

SCIENCE



CAPABILITY
DEVELOPMENT



HARMONIZATION

RESEARCH

**ILSI SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION
ANNUAL REPORT 2010**



President

The programs and activities of ILSI SEA Region in 2010 have made major contributions to increased scientific understanding of critical issues in nutrition and food safety. Our wide network of partnerships, including public health officials, regional academic institutions and scientific organizations, have expanded during the year. We have continued our tripartite approach to facilitate broad understanding of the best science and translation of that science into practice. In the following pages, are key highlights of a wide range of activities undertaken by ILSI SEA Region's Science Clusters and Task Forces over the last year.



In 2010, important progress was made in reviewing infant nutrition appropriate for the region, and recommendations for research priorities. ILSI SEA Region also organized two important symposia on cognition, one covering brain and gut health, while the second conference broadly covered nutrition and cognition, looking at these issues over the life span, from infants to the elderly. The ILSI Center for Health Promotion activities on iron deficiency reduction programs continue in Cambodia and The Philippines, and additional scientific focus on other key micronutrients are planned for this year.

sound science as fundamental. As a central tenet of its organizational principles, ILSI SEA Region does not take policy positions, but fosters and supports sound science in decision making. Great care continues to be taken to ensure comprehensive scientific review and transparency. ILSI SEA Region also understands the importance of communicating science to consumers and will work with partner organizations in this aspect, as scientific issues have direct impact on consumer and public health.

We want to thank our ILSI SEA Region members, scientific directors, advisors, partners, branch staff and country coordinators for their important contributions, and look forward to continuing cooperation in the coming year.

Global issues of food security are also reflected in our region. Many staple foods have spiked in price, while weather disasters have affected food availability and raised emerging safety issues. At the same time, obesity is growing even in newly developing countries. ILSI SEA Region has organized scientific activities to address these twin issues, from methodologies of risk assessment of high yield crops, to community efforts to address obesity.

Food safety remains an important priority. ILSI SEA Region conducted a training workshop in Vietnam on the development of food safety standards. We are now preparing for the 6th Asia Conference on Food and Nutrition Safety which will take place in 2012.

Food and water safety and nutrition affect every person every day. ILSI SEA Region takes its responsibilities and its support of



Geoffry Smith

Executive Director

"Best in Collaboration", theme of the ILSI Annual Meeting 2011 which was held in January, deftly demonstrated ILSI's organization goals and its ability to identify and answer pressing scientific questions, while translating them into programs that help resolve public health concerns and improve lives of communities. With ILSI SEA Region spanning a diverse region from the ASEAN countries to Australia and New Zealand, we have sharpened our scientific strategies to maximize our impact and benefit our various stakeholders. In this report, you will find highlights of some of the activities that illustrate our core strategies of **Sharing New Scientific Knowledge and Research; Developing Capabilities for Science-based Decision Making; Fostering Harmonization in a Diverse Region; and Supporting Community Health Programs and Research.**



In 2010, ILSI SEA Region provided a platform to discuss questions on cognitive performance and assessment applicable to Asian populations, assessed the regional status of maternal and infant intake and nutritional practices, shared science-based community approaches to obesity prevention, facilitated continuing regional efforts in harmonization of food safety standards and analytical methods, as well as updated on safety assessment of new biotechnology-derived crops entering into the food chain. ILSI SEA Region is also one of the ILSI branches participating in the ILSI Global Water Project led by ILSI Europe. Science InSight, our bi-annual newsletter and our monthly Newsflash have enhanced our outreach and have received much positive feedback. Through these, we have forged new partnerships, expanded our network to other related scientific disciplines and strengthened

collaboration with our members and partner institutions. ILSI SEA Region also undertook processes to overcome the vulnerability and challenges that have impacted our financial resources this past year due to widening currency exchange gap.

Going forward, we will seek further opportunities to reach out, expand our membership base and explore innovative approach in increasing resources for our scientific undertakings. We thank all members, partner institutions and individuals who have contributed generously to our programs and accomplishments, upholding the spirit of achieving the best in collaboration.



Boon Yee Yeong

ILSI SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION

ABOUT ILSI

The International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) is a global nonprofit scientific organization where scientists from industry, academia, and government collaborate to generate scientific information and encourage scientific dialogue.



ILSI's mission is to provide science that improves public health and well-being. It achieves this mission by focusing its activities primarily on nutrition and health promotion; food safety; risk assessment; and the environment.

Established in 1978 and headquartered in Washington, DC, USA, ILSI carries out its work through its 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 special consultative status with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

ILSI receives funding from its industry members, governments, and foundations.

ABOUT ILSI SEA REGION

Established in 1993, ILSI Southeast Asia Region (ILSI SEA Region) is a regional branch of 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 its 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.

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 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 related to 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 community projects that bring direct benefits to 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 tripartite 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.

2010: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Highlights of our achievements in 2010

SHARE NEW SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH IN NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY

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One of ILSI SEA Region's key roles is to share the latest scientific knowledge, research findings and technological advances on relevant and emerging issues that impact public health. Working with leading scientists and experts in their fields, we initiate, organize and support many scientific meetings throughout the region each year to bring these new knowledge and advances to a wide audience.

Highlights of these scientific meetings in 2010 include a symposium exploring the connections between nutrition and cognition, seminars focusing on fat intake through the diet and best practices for reducing obesity in communities, as well as a seminar on the latest in science and regulation of genetically modified crops.

● Seminar on Optimizing Brain and Gut Health: Genes, Diet and Lifestyle

April 20, Singapore



This seminar explored the latest scientific research on the optimization of physical and cognitive function and performance throughout the lifespan. Genes, diet including early fetal nutrition, environment and lifestyle choices may substantially influence the risk or severity of diseases. Experts from the region and Australia shared their research findings and highlighted the need to translate research into market applications.

● Symposium on Nutrition and Cognition: Towards Research and Application for Different Life Stages

October 19 – 21, Malaysia

International researchers, scientists and experts shared their knowledge and research findings in this complex area of science and on the assessment methodology, focusing on children, adults and the elderly. The potential role of functional ingredients and herbal substances in cognitive performance, as well as issues relating to the scientific substantiation and regulation of claims, were also discussed. Researchers from Asia were given the opportunity to present their work through the plenary and poster sessions. Industry stakeholders shared their perspectives through the plenary sessions and participation in the symposium exhibition.



● **Symposium on Saturated Fat and Trans Fats –Where Do We Stand?**

June 17, Australia



This Symposium brought to focus the latest data on consumption of saturated and trans fat in the Australian population, related health issues, as well as challenges and strategies for reducing the use of saturated and trans fat in the food supply and their intake among the general population.



● **Seminars on Reducing Obesity in our Communities**

July 22, Singapore; July 26 – 27, Australia

With the objective of providing health professionals, health agencies, government policy makers and educators with the latest knowledge on best practices and strategies for reducing obesity, ILSI SEA Region organized two seminars in July 2010. Both seminars saw experts from the United States, Europe, Asia and Australia sharing key lessons and success factors for developing and implementing effective policies and programs to reduce obesity in communities. ILSI's focus on obesity as one of its global strategic issues, as well as its experiences in developing targeted intervention programs, were also shared.



● **Seminar on Science and Regulatory Perspectives on Stacked Events in Genetically Modified Crops**

September 20 -21, Thailand; September 22 – 23, Indonesia



The next generation of genetically modified (GM) crops will mainly consist of those containing multiple, or 'stacked', transgenic traits. To provide an opportunity for regulators in the region to share thoughts and exchange ideas on developing science-based approaches for the assessment of stacked GM products, we organized two meetings in Thailand and Indonesia. Experts were able to share the latest scientific thinking in relation to the safety assessment of stacked GM crops, as well as the analytical solutions currently available; countries that have experience in regulating such products were also able to share their perspectives.



