

Press Release: 5th Asian European Business Innovation Congress

The 5th Asian-European Business Innovation Congress (AEBIC) took place in Bangkok on November 14-15, 2017 at the Athenee Hotel, a luxury collection hotel, and at the Food Innopolis Technopark in Thailand. Delegates from different countries participated in the event dedicated to the main theme: **FOOD INNOPOLIS - Innovation in the Food Industry.**

The main objective of the AEBIC Bangkok 2017 was to explore new market trends, products, services, and technological innovation in the food industry in the ASEAN region. During the two-day program, participants had a good opportunity to discuss *important issues such as food safety, process optimization, and industry 4.0.*

Chairman of the Asian-European Business Innovation Congress Council and Managing Director of the Center for strategic intercultural communication GmbH, Dr. Konstantin Schamber (ECA President China), said: *“For the first time the Asian-European Business Innovation Congress took place in Thailand and we are honored to start our cooperation with **the National Science Technology and Innovation Policy Office (STI) Thailand supported by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) Thailand. With such respected players as the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation ASEAN, Siemens Thailand, the Thailand Management Association,** we are glad to establish business relationships within this very dynamic region.”*

The **plenary sessions on Day 1** were opened by **Dr. Kitipong Promwong, Secretary General of the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Office (STI)** who illustrated the Thai **government’s role in supporting innovation for sustainability.** Dr. Promwong emphasized the government’s efforts in ushering Thailand towards an innovation-based economy, bringing to light the government’s long-term technology policy involving technology localization, industrial diversification and industry technology deepening, as well as regulatory policies involving provisions for tax exemptions for targeted industries and for R&D and innovation expenditures, the establishment of economic zones of innovation, and the drafting of national startup promotion programs and laws.



The second session was devoted to the **digitalization process in food and beverage manufacturing** presented by **Mr. Alexander Samuel Grimm, Head of Vertical Food & Beverage ASEAN, Digital Factory Division Siemens, Singapore.** Among others, Mr. Grimm introduced the notion of a holistic approach in food and beverage production digitalization, stressing the key role of communication and connectivity between and among different players, lines and disciplines throughout the entire value chain. **Mr. Alexander Samuel Grimm** said: *“For Siemens the Food & Beverage industry in Thailand shows big potential and with the Thailand 4.0 initiative an innovative environment for the development towards digitalization. The AEBIC has been a very good platform to get in touch with Thailand food associations as*

well as food & beverage producers to discuss the current status and the future needs like standardization as a first step”.

The session on **novel food** was facilitated by **Mr. Smith Taweelerdniti**, *Managing Director of Nithi Foods*, who discussed the global trends for novel food and **Mr. Matthew Godfrey**, *Chief Executive Officer, Nutrition Innovation, Singapore* who discussed open innovation in novel food. Mr. Taweelerdniti pointed out that the global trends for novel food introduces an economy of speed in the food industry, wherein time to market is critical, and consequently gives rise to the necessity of outsourcing science; while Mr. Godfrey stressed that for innovation to be successful, it must be collaborative.

The **food safety and standard** session was led by **Ms. Cyndy Au**, *Regional Director for Regulatory and Scientific Affairs, Asia Pacific, Dupont Nutrition and Health* who emphasized bringing to consumers the message that they have a right to expect that the food they purchase and consume is safe and of high quality. **Dr. Rutjawate Taharnklaew**, *DVM, Vice President, Research and Development Center, Betagro Group* followed with his presentation, stressing that what we choose to eat “is a big deal”.

The session on **supply chain and service innovation in the food sector** started with the presentation on **international collaboration opportunities in food innovation at Fraunhofer Food Chain Management Alliance** by **Mr. Ralf Opierzynski**, *Head of Office of Fraunhofer IFF ASEAN Regional Office Thailand*. A discussion by **Mr. Motoyuki Hazu**, *Executive Officer, General Manager, Overseas Business Development Division, Nichirei Logistics Group Inc. Thailand* on **innovative solutions in logistics** through the use of transfer centers followed. **Mr. Ralf Opierzynski** said: *“The Fraunhofer Food Chