

NTS Bulletin September 2013

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NTS VIEWPOINT

'Stock' solution to regional food security: Which way forward?

By Belinda Chng

Consumption patterns in Southeast Asia are changing rapidly. As the region becomes more affluent, demand for protein and wheat is expected to increase. Such shifts may leave countries with no choice but to seek regional or multilateral options to complement their own food security strategies.

At present, many countries still focus on national-level strategies. For example, traditional rice-importing countries Indonesia and the Philippines seek to be self-sufficient in rice through a combination of national stockpiling schemes, imports, and domestic production and procurement.

However, such national-level measures are costly, and are vulnerable to factors such as volatility in the prices of production inputs, availability of land, labour and capital, environmental hazards, trade policies of exporting countries, the import capacity of a country, and even losses from spoilage. The Philippines made international headlines in 2011 when a local non-governmental organisation reported that 500,000 tons of rice were rotting in government warehouses due to poor management.

Such issues suggest that alleviating food supply vulnerabilities requires the use of multiple approaches. Within this context, a regional stockpile becomes attractive, which explains to some extent the creation of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR).

Food reserves are however costly and tedious to manage. Studies show that stabilising prices through buffer stocks and trade policies requires rigorous conditions, including sufficient access

to finance, and well-timed purchases and sales. When reserves are released in non-emergency situations, it can cause instability in the international markets.

APTERR itself has seen limited success. Contributions from the 10 ASEAN countries make up just 11 per cent of the current reserves, with Japan, China and South Korea making up the balance. Total reserves stand at 787,000 tons – less than two days of consumption in Southeast Asia and East Asia. This is despite ASEAN member states being among the world's largest producers, exporters and stockpilers of rice.

This does not mean that food-stock mechanisms are ineffective. Properly crafted, such measures can strengthen a country's resilience to food supply shocks. There is a need, however, to look at what could be done to improve their design.

To begin with, ASEAN could look at how APTERR can be enhanced. Specifically, countries will need to step up their commitment to APTERR, by increasing their rice pledges and providing higher financial support to boost operational capacity.

Beyond that, a range of other bilateral, multilateral and regional arrangements that involve partnerships with the private sector could be considered. Shared management of specific food items could allow countries to hold a lower level of stocks in other items, which could help them manage costs and strengthen access to a wider range of food stocks. Governments could also tap private-sector logistics networks to facilitate rapid and smooth distribution of food stocks.

There is still much scope at the regional level to improve existing mechanisms, and to explore new ones – both to mitigate the risks inherent in national-level strategies, and to enhance stability of food supply in the region. What is needed now is the will to push this agenda forward.

Belinda Chng is Research Fellow with the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Additional Info:

- Briones, Roehlano M., 2011, 'Regional cooperation for food security: The case of emergency rice reserves in the ASEAN Plus Three', ADB Working Paper No. 18, Manila: Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (US), 2012, 'Grain reserves and the food price crisis: Selected writings from 2008–2012', Minneapolis, MN.
- Islam, Nurul and Saji Thomas, 1996, 'Foodgrain price stabilization in developing countries', International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).
- Teng, Paul and Maria C.S. Morales, 2013, 'A new paradigm for food security: Robustness as an end goal', *NTS Policy Brief*, No. PO13-05, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.
- Timmer, Peter, 2010, 'Food security in Asia and the changing role of rice', Occasional Paper No. 4, Asia Foundation.

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CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- 'Typhoon Utor hits southern China', *Al Jazeera*, 15 August 2013.
- Del Bello, Lou, 'Coastal cities to pay high price for climate change', *SciDev.Net*, 18 August 2013.
- Hook, Lisa, 'The business of climate change preparedness', *In Asia*, 21 August 2013.
- Prakash, Megha, 'Enforcement key to earthquake survival in Asia', *SciDev.Net*, 21 August 2013.
- Fabe, Bong D., 'Green group urges govt to use "pork" to "climate-proof" PHL', *Business Mirror*, 26 August 2013.
- 'Ahead of G20 summit, Ban calls for leadership towards building more sustainable future', *UN News Centre*, 30 August 2013.
- Hajramurni, Andi, 'S. Sulawesi establishes new environment university', *The Jakarta Post*, 1 September 2013.
- Chai, Sophie, 'Starvation, poverty follow indigenous land sales in Indonesia', *Environment News Service*, 3 September 2013.
- Ngiau, David, 'Flash floods hit several areas in western Singapore', *Today*, 5 September 2013.

