROLE OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES FOR CAMBODIA, THE LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, MYANMAR AND VIET NAM
TRADE INTEGRATION WITHIN ASEAN: THE ROLE OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES FOR CAMBODIA, THE LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, MYANMAR AND VIET NAM

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Preface

In 2014, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) decided to launch and finance a research and capacity-building project on economic integration within ASEAN. More specifically, the project was aimed at dealing with the specific problems that the four less prosperous countries of ASEAN (i.e., Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam, collectively known as the CLMV group) would have to cope with in the context of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which was to be fully realized by the end of 2015. The first phase of the project, which was carried out in partnership with the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), dealt with reforms in the agriculture sector. The second phase, the results of which are presented in this publication, concentrated on non-tariff measures (NTMs) and geographical indications. This phase was carried out in partnership with researchers from the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT) and its secretariat at ESCAP.

This research project is emblematic of one of the two pillars of AFD research activities. Apart from gaining knowledge to improve its own operations, AFD also aims at promoting policy dialogue on development by supporting research centres and think tanks based in developing and emerging countries. The CLMV project is a perfect example of how a research and policy support programme can be designed to run concurrently with national or regional development strategies as well as serve as a knowledge backstop for policymakers and other key stakeholders.

The substantial gap in economic development between CLMV and the other members of ASEAN appears to be one of the key challenges facing the region and its ability to fully realize the benefits from regional integration. Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Myanmar are now middle-income developing countries while Viet Nam is consolidating its status of a dynamic exporter, and they face a different global environment from the one faced by the ASEAN-6 when they were at the similar level of development. After the negative impact of the global financial crisis of 2008/09 on merchandise trade,
the recent depression (2011-2015) is slowly being corrected, although more in terms of value than volume. With some main international production networks reaching maturity with less or no expansion, the signs point to a longer-term slow trade growth. Moreover, the ability to benefit from market access depends increasingly on compliance with trade regulatory measures such as sanitary and phytosanitary requirements and goods standards as well as many other standards such as behind-the-border measures. The CLMV group faces this problem on both sides of their borders, which increases their trade costs and reduces their ability to follow the ASEAN-6 in exploiting trade and regional integration effectively for their development, even though regional trade is expected to continue to grow. As a matter of fact, ASEAN’s greatest success has been in the area of tariff reductions. On average, 96% of tariff lines are at zero per cent and more than 70% of intra-ASEAN trade travels at a most-favoured nation rate. Nowadays, more than 70% of total trade between ASEAN members is conducted with zero tariffs. However, tariff liberalization is certainly not the end of the story, especially for the CLMV group whose economic structures still lag compared to those of other ASEAN members.

These are the reasons why the second phase of the AFD project was aimed at the implementation of policy-oriented research activities, a research capacity development programme and the sharing of knowledge about NTMs and geographic indications (in the broader context of trade-related intellectual property rights). The objective was to strengthen the technical and analytical skills of CLMV officials and researchers in managing the use of such tools in making assessments. Taking into account ESCAP’s overall capacity-building work, synergies were found with other projects, such as “reducing obstacles to international trade and investment in Asia and the Pacific”. Moreover, ARTNeT’s management skills in carrying out research programmes is a guarantee of good-quality outcomes, which is clearly demonstrated in this publication.

The ASEAN fell short of its target of fully realizing the AEC by the end of 2015, as 105 of its 506 measures were deferred. A successor blueprint called the
AEC blueprint 2025, which lays out the work for ASEAN economic integration in the next 10 years, was therefore adopted at its twenty-seventh summit in November 2015. Among many other provisions, greater emphasis is being placed on harmonizing standards and regulatory convergence, a field that directly considers NTMs and geographic indications. When every ASEAN country accepts and enforces commonly defined standards and mutually recognizes geographic indications, ASEAN will become more of a single market.

It is hoped that the research work carried out by the project, together with the many exchanges of views between participants, will contribute to better preparation by the CLMV group in adopting an equitable framework for trade facilitation under the 2025 perspective.

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“Trade integration within ASEAN: The role of non-tariff measures for Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam” resulted from a project implemented in a partnership between Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the ESCAP’s Trade, Investment and Innovation Division in collaboration with researchers associated with the Asia-Pacific research and training Network on Trade (ARTNeT). The project “Supporting Equitable Economic Development in ASEAN: Impact of regional Integration (AEC) on Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV countries)” had an objective to strengthen the technical and analytical skills of officials and researchers from CLMV countries to manage use and assessment of the impact of 1) non-tariff measures, and 2) geographical indications in the context of effective response in CLMV countries in these policy areas.