DEVELOP CAPABILITIES IN THE REGION FOR SCIENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

ILSI SEA Region operates in a diverse region where levels of economic, social, health and scientific developments vary greatly. To support the use of sound science in the planning and implementation of policies and programs relating to nutrition, food safety and public health, as well as to ensure their sustainability and effectiveness, ILSI SEA Region works with partners and stakeholders to develop and strengthen the scientific capabilities of decision makers in the region.

In 2010, these efforts include training workshops conducted in Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia.

FOOD SAFETY

● National Training Workshop on Development of Food Safety Standards

April 7-8, Vietnam



This training workshop provided a practical training and hands-on experience for Vietnam's regulators who gained better understanding of the principles behind standard-setting, finding data on toxicity and dietary exposure, using this data to determine health risks, as well as examining risk management options with emphasis on standard-setting.

NUTRITION

● Seminar and Roundtable Discussion on Codex Standards for Food Intended for Infants and Young Children

April 28, Indonesia

This meeting provided a forum for pediatricians and health professionals, government officials and food industry representatives to learn from experts who shared their knowledge in understanding and interpretation of Codex Standards and Guidelines, the development processes and scientific criteria behind these Standards and Guidelines, as well as their appropriate adoption and implementation.



● **6th Seminar and Workshop on Nutrition Labeling, Claims and Communication Strategies for the Consumer**

September 20 -21, Malaysia



With increasing research and scientific developments in nutrition, and wider consumer understanding of health and nutrition-related information on food packagings, regulations on nutrition labeling and claims need to be reviewed and updated regularly. ILSI SEA Region organizes a series of meetings and dialogues between scientists, regulators and industry to facilitate the use of sound science in developing guidelines for the use and communication of nutrition labels and claims. This seminar and workshop provided updates on the status of labeling and claims regulations around the region. Experts from America, Europe and Australia also shared their knowledge on current issues such as front-of-pack sign-posting, nutrient profiling, consumer understanding, and effective communication strategies.

FOSTER HARMONIZATION IN A DIVERSE REGION

ILSI SEA Region covers 13 countries and regions in ASEAN and Australasia, with a combined population of over 600 million. With closer economic and trade links within the region, regulators and food producers need to ensure a reliable supply of safe and wholesome food to consumers. Many countries in the region are in the process of aligning and harmonizing their national food standards with international standards such as Codex Alimentarius. ILSI SEA Region has spurred and facilitated this harmonization process by working with national government agencies, international organizations such as WHO and FAO, and academic institutions.

In 2010, our efforts in fostering harmonization focused on food safety standards, and survey of regional food fortification regulations.

● **ILSI Asian Branches Collaborative Project on Harmonization of Food Standards and Analytical Methods in Asia**

ILSI SEA Region collaborated with other ILSI branches in Asia – ILSI Japan, ILSI Focal Point in China and ILSI Korea – in a project to ensure regional food security by enhancing industry's understanding of food standards, resources and environmental conservation. It is hoped that this will also facilitate future harmonization and integration of food standards in the Asia-Pacific region. As part of the first phase of this project, a study of the food regulations in Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore, as well as the food safety standards for particular food categories in these countries, was completed, and its findings were shared at a workshop in Tokyo, Japan in March 2010.



● Survey on Regulatory Status of Mandatory and Voluntary Fortification in SEA Region

Fortification of commonly consumed foods with micronutrients has been shown to be a cost effective strategy for the control of micronutrient malnutrition. In SEA region, fortification of staples and condiments have been attempted to a lesser or greater degree. National authorities have developed mandatory fortification for some nutrients, and voluntary fortification for others. The extent of this strategy and the regulation governing this, however, is not clear with vast variations in requirements and approaches. To identify data gaps and assist countries in planning and implementing food fortification in their countries, ILSI SEA Region conducted a survey on regulatory status of mandatory and voluntary fortification in the Southeast Asia region. The report of the survey finding is being finalized and this background information will be crucial to move toward possible harmonization of fortification framework.



