

Meeting of the Council at Ministerial Level, 2-3 May 2024**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE OECD STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
FOR THE INDO-PACIFIC****JT03543042**

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1. On 7-8 June 2023, the OECD Council at Ministerial Level approved the OECD Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific [C/MIN(2023)19/FINAL] (hereafter the “Strategic Framework”), which foresees that “*the OECD will develop a plan to implement this Strategic Framework, in full consultation and co-operation with partners in the region through existing mechanisms before the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting in 2024*”.

Implementation Plan

2. This Implementation Plan **builds on existing global relations tools, and their underlying mandates, budgets and policy areas of engagement**, through the Southeast Asia Regional Programme (SEARP); Key Partnerships with the People’s Republic of China (hereafter “China”), India and Indonesia; the Thailand Country Programme; the engagement with Viet Nam and Singapore; and with regional organisations and institutions. It includes existing structures enhancing OECD presence in the region, namely the OECD Tokyo Centre and OECD Offices in Jakarta and Beijing, and proposes additional physical presence with ASEAN in Jakarta, Indonesia and in New Delhi, India.

3. The Implementation Plan **addresses the objectives of the Strategic Framework** with an emphasis on:

- building strong, inclusive and sustainable economies;
- working together to mitigate and adapt to climate change, promoting the energy transition to climate neutrality while protecting energy security, countering biodiversity loss, pollution, other forms of environmental degradation and strengthening ocean governance as well as a focus on plastics and the circular economy;
- managing the digital transformation and work to improve trusted connectivity;
- strengthening cyber and digital security;
- promoting human development by delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals, including gender equality and women’s economic empowerment, decent work and economic growth, quality education, reducing inequality and enhancing wellbeing;
- attracting more, better, and safe foreign direct investment;
- building more resilient and sustainable supply-chains; and
- protecting and strengthening the global rules-based trading system.

4. These policy areas will be incorporated where possible in all the existing global relations tools, and potentially be subject to new projects and partnerships with the region. The Strategic Framework calls for working closely with the countries of the Indo-Pacific to:

- increase their alignment with OECD standards with a view to potentially adhere to OECD legal instruments;
- substantially enhance the participation of Indo-Pacific countries in OECD bodies and identify Indo-Pacific countries for possible OECD membership;
- increase high-level engagement between the OECD and Indo-Pacific countries; and
- strengthen institutional relationships with key regional organisations.

Outputs of the Implementation Plan

5. **Making OECD standards count on a global scale.** Working towards making OECD standards count on a global scale, the Implementation Plan focused on engaging with partner countries from the region in areas ranging from climate change to artificial intelligence, the digital transformation, cyber and digital security, quality infrastructure investment, resilient and sustainable supply chains and inclusive growth. This would foster not only greater familiarity with OECD standards, but also increased participation with OECD bodies, including benchmarking analyses of selected countries.

- **Technical, capacity-building, and twinning seminars** on key OECD legal instruments for Indonesia, Thailand and other Indo-Pacific countries.
- **Gap studies, practical and detailed policy briefs and training workshops** to assess alignment with OECD legal instruments.

6. **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).** Since its launch in 2014, the SEARP has worked closely with ASEAN and supported the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Chairs with a number of deliverables. These include, among others, the *ASEAN Principles for Public Private Partnerships*, *ASEAN Principles on Good Business Registration Practice*, and *ASEAN Guidelines of Micro Enterprises*. Endorsed by ASEAN Leaders, the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) identified the OECD as a partner in its implementation plan. This was followed by the first MOU between ASEAN and the OECD signed in February 2022 at the SEARP Ministerial Meeting in Seoul, Korea. The Implementation Plan aligns with national and regional frameworks, including the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). To further strengthen this relationship, it is proposed to have an in-country liaison officer responsible for enhancing OECD relations with the ASEAN Secretariat and for liaising with ASEAN Member States and ASEAN partners.

7. **Asia/OECD awareness: a two-way approach** through fostering greater understanding of the OECD in Asia and Asia in the OECD. The Implementation Plan could encourage more staff on loan from governments of Asian countries to the Organisation, who can then contribute to the understanding of OECD matters back in capitals. In addition to the existing engagement with Thailand, Viet Nam, and Singapore, a particular focus would be placed on Indonesia. The Implementation Plan could also promote secondments of OECD officials to partner organisations and institutions based in the region, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and potentially the ASEAN Secretariat or ASEAN member ministries and agencies.

8. **Indonesia: Next steps on the accession request.** On 14 July 2023, Indonesia formally expressed its interest in joining the Organisation and requested to start the accession process to the OECD. The Indonesian government recognises that OECD accession would provide a catalyst for reform and continuity to achieve Indonesia's national development goals, as well as enabling Indonesia to access the numerous benefits of OECD membership. On 20 February 2024, OECD Council decided to open accession discussions with Indonesia. Subsequently, the Accession Roadmap for Indonesia was adopted on 29 March 2024.

9. **Thailand: Next steps on the accession request.** On 13 February 2024, H.E. Srettha Thavisin, the Prime Minister of Thailand, sent a letter formally requesting to begin the accession process to the OECD. The Thai government states that OECD membership would accelerate the process of regulatory alignment with OECD standards, improve its policy competitiveness, and create a better business climate with fair competition and transparency.

10. **Engagement with China.** The OECD aims to strengthen its engagement with China on areas of global concern such as climate and environment as well as international tax co-operation. The OECD will also continue engaging with China in policy areas where China's increased alignment with OECD standards and best practices and potential adherence to OECD legal instruments can contribute to reducing policy distortions and levelling the global playing field.

11. **Supporting OECD awareness raising in India.** Following the successful G20 engagement, continue to work with the Government of India on OECD strategic priorities including tax policy, economic surveillance, clean energy and environment, corporate governance, responsible business conduct (RBC), competition, digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI), education, investment and private sector development, among others.

12. **Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).** There is a need to deepen engagement with additional key regional organisations and fora, such as the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and its member countries. At present the engagement is limited and there are many international and regional organisations involved with the Pacific Islands. The OECD will stay focused on strengthening its engagement in the first instance in the areas of tax policy, the OECD's Sustainable Ocean for All Initiative, Small Island Developing States Initiative, and early discussions on private sector development and MSMEs.

13. **South Asia.** Drawing on the lessons of the successful 10-year engagement through the SEARP, there is scope to strengthen engagement with the South Asia region. This could also include country-specific collaboration with Bangladesh and other partners in the region.