ILSI Southeast Asia Region
ANNUAL REPORT 2013

20 years of science and partnerships for public health
In 2013, ILSI SEA Region marked the 20th Anniversary of its establishment as a branch of the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI). This momentous occasion led us to reflect on the work it has accomplished, as well as its effectiveness as a scientific organization seeking to provide science to improve public health and well-being in a fast-changing world and a dynamic region. We have been undertaking a comprehensive review of our branch strategy, in parallel with a similar review of ILSI strategy at the global level.

Since its inception in 1993, ILSI SEA Region has sought to address public health concerns that are critical and relevant to the diverse populations across the wide geographical regions that the organization covers. These include the double-burden of over and undernutrition in the developing economies, food innovation, nutritional status, capacity building as well as the safety and security of food supply that flows across the borders of Southeast Asia, Australasia and other parts of the world.

As our environment changes, and new issues and concerns in public health emerge, ILSI SEA Region must continue to actively address the needs of our stakeholders. We face increased pressures on land use, population growth, agricultural productivity and climate. Our mission is to provide the best science that helps to inform decision-making, for the improvement of public health. In order to achieve this, ILSI SEA Region must not only keep pace with scientific advances and technical breakthroughs; it must achieve scientific leadership in its core focus areas of nutrition and health promotion, as well as food safety and risk assessment.

In preparation for the next phase of ILSI SEA Region’s growth, our strategic review of the organization has been completed both for the branch and globally, and for our branch we have prepared a strategic road map for the next 5 years. This strategic plan will guide ILSI SEA Region’s efforts to enhance its effectiveness and impact, while ensuring that it continues to bring value to all its members, stakeholders and partners. At the global level, we have adopted the overall theme of One ILSI, to increase the synergies of our global branch network. We have selected four key themes for action: a) Food and Water Safety, b) Nutrition, Health and Wellness, c) Toxicology and Risk Science and d) Agricultural Sustainability and Nutrition Security. I look forward to working with all our stakeholders in implementing this strategic plan, as we strive towards achieving our mission.

2013 has been a special year for ILSI SEA Region, as we celebrated our 20th Anniversary. There is a Chinese saying that ‘It takes 10 years to grow a tree, but a hundred years to nurture and build a man’. Looking back, ILSI SEA Region has been nurtured over the past 20 years by many people who contributed to its growth as a branch of ILSI. Many Members, Directors, Advisors and Partners have provided their generous support and invaluable contributions to ILSI SEA Region and our scientific programs. Without their support, we would not have been able to stride forward in our mission to provide science that improves human health and well-being. For that, we are deeply grateful!

Our programs and activities over the last 12 months focused on topics of particular relevance to the evolution and engagement of ASEAN and Australasia in international public health development. We organized and supported seminars, symposia and conferences on topics including Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition; Micronutrient Fortification of Foods, Nutrition Labeling and Claims, Food Allergens, and Gut Health.

ILSI SEA Region also facilities workshops and discussion forums to further development scientific and technical capability in the region. Working closely with ASEAN, WHO and FAO, we organized a second workshop as part of an ASEAN project to develop a common food consumption database that can be used for exposure assessment activities. We participated actively as in-kind contributor to the Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP) initiative by the World Bank since the project’s inception. Over the past year, we have also expanded our research activities. Continuing with our study of food consumption patterns in Southeast Asia, which has included studies on sodium intake, we have initiated a review of sugar intake and the major sources of sugar in the diet in several countries.

Looking ahead in 2014, ILSI SEA Region will continue to develop and implement scientific programs that meet the needs of our members and stakeholders. We look forward to working with all our partners to enhance the impact of our programs, and further contribute to improving the knowledge base for public health decision-making in the region for many more years to come.
Established in 1993, ILSI Southeast Asia Region (ILSI SEA Region) is a regional branch of the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) that initiates and coordinates scientific programs, research, and information dissemination among the 10 ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam), Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

With our Regional Office located in Singapore, ILSI SEA Region oversees a Country Office in Australia, as well as Country Committees in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand.