4 SUPPORT COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH

Southeast Asia and Australasia form a large and diverse geographical region with populations of many cultures and ethnicity, and varying socio-economic status. These factors have a direct impact on the health status and well-being of its populations. ILSI seeks to address public health issues and challenges by supporting community programs and facilitating research.

In 2010, community health programs and research supported by ILSI SEA Region focused on the issues of iron-deficiency anemia and safe water supply in developing Southeast Asian countries.

● Project IDEA Iron-Fortification Programs in Southeast Asian Countries



Project IDEA (Iron Deficiency Elimination Action) is an ILSI program that seeks to help prevent iron-deficiency anemia by supplying iron through daily meals. In collaboration with the ILSI Japan Center for Health Promotion (ILSI Japan CHP) and local institutions, ILSI SEA Region is supporting on-going food fortification programs in Philippines, Cambodia and Vietnam. These programs include an efficacy study of an iron-fortification of rice program in Vietnam; expansion of iron-fortification of rice program in the Philippines; and the market trial of iron-fortified fish sauce and soy sauce in Cambodia.

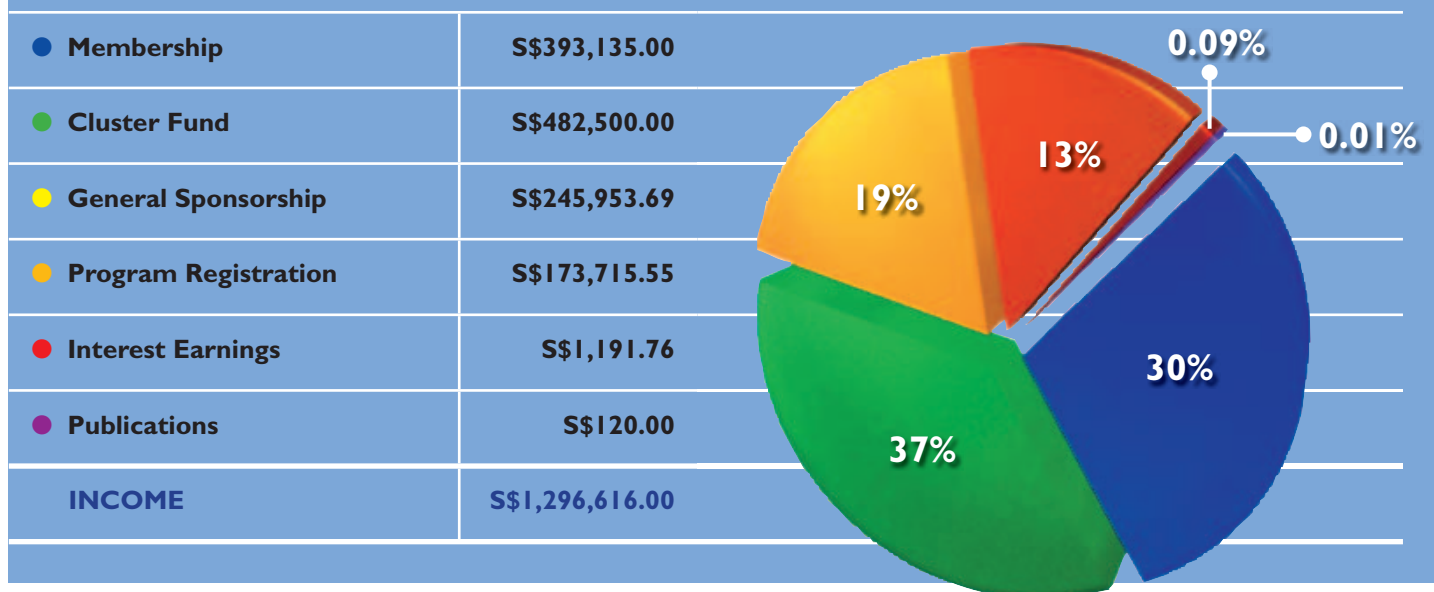
● Project SWAN in Indonesia

Project SWAN (Safe Water and Nutrition) is a program developed by ILSI Japan CHP to assist communities in developing countries such as Vietnam and Cambodia to secure safe water supply. ILSI SEA Region has been involved in discussions with ILSI Japan CHP and SEAMEO RECFON (Regional Center for Food and Nutrition) to initiate Project SWAN in Indonesia. After completion of a situational analysis in 2010 by SEAMEO RECFON, we will progress to initiate a pilot project of Project SWAN in Indonesia in 2011-2012.

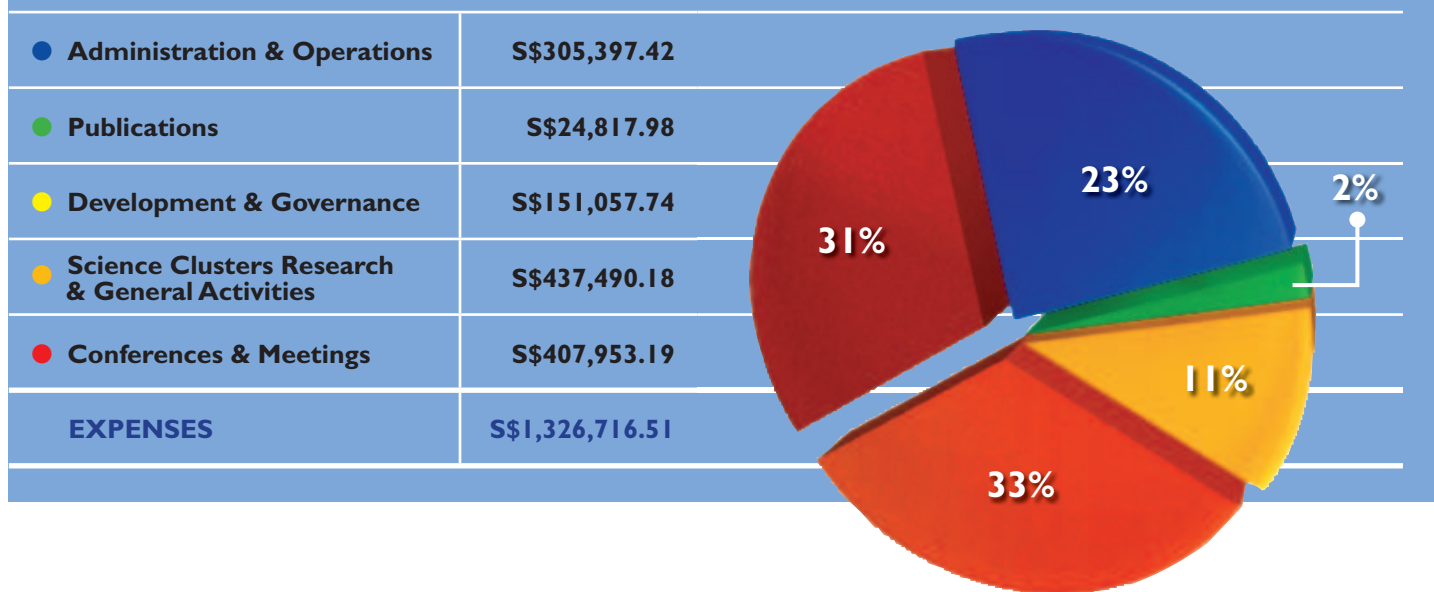


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2010-2011

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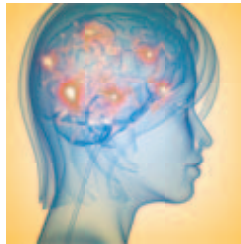
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http://www.ilsil.org/SEA_Region

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