Selected Publications

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 2013, 'Biodiversity for cities and slums', Brief No. 2, April.

The brief discusses the importance of promoting green spaces in urban areas as a key mechanism for the conservation of nature elsewhere. In addition to studies that note the importance of exposure to nature in cultivating an appreciation for ecosystems and thereby building awareness on environmental issues, the concentration of people, wealth and political power in urban areas makes cities an important focus area for biodiversity conservation.

- Dodman, David, Donald Brown, Katie Francis et al., 2013, 'Understanding the nature and scale of urban risk in low- and middle-income countries and its implications for humanitarian preparedness, planning and response', Discussion paper, London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

Through an analysis of academic and policy literature, and a number of interviews with key informants in the field, this paper seeks to assist humanitarian and development actors to better promote urban resilience and disaster risk reduction and to respond effectively to the humanitarian emergencies that are likely to occur in cities.

- Wilson, Emma and Emma Blackmore (eds), 2013, *Dispute or dialogue? Community perspectives on company-led grievance mechanisms*, London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

This publication explores the use and impact of company–community grievance mechanisms in the oil and gas, forestry and mining sectors. It highlights the importance of having an open and responsive approach to stakeholder engagement within which a grievance mechanism can sit. It cites effective approaches for enhancing dialogue as well as recommendations on how to design grievance mechanisms to better meet the needs of communities and to avoid the risk and costs of community disputes for business.

Events & Announcements

- 'Social Good Summit', 22–24 September 2013, New York, NY, US.

- 'Third Global Green Growth Forum', 21–22 October 2013, Copenhagen, Denmark.

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ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Wallace, Michael, George David Banks and Alayna Rodriguez, 'Finding a solution to America's nuclear waste problem', *Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)*, 2 August 2013.
- C.C., 'The land of green and money', *The Economist*, 4 August 2013.
- DeHart, Jonathan, 'Taiwan's parliamentary brawl: Debate rages over nuclear plant', *Diplomat*, 5 August 2013.
- Smith, Ray, 'Geothermal energy stuck in a hole in Switzerland', *Jakarta Globe*, 5 August 2013.
- Trivedi, Anjani, 'No end in sight to the energy crisis that plagues the Philippines', *Time*, 6 August 2013.
- 'Political unrest could constrain OPEC exports "indefinitely", says IEA', *Telegraph*, 9 August 2013.
- Wolfgang, Ben, 'U.K.'s Cameron: Shale gas drilling is safe, will create jobs', *The Washington Times*, 12 August 2013.
- Nakano, Jane, 'Japan gears up its quest for the "best energy mix"', *Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)*, 23 August 2013.
- 'Indonesia may miss oil output target this year as operators wary after graft scandal', *The Jakarta Post*, 26 August 2013.
- 'ADB to fund Sarawak-West Kalimantan hydroelectric power project', *Jakarta Globe*, 28 August 2013.
- Kazmi, Shabbir H., 'Pakistan's energy crisis', *Diplomat*, 31 August 2013.



Selected Publications

- Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2013, 'Affordable pay-as-you-go solar power for India's energy-poor homes', *ADB Knowledge Showcases*, No. 48, August.

This document provides an overview of an ADB project with a private-sector partner to provide affordable, clean energy (solar-powered energy) to Indian rural households. The project allows poor homes to purchase energy on a pay-as-you-go basis using mobile phones.

- Zhang, Sufang, Philip Andrews-Speed and Xiaoli Zhao, 2013, 'Political and institutional analysis of the successes and failures of China's wind power policy', *Energy Policy*, Vol. 56, pp. 331–40.

The analysis highlights China's strong political will in advancing renewable energy policy, driven by energy security concerns. That will is demonstrated by emphases on the environment and green technology development, with environmental and social agenda featured in national plans since the 11th Five-year Plan (2006–2011). Institutional arrangements under the Renewable Energy Law have also successfully incentivised the development of wind power, an energy source that still needs to be maximised.

Events & Announcements

- 'Asia Pacific Oil & Gas Conference and Exhibition', 22–24 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia.
- '3rd International Conference and Exhibition on Sustainable Energy and Advanced Material', 30–31 October 2013, Melaka, Malaysia.