ILSI SEA Region also serves as coordinator for collaborative programs among ILSI's Asian branches, including ILSI Focal Point in China, ILSI India, ILSI Japan, ILSI Korea, and ILSI Taiwan.

Our activities focus primarily on nutrition and health promotion; food and water safety; risk science and toxicology; and sustainable agriculture and nutrition security.

The International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) is a nonprofit, worldwide organization whose mission is to provide science that improves human health and well-being, and safeguards the environment.

It achieves this mission by fostering collaboration among experts from academia, government, and industry, to provide a balance of perspectives and ensure that the scientific outcomes of our activities are useful at the local, national and international levels.

Our activities focus primarily on nutrition and health promotion; food and water safety; risk science and toxicology; and sustainable agriculture and nutrition security.

ILSI was established in 1978 and is headquartered in Washington, DC, USA. We carry out our work through a global network of 14 branches across the world, the ILSI Research Foundation, and the ILSI Health and Environmental Sciences Institute. ILSI is affiliated with the World Health Organization (WHO) as a non-governmental organization and has specialized consultative status with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

ILSI receives funding from industry members, governments, and foundations.
ILSI SEA REGION’S ACTIVITIES

• SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES
We organize and facilitate scientific meetings including workshops, seminars, symposia and conferences for local, regional and international audiences. Through these events, ILSI SEA Region is able to provide a credible and neutral platform for the sharing of the latest scientific knowledge and regulatory updates, as well as facilitate the productive exchange of ideas and dialogue among our tripartite stakeholders – industry, academia, and government.

• COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT
In a diverse region with varying levels of socio-economic development, many population groups remain vulnerable to critical problems such as inadequate nutrition, food safety and food security issues. ILSI SEA Region aims to translate science and technology into sustainable solutions, and maximize our impact on improving public health in the region, through collaborative projects that bring direct benefits to communities and populations. To enhance the long-term success and sustainability of such initiatives, we also conduct capability development programs and activities for key stakeholders including local health professionals, educators, and government officials.

• RESEARCH
ILSI SEA Region seeks to enhance scientific resources and support scientific research in the region through private-public partnerships between industry, government, academia, research and scientific institutions, as well as nonprofit organizations and foundations. Such collaborations are based on strict principles of scientific integrity, ethics and transparency.

• PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS
Important outcomes of ILSI SEA Region’s activities and programs are disseminated to our stakeholders and the wider public through our scientific publications, as well as published articles in scientific journals. We also disseminate regular updates of our organization’s news and activities through our website, monthly NewsFlash, and Science InSight - our biannual ILSI SEA Region newsletter.
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

ILSI SEA Region is governed by a Board of Directors, which comprises an equal number of invited individuals from the public sector (Scientific Directors) and ILSI SEA Region member representatives (Member Directors), to ensure a balance of scientific perspectives.

A Scientific Advisory Committee and a Panel of Scientific Advisors provide the latest scientific knowledge and expertise, as well as general oversight and guidance for our scientific programs.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-2014

Executive Committee

President: Mr. Geoffry Smith
Vice President: Dr. Roger Bektash
Co-Vice President: Prof. Sushila Chang
Honorary Secretary: Dr. Harvey Glick
Honorary Treasurer: Dr. Lionel Buratti
Member-at-large: Prof. Corazon Barba
Member-at-large: Dr. Yoko Ogiwara
Member-at-large: Dr. E-Siong Tee

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Prof. Soh Ha Chan
Mr. Howard Gilmour
Dr. Leon Gorris
Dr. Widjaja Lukito
Dr. Nadim Ur Rehman
Prof. Andrew Sinclair
Dr. Emorn Wasantwisut
Prof. Aman Wirakartakusumah

ORGANIZATION CHART
ILSI SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION ANNUAL REPORT 2013

BRANCH MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

ILSI SEA Region’s Regional Office based in Singapore is managed by the Singapore registered consultancy firm, Food & Nutrition Specialists Pte Ltd. The Regional Office oversees and carries out ILSI SEA Region’s day-to-day activities, including coordination and implementation of the Branch’s scientific programs across ASEAN and Australasia. It also oversees ILSI SEA Region’s Country Office in Australia, and its Country Committees in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand.

