

PAFTAD 40: New dimensions of connectivity in the Asia Pacific

Wednesday 17 to Friday 19 July 2019

Arnoma 1 Room, 3rd Floor, The Arnoma Grand
Bangkok, Thailand

Faced with rising global protectionism, regional integration led by institutions like ASEAN is increasingly under threat. Meanwhile, new opportunities are opening up for deepening regional connectivity, with the growth of the digital economy and new momentum in regional infrastructure development. These challenges and opportunities necessitate revisiting past achievements in regional integration and rethinking current regulations, labour market policies and investment facilitation. They push us to think about a new collaborative agenda in further facilitating connectivity in the Asia Pacific. These new dimensions of connectivity will be the theme of the 40th PAFTAD Conference in Bangkok.

Program summary

Day 1 9:00–9:15am **Opening session and welcome remarks**

9:15–
10:45am

Session 1: Does regional integration matter for inclusive growth?

This scene-setting paper uses a multidimensional approach to gauge the degree of regional integration and analyse its impact on growth, inequality and poverty.

Chair: Professor Mari Pangestu, University of Indonesia

Presenter: Racquel Claveria, ADB

Discussants: Dr Anna Strutt, University of Waikato
Dr Mia Mikic, UNESCAP

11:15am–
12:45pm

Session 2: ASEAN's connectivity agenda revisited

This paper will revisit ASEAN's agenda in regional integration and connectivity, and envision ASEAN's role in defending the multilateral trading system against new challenges.

Chair: Dr Vo Tri Thanh, CIEM

Presenter: Dr Yose Rizal Damuri, CSIS

Discussants: Professor Robert Scollay, University of Auckland
Dr Tomoo Kikuchi, RSIS

Day 1 (cont.) 1:45–3:15pm **Session 3: The Belt and Road Initiative collaboration on global value chains**

Xi Jinping's signature Belt and Road Initiative has attracted a great deal of international attention as well as scepticism. This paper will analyse, from the perspective of global value chains, the potential of Belt and Road international cooperation and China's role.

Chair: Professor M Chatib Basri, University of Indonesia

Paperwriter: Dr Zhang Monan, CCIEE

Discussants: Dr Shiro Armstrong, ANU
Professor Yves Tiberghien, UBC

3:45–5:15pm **Session 4: The connectivity of the Greater Mekong Sub-region – A view from the sky**

This paper will study regional connectivity in the Greater Mekong Sub-region using satellite image data. The data set will be combined with other data sets to measure the impacts of physical infrastructure on urbanisation along the borders of Greater Mekong Sub-region countries.

Chair: Dr Chien-Fu Lin, TIER

Presenters: Dr Wichsinee Wibulpolprasert and
Dr Somkiat Tangkitvanich, TDRI

Discussants: Dr Watcharas Leelawath, Mekong Institute
Souknilanh Keola, JETRO

~5:30pm Transport by bus to reception dinner

6:30–8:30pm **Reception dinner**

Venue: Rong-Si Restaurant (248 Chiang Mai Rd, Khwaeng Khlong San)

Day 2 9:00–
10:30am

**Session 5: The digital economy in Southeast Asia –
Strengthening the foundations for future growth**

This paper will analyse the state of play and foundations for the digital economy in Southeast Asia, focusing on the role of policy and regulation in facilitating or impeding the development of an enabling environment for the digital economy.

Chair: Dr Narongchai Akrasanee

Presenter: Natasha Beschorner, World Bank

Discussants: Dr Erik van der Marel, ECIPE
Professor M Chatib Basri, University of Indonesia

11:00am–
12:30pm

**Session 6: Connecting locals to locals –
Market discovery through ecommerce**

The Asia Pacific has seen digital commerce taking-off in the last decade. While China has led the way, ASEAN countries such as Thailand and Indonesia are also rapidly emerging as key ecommerce markets with their own unique characteristics. This paper examines how ecommerce empowers local entrepreneurs by connecting them to new market opportunities. It also discusses the potential implications for policies concerning the digital economy.

Chair: Professor Akira Kohsaka, KGU

Presenters: Dr Santitarn Sathirathai, Sea, and
Dr Voraprapa Nakavachara, Chulalongkorn University

Discussants: Dr Siwage Dharma Negara, ISEAS
Tengfei Wang, UNESCAP

1:30–3:00pm

**Session 7: Digital connectivity in China and Asia –
The case of mobile Payment**

This paper introduces the innovation and development of China's mobile payment. It explores the prospects of cooperation on mobile payment between Asian and other emerging and developing countries while analysing issues and challenges to be addressed for further digital connectivity in the Asia Pacific.

Chair: Dr Zaw Oo, CESD

Presenter: Dr Xun Wang, Peking University

Discussants: Dr Adam Triggs, ANU
Professor Chen Lin, HKU

Day 2 (cont.) 3:30–5:00pm **Session 8: The facilitation of movement of people**

This paper will examine the relationship between the movement of people and trade and investment relationships in the Asia Pacific today. How does movement of people improve regional connectivity, and how can governments better facilitate it?

Chair: Professor Edward K Y Chen, HKU

Presenter: Dr Çağlar Özden, World Bank

Discussants: Dr Chul Chung, KIEP
Dr Jayant Menon, ADB

6:00pm **Dinner for PAFTAD International Steering Committee members**

Venue: Sarocha, 3rd Floor, The Arnoma Grand

Day 3 9:00–10:30am **Session 9: The investment facilitation agenda**

This paper examines the role of the international investment policy regime in facilitating foreign investment in Asia Pacific countries, with attention to the delivery of connectivity services. It is argued there is a substantial agenda of work at the economy level but in addition there is a rich menu of additional options for regional cooperation to support these efforts.

Chair: Professor Shujiro Urata, Waseda University and ERIA

Presenter: Professor Christopher Findlay

Discussants: Dr Shekhar Shah, NCAER
Dr Adam Triggs, ANU

11:00am–12:30pm **Public forum: Connecting the ASEAN Smart Cities Network**

Chair: Dr Narongchai Akrasanee

Presenters: Dr Twarath Sutabutr, Inspector General, Ministry of Energy
Dr Nuttapon Nimmanphatcharin, President/CEO,
Digital Economy Promotion Agency

Discussant: Professor Shujiro Urata, Waseda University and ERIA
Dr Siwage Dharma Negara, ISEAS