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FOOD SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- 'Could Sri Lanka get irrigation boost from ancient reservoirs?', *IRIN*, 1 August 2013.
- Dobrovlny, Michelle, 'Rice gene digs deep to triple yields in drought', *SciDev.Net*, 5 August 2013.
- Jikkham, Patsara and Soonruth Bunyamane, 'Pledging scheme "aids rich"', *Bangkok Post*, 5 August 2013.
- Iubis, Anggi M., 'RI to import 600,000 tons of rice due to low production', *The Jakarta Post*, 6 August 2013.
- Del Bello, Lou, 'Non-food crops lock up enough calories to feed 4 billion', *SciDev.Net*, 14 August 2013.
- 'Experts examine ways to boost regional cooperation for food security in South Asia', *UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)*, 14 August 2013.
- Weng, Lawi and Saw Yan Naing, 'Gathered farmers called on govt to end land grabs', *The Irrawaddy*, 20 August 2013.
- Aung, Htin Lin, 'Myanmar uncertain of fulfilling Japan's offer to import rice', *Mizzima*, 21 August 2013.



- Desker, Barry, 'The rising challenge of our fragile food security', *Today*, 22 August 2013.
- Domingo, Ronnel W., 'DA seeks more funds for rice farms', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 22 August 2013.
- 'India's malnourished: A mess of pottage', *The Economist*, 24 August 2013.
- 'FAO Food Price Index continued to fall', *Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)*, 5 September 2013.

Selected Publications

- Fan, Shenggen, Joanna Brzeska, Michiel Keyzer et al., 2013, *From subsistence to profit: Transforming smallholder farms*, Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

This policy report presents a typology of the diverse livelihood strategies and development pathways for smallholder farms in developing countries, and offers recommendations to help potentially profitable smallholders meet emerging risks and challenges.

- Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2013, *Gender equality and food security: Women's empowerment as a tool against hunger*, Mandaluyong City.

The report indicates that equality of treatment between women and men and food security are mutually reinforcing. However, gender equality remains an elusive goal in many parts of Asia and the Pacific. There is thus a need for a transformation of traditional gender roles and to build on improved information about the range of inequalities and the specific constraints facing women.

Events & Announcements

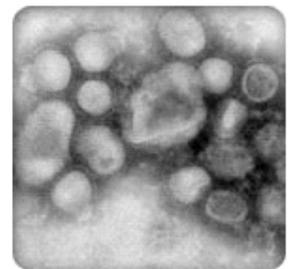
- 'Science Forum – Nutrition and Health Outcomes: Targets for Agricultural Research', 23–25 September 2013, Bonn, Germany.
- '40th Session of the Committee on World Food Security', 7–11 October 2013, Rome, Italy.

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HEALTH SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Reyes, Elga, 'Happy people, healthy bottom line', *Eco-Business*, 13 August 2013.
- 'FAO says it's too early to draw conclusions on source of MERS-CoV', *Vaccine News*, 15 August 2013.
- 'More work needed in Myanmar on drug-resistant TB', *IRIN*, 20 August 2013.
- 'Flooding prompts health concerns in Philippines', *Asian Scientist*, 22 August 2013.
- 'Indonesia introduces five-in-one vaccine for children', *World Health Organization (WHO)*, 22 August 2013.
- 'Seventeenth case of avian influenza H5N1 in Cambodia in 2013', *World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region*, 22 August 2013.
- Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, "'Safe" levels of environmental pollution may have long-term health consequences', *ScienceDaily*, 29 August 2013.
- MacLean, Dana, 'Analysis: As Laos prospers, child malnutrition persists', *IRIN*, 29 August 2013.
- University of Toronto, 'New research gives answers on the relationship between chronic illness and food insecurity', *ScienceDaily*, 30 August 2013.
- De Bello, Lou, 'UK pledges £30 million for neglected disease R&D', *SciDev.Net*, 3 September 2013.



Selected Publications

- World Health Organization (WHO), 2013, *The World Health Report 2013: Research for universal health coverage*, Geneva.

This report underscored the need for research to define the services and supporting policies needed in specific settings, including financial risk protection for populations that need these services and the cost (out-of-pocket payments) for such services. It is also vital to measure progress towards universal coverage using valid indicators and appropriate data.

- Fan, Victoria Y., Denizhan Duran, Rachel Silverman et al., 2013, 'Performance-based financing at the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria: An analysis of grant ratings and funding, 2003–12', *Lancet Global Health*, Vol. 1, pp. e161–8.