The Regional Office, together with the Board of Directors, also charts ILSI SEA Region’s growth the organizational development, supports its resource development and forges partnerships with local, regional and international stakeholders.

REGIONAL OFFICE

Executive Director
Director, Scientific Programs
Deputy Director, Scientific Programs
Director, Development and Communications
Senior Manager, Administration
Senior Manager, Scientific Programs
Manager, Communications / Scientific Programs
Assistant Manager, Administration

Mrs. Boon Yee Yeong
Ms. Pauline Chan
Dr. Sofia Amarra
Ms. Li Yuin Yeong
Ms. Amy Kok
Mr. Keng Ngee Teoh
Ms. Justine Gayer
Ms. Joycelyn Seah

COUNTRY OFFICE/COMMITTEES

Australasia
Indonesia
Malaysia
Philippines
Thailand

Ms. Christine Dowdall
Ms. Wandansari Roch-Ratri
Dr. E-Siong Tee
Prof. Rodolfo Florentino
Prof. Anadi Nithithamyong
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013 ACTIVITIES

SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

• Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition
  Research indicates that optimum nutrition during the 1,000 day period between the start of a woman’s pregnancy through to her child’s second birthday lays the foundation for a healthy and productive future, both for the individual child as well as the nation. Malnutrition during this critical period results in irreversible physical and cognitive impairments that prevent children from reaching their full potential. Maternal undernutrition remains a major concern in developing countries, such as the Philippines, and is a contributing factor to the high rates of maternal mortality and low birth weight infants, with an increase in the prevalence of stunting in children aged 0-5.

Continuing its series of Seminars in Infant and Young Child Nutrition, ILSI Southeast Asia Region presented the ‘Seminar and Workshop on Infant and Young Child Nutrition: The First 1,000 Days’ in September, 2013 in Manila, Philippines. Bringing together leading experts in maternal and infant nutrition, the seminar examined the nutrition and health status of adolescent females, pregnant and lactating women in the Philippines and their implications for the health of infants and young children from birth up to age 2 years; discussed existing programs that address the needs of adolescent females, pregnant and lactating mothers, and children aged 0-24 months; and identified gaps in existing knowledge and programs using a continuum of care perspective.

ILSI SEA Region was also recognized for its contributions to advancing science for the improvement of public health by being invited to present a summary of its Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition Program at the 2nd Meeting of the ASEAN Task Force on Maternal and Child Health in August 2013, attended by health ministry officials from ASEAN countries.
• **Micronutrient Fortification of Foods**

Micronutrient deficiencies continue to present a significant challenge to public health throughout Asia, particularly in vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and young children. The fortification of common foodstuffs with micronutrients is an on-going strategy to address this public health concern. With evolving regulations and technologies surrounding fortification, there is wide diversity in fortification levels, food vehicles, and level of regulatory control. In addition, the actual status of micronutrient deficiencies in some Asian countries is not well-established.

To address these issues, ILSI SEA Region co-organized a parallel symposium session “Micronutrient Fortification: Science and Strategies for Public Health Improvement in Asia” in September 2013 at the International Congress of Nutrition (ICN) in Granada, Spain. The session featured case studies on large-scale food fortification programs in Vietnam, Philippines and Cambodia; and provided the opportunity to share scientific outcomes, lessons learnt on administrative policy, and business strategy adopted by the stakeholders to achieve the common goal of public health improvement. The session was supported by ILSI SEA Region, ILSI Japan Centre for Health Promotion, ILSI Focal Point in China, and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