The project included two components: technical capacity building and production of policy-relevant research. ARTNeT secretariat in collaboration with its advisers and resource persons from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Center for the Advancement of Trade Integration and Facilitation (CATIF), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and World Trade Organization (WTO) organized two technical trainings for the researchers involved in this project. Their initial findings were shared and discussed at the ARTNeT dialogue on “Analyzing non-tariff measures: collating evidence and setting research agenda” 26-27 April 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand,¹ which also provided a platform for the formulation of the future research agenda in this substantive area.

In addition to the authors of the chapters, many people deserve to be thanked for their contributions to the implementation of the project and preparation of this publication, including all experts sharing their knowledge through training

¹ http://www.unescap.org/events/artnet-dialogue-%E2%80%9Canalyzing-non-tariff-measures-collating-evidence-and-setting-research-agenda
and mentoring, former and current TIID staff including Adam Heal and Arun Jacob (working on the project in its early phase), Alexey Kravchenko, Su-Arjar Lewchalermvongs and Mia Mikic who in various capacities led the project to its full implementation. The cover design for the publication was prepared by Cheng Wen Cheng, Consultant in TIID, ESCAP, copy editing was done by Robert Oliver, and the final checks were done by Alexey Kravchenko. The printing was done by Dharmmasarn Co., Ltd.
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<td>ACIAR</td>
<td>Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research</td>
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<td>ADBI</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank Institute</td>
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<td>AEC</td>
<td>ASEAN Economic Community</td>
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<td>AFD</td>
<td>Agence Française de Développement</td>
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<td>AFTA</td>
<td>ASEAN Free Trade Area</td>
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<td>AO</td>
<td>appellation of origin</td>
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<td>APLAC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation</td>
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<td>ARTNeT</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>ASEAN-6</td>
<td>Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, and Thailand</td>
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<td>ATIGA</td>
<td>ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement</td>
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<td>BEC</td>
<td>Broad Economic Categories</td>
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<td>BIT</td>
<td>bilateral investment treaty</td>
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<td>competent authority</td>
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<td>CAB</td>
<td>conformity assessment body</td>
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<td>CAC</td>
<td>Codex Alimentarius Commission</td>
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<td>CBI</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Investigation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Committee on the Implementation of ATIGA</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDRI</td>
<td>Cambodia Development Resource Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEPII</td>
<td>French Research Center in International Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFDO</td>
<td>Community Fisheries Development Office</td>
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<td>CIEM</td>
<td>Central Institute for Economic Management</td>
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<td>CIRD</td>
<td>Cambodia Institute for Research and Rural Development</td>
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<td>CLMV</td>
<td>Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam</td>
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<td>COMTRADE</td>
<td>United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database</td>
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<td>COO</td>
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CTIS          Cambodia Trade Integration Strategy
DFQF          duty-free, quota-free
DIMEX         Department of Import and Export
EDC           Enterprise and Development Consultants
EDI           Electronic Data Interchange
EEZ           exclusive economic zone
EMC           electromagnetic compatibility
ERIA          Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia
ESCAP         Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU            European Union
EVFTA         Viet Nam – European Union FTA

FAO           Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI           foreign direct investment
FTA           free trade agreement

GDP           gross domestic product
GI            geographical indication
GMS-CBTA      Greater Mekong Subregion Cross-Border Transport Facilitation Agreement
GSO           General Statistics Office
GSP           Generalized Scheme of Preferences

HACCP         Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
HS            Harmonized System

I-TIP         Integrated Trade Intelligence Portal
IEC           International Electrotechnical Commission
IFReDI        Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute
ILAC          International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
IPR           intellectual property right
ISO           International Organization for Standardization
ITC           International Trade Centre
ITU           International Telecommunication Union
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<td>Kampot Pepper Promotion Association</td>
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<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic</td>
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<td>MAFF</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoC</td>
<td>Ministry of Commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>memorandum of understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRA</td>
<td>Mutual Recognition Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSDP</td>
<td>National Strategic Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTB</td>
<td>non-tariff barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTM</td>
<td>non-tariff measure</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PGI</td>
<td>Protected Geographical Indication</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPM</td>
<td>process and production method</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWO</td>
<td>Public Warehouse Organization</td>
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<td>RASFF</td>
<td>Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCEP</td>
<td>Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEOM</td>
<td>Senior Economic Officials' Meeting</td>
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<td>SIDS</td>
<td>small island developing state</td>
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<td>SPS</td>
<td>sanitary and phytosanitary measure</td>
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<td>TBT</td>
<td>technical barriers to trade</td>
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<td>TDF-2</td>
<td>Second Trade Development Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>TFA</td>
<td>Trade Facilitation Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRAINS</td>
<td>Trade Analysis and Information System</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRIPS</td>
<td>Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNNEExT</td>
<td>United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>VASEP</td>
<td>Viet Nam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDI</td>
<td>World Development Indicator</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<td>WITS</td>
<td>World Integrated Trade Solution</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
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