Through an analysis of performance ratings of Global Fund grants from 2003 to 2012, this article argues that a complex, multi-step system for grant ratings tends to be subjective and discretionary, and leads to disincentives for recipients. The article recommends a redesign of the Global Fund's system based on independently measured health outcomes.

Events & Announcements

- 'World Alzheimer's Month', September 2013.
- '64th Session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Western Pacific', 21–25 October 2013, Manila, Philippines.

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INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT

News & Commentaries



- 'Analysis: In search of a regional Rohingya solution', *IRIN*, 26 July 2013.
- 'Kevin Rudd signs asylum seeker settlement deal with Nauru', *Australian AP*, 4 August 2013.
- Ramakrishna, Kumar, 'Studying Southeast Asian religious conflicts: Bringing back religion', *RSIS Commentaries*, No.152/2013, 15 August 2013.
- 'Bangladesh: Azam conviction based on flawed proceedings', *Human Rights Watch*, 16 August 2013.
- Chaichalearmmongkol, Nopparat, 'Roadblocks still ahead for peace in Thailand's deep south', *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 August 2013.
- Ashayagachat, Achara, 'Security reform needed "to help solve South violence"', *Bangkok Post*, 25 August 2013.
- Cochrane, Joe and Matt Siegel, 'Seeking asylum in Australia, refugees find a policy in flux', *The New York Times*, 26 August 2013.
- 'Sri Lanka heading in "authoritarian direction", says UN human rights chief', *UN News Centre*, 31 August 2013.
- 'Cambodia: Government obstructs Khmer Rouge court', *Human Rights Watch*, 5 September 2013.
- Fuller, Thomas, 'In an unsettled Cambodia, preparing to confront the government', *The New York Times*, 5 September 2013.

Selected Publications

- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement, 2013, *National instruments on internal displacement: A guide to their development*, Geneva and Washington, DC.

This report offers guidance for developing national instruments for addressing internal displacement. The state has the responsibility to protect the rights of internally displaced people and national legal frameworks facilitate the efforts to achieve this end. The report discusses the processes of developing such instruments as well the challenges and difficulties that arise during the process.

- Mills, Kurt, 2013, 'R2P3: Protecting, prosecuting, or palliating in mass atrocity situations?', *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 333–56.

This article discusses the responsibilities of the international community with regard to the protection of people against mass atrocities. It argues that the different elements of the responsibility to protect (RtoP) could each undermine the others' effects, rather than be mutually reinforcing; and it reframes the RtoP as protection, prosecution and palliation (diverging from the version unanimously adopted at the 2005 UN World Summit).

Events & Announcements

- 'World Conference on Humanitarian Studies and Third Istanbul Human Security Conference – Human Security: Humanitarian Perspectives and Responses', 24–27 October 2013, Istanbul, Turkey.
- 'Call for Papers: Refugee Studies Centre (RSC) International Conference – Refugee Voices', Deadline: 31 October 2013.

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TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

News & Commentaries



- 'China says joint Mekong River operation with Laos, Myanmar, Thailand seized \$400M of drugs', *AP*, 2 July 2013.
- '427 deaths among the Gulf's Nepali workers', *Migrant Rights*, 16 August 2013.
- Finkle, Jim, 'Virus targets the social network in new fraud twist', *Reuters*, 16 August 2013.
- Al-Shaher, Omar, 'Money laundering to be in billions, Iraqi official estimates', *Al-Monitor*, 21 August 2013.
- Kaze, Reinnier, 'Counterfeit medicine trade targets Africa's poor', *AFP*, 21 August 2013.
- Hockenson, Lauren, 'Your identity is probably worth \$5 on the black market', *Gigaom*, 22 August 2013.
- Hodal, Kate, 'Meth drug makers lure children in Thailand with sweet-coated yaba pills', *Guardian*, 27 August 2013.
- Kriesch, Adrian, 'Egypt's chaos fuels Africa's human trafficking', *Deutsche Welle*, 27 August 2013.

- 'Key arrest in Thailand, may prove "China link" to NE arms', *The Indian Express*, 2 September 2013.

Selected Publications

- Crouch, Melissa and Antje Missbach, 2013, *Trials of people smugglers in Indonesia: 2007–2012*, Policy Papers No. 1, Melbourne: Centre for Indonesian Law, Islam and Society (CILIS), University of Melbourne.