ILSI SEA Region also organized a Regional Conference on Micronutrient Fortification of Food held in Bangkok, Thailand in October 2013 to provide an update on micronutrient deficiency in Southeast Asia, and to address issues related to the micronutrient fortification of foods, including benefits and regulatory considerations. The conference was organized in collaboration with the Food Science and Technology Association of Thailand (FoSTAT), and discussed future strategies to address micronutrient deficiency in Asia.
• **Nutrition Labeling and Claims**

As part of ILSI SEA Region’s ongoing series of updates on nutrition labeling and claims, the **8th Seminar on Nutrition Labeling, Claims and Communication Strategies** was organized and held in Jakarta, Indonesia in November 2013. The seminar provided an update on international and regional developments in nutrition labeling, nutrition and health claims in Southeast Asia and other regions. The use of Front-of-pack (FOP) signposting schemes in the region was discussed, in addition to identifying opportunities and challenges related to the use of nutrition labeling and claims in communicating nutrition and health related messages. Opportunities for harmonization of nutrition labeling and claims in Southeast Asia were also explored. Co-organized by the National Agency of Drug and Food Control (BPOM), Indonesia, the seminar was attended by over 200 participants, including regulators from ASEAN countries, along with key nutrition academics, and food industry regulatory and nutrition personnel.

The issue of nutrition labeling has been a pressing concern in the Philippines, with the question of consumer awareness and use of nutrition labels on packaged food products frequently raised. The food industry has recently received new regulations from the government on FOP labeling, while the health and nutrition community has been considering FOPs that serve broader objectives. The seminar on “**Nutrition Labeling: What You Need to Know**” was organized by the ILSI SEA Region Philippine Country Committee and held in Manila in November 2013. Speakers and participants discussed recent developments in nutrition labeling both in packaged food products and food service in the Philippines, as well as future trends and directions (including harmonization) in the area of nutrition labeling.

• **Food Allergens**

Food allergies are increasingly being recognized globally as an important public health concern, including in Southeast Asia. In view of the need to address this issue, ILSI SEA Region supported a session on ‘**Managing Allergens in the Food Chain**’ at the 13th ASEAN Food Conference, which was held in Singapore in September 2013. Among the highlights of the session was a review on the prevalence of food allergies in the Southeast Asian region. In contrast to Western populations, peanut allergies are rare in Southeast Asia while allergies to shellfish are much more common. This is in part due to cross-reactivity from the inhalation of dust mite allergens, which is common due to hot and humid climatic conditions. In addition, the Allergen Bureau shared updates on ongoing initiatives being undertaken by the food industry in Australia to support decision-making on allergen labeling through the ‘**Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling**’ (VITAL) program. The VITAL program is underpinned by scientific risk assessment to determine thresholds for different types of food allergens, which are subsequently used to set action levels to guide the need for trace allergen labeling. Due to its effectiveness, similar approaches may one day be rolled out in other regions including Southeast Asia to manage allergens in the food chain.
CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Strengthening Risk Assessment Capacity for ASEAN: Food Consumption Data**

  This project was implemented by ILSI Southeast Asia Region, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health, Malaysia, as lead country for Surveillance and Monitoring Program under the ASEAN Food Safety Improvement Plan II (AFSIP II) of the ASEAN Expert Group on Food Safety (AEGFS). Technical assistance was also provided by the World Health Organization (WHO). The project enabled ASEAN countries to work towards developing a common food consumption database that could be used for dietary exposure assessment activities at the regional level.