This paper presents the findings of a survey of court cases from 2007 onwards, including the first year and a half of the operation of Indonesia's Law 6/2011 on Immigration (May 2011 – December 2012). It argues that any efforts to increase the scope and depth of cooperation between Australia and Indonesia must take into account the progress made by, as well as the challenges confronting, law enforcement agencies in prosecuting people smugglers in Indonesian courts.

- UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2013, *Transnational organized crime in Eastern Africa: A threat assessment*, Vienna.

According to this report, more than 100,000 people were smuggled out of East Africa in 2012 alone, generating over USD15 million for organised criminal networks. Ivory poaching led to an additional USD30 million in illicit revenue just from Asian markets. Illicit drugs are increasingly becoming lucrative, with up to 22 tons of heroin trafficked to and through the region annually. Finally, Somali piracy was worth an estimated USD150 million in 2011, equivalent to almost 15 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Events & Announcements

- '5th International Symposium on Terrorism and Transnational Crime', 6–8 December 2013, Antalya, Turkey.
- 'International Conference on Counter Terrorism and Human Security', 30–31 July 2014, Zurich, Switzerland.

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WATER SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Johnson, Ian, 'China's great uprooting: Moving 250 million into cities', *The New York Times*, 15 June 2013.
- 'Hong Kong to reduce reliance on China with water projects', *Power Insider*, 19 July 2013.
- Reyes, Elga, 'Singapore discovers world's first water treatment method using apple and tomato peels', *Eco-Business*, 23 July 2013.
- 'Uganda launches construction of mega power dam on river Nile', *Sudan Tribune*, 14 August 2013.
- Ahmed, Nafeez Mossadeq, 'How resource shortages sparked Egypt's months-long crisis', *The Atlantic*, 19 August 2013.
- 'China less than enthusiastic to Indian proposal on water issue', *The Economic Times*, 20 August 2013.
- Udasin, Sharon, 'Jordanian PM: Sell future desalinated water to Israel, purchase more Kinneret water', *The Jerusalem Post*, 20 August 2013.
- 'Mekong River Commission and China boost water data exchange', *Mekong River Commission (MRC)*, 30 August 2013.
- Takenaka, Kiyoshi and Mari Saito, 'Japan to spend almost \$500 million on water crisis at Fukushima nuclear plant', *Reuters*, 3 September 2013.



Selected Publications

- Hangzo, Pau Khan Khup and J. Jackson Ewing, 2013, 'Will rapid development in Johor impact water access, quality or price in Singapore?', *NTS Insight*, no. IN13-06, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

This paper investigates the potential impacts of Johor's economic growth and the attendant social changes on future water supply to Singapore. It argues that the development of the Iskandar Malaysia economic corridor could lead to an increase in demand for water across all sectors. This could potentially affect Singapore's imports of water from Johor, which remains substantial despite ongoing self-reliance efforts.

- Savoskul, Oxana S. and Vladimir Smakhtin, 2013, *Glacier systems and seasonal snow cover in six major Asian river basins: Water storage properties under changing climate*, IWMI Research Report No. 149, Colombo: International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

This report analyses the meltwater resources of Asia's river basins. The Syr Darya and Mekong river basins are likely to become glacier-free if temperature increases by 4–5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. Glaciers in the Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra and Amu Darya river basins will survive, but total basin ice reserves may decrease by as much as three quarters from levels in 1961–

1990.

- Grumbine, R. Edward and Maharaj K. Pandit, 2013, 'Threats from India's Himalaya dams', *Science*, Vol. 339, No. 6115, pp. 36–7.

This article analyses hydroelectric dam building efforts by India – it has plans to construct 292 – on the Himalayan rivers. The article warns that the human and ecological impacts of the extensive dam building would be disastrous, and as such, careful consideration should be given to the potential consequences.

Events & Announcements

- 'Peoples, Land and Water: The Natural Connection', 3–6 November 2013, Cotonou, Republic of Benin.
- 'VII World Aqua Congress – Universal Conference', 11–13 December 2013, New Delhi, India.
- 'International Conference on Intelligent Agriculture', 13–14 February 2014, Hong Kong.

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The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Climate Change, Food Security, Energy Security, Health Security, as well as Internal and Cross Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.