  As part of the project, technical experts on food consumption data and risk assessment from all 10 ASEAN Member States, as well as a representative from the ASEAN Secretariat, participated in the ‘2nd Workshop on ASEAN Food Consumption Data and Exposure Assessment’, which was organized by ILSI SEA Region and held on November 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Key outcomes of the workshop included the finalization of a list of food categories that will be used as a basis to input data for a common ASEAN Food Consumption Database. Once compilation of the consumption data into the ASEAN Food Consumption Database is complete, it will be provided to the ASEAN Risk Assessment Centre (ARAC) for future risk assessment applications.
RESEARCH

• **Sugar Consumption in Southeast Asia**
  ILSI SEA Region’s research into sugar intake in Southeast Asia, including consumption levels and major sources in the diet, is underway. In 2013, ILSI SEA Region commenced the ‘Scoping Review on Sugar Intake in Southeast Asia: Levels of Consumption and Major Sources in the Diet’. The objective of the scoping review is to summarize available information regarding levels of consumption of ‘free’ or ‘added’ sugar in Southeast Asian countries; to estimate the contribution of sugar to the energy intake of Southeast Asian populations; and to identify the major sources of added sugar in the diet in these countries. In addition, ILSI SEA Region has commenced the project ‘Data Analysis: Levels and Sources of Sugar Intake in the Philippines’, in collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, Philippines.

• **Complementary Feeding**
  Further research into infant and young child feeding practices commenced in 2013 with the project ‘Validation of WHO Complementary Feeding Indicators against Dietary Intakes of Malaysian Children Aged 6-23 months’, conducted by ILSI SEA Region in collaboration with International Medical University (IMU), Malaysia. This validation study assesses intake of energy, key macro- and micronutrients of breastfed and non-breastfed infants and children using the WHO Infant and Young Child Feeding questionnaire, and using 3 days weighed food records; and correlates adequacy of dietary intakes based on the WHO questionnaire and that obtained from weighed food records.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION 2013

OVERALL INCOME/EXPENSES 2013

INCOME
$1,615,144

- General Sponsorship $237,655
- Publications $220
- Conference/Meeting Registrations $219,196
- Membership Dues $520,802
- Science Clusters Fund $637,000
- Interest Earnings $272

EXPENSES
$1,573,387

- Science Clusters Activities/Research $514,915
- Publications $52,876
- Conference/Meeting $441,324
- Research $15,000
- Administration & Operations $237,813
- Development & Governance $311,459
## MEMBERS 2013

- Abbott Manufacturing Singapore Pte Ltd
- Ajinomoto Co, Inc, ASEAN Regional Headquarters
- Almond Board of California
- BASF Southeast East Asia Pte Ltd
- Bayer CropScience (China) Company Ltd
- BENEO Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd
- Campbell Arnotts
- Cerebos Pacific Limited
- Coca Cola ASEAN
- Danone Asia Pacific Holdings Pte Ltd
- DSM Nutritional Products Asia Pacific
- DuPont Nutrition and Health
- F&N Interflavine Pte Ltd
- Fonterra Brands
- Mars Inc
- Mead Johnson Nutrition (Asia Pacific) Pte Ltd
- Meat & Livestock Australia
- Mondelez International
- Monsanto Singapore Co (Pte) Ltd
- Nestle R&D Center (Pte) Ltd
- Nutrition Strategies International
- PepsiCo Asia Services
- PT Cargill Indonesia
- PT Nutrifood Indonesia
- Shimadzu (Asia Pacific) Pte Ltd
- Simplot Australia Pty Ltd
- Unilever GCEA-NZ
- Yakult Honsha Co, Ltd
- Yeo Hiap Seng Ltd
ILSI SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION
REGIONAL OFFICE
9 Mohamed Sultan Road, #02-01
Singapore 238959
Tel: (65) 6352 5220  Fax: (65) 6352 5536
Email: ilsisea@singnet.com.sg

COUNTRY OFFICE
ILSI SEAR Australasia
P.O. Box 2220, Hawthorn, Vic 3122
Grd Floor, 737 Burwood Road,
Hawthorn, Vic 3122, Australia
Tel: (613) 9819 9187  Fax: (613) 9011 6285
Email: admin@ilsi.org.au

COUNTRY COMMITTEES
Indonesia
Malaysia
Philippines
Thailand

www.ilsi.org/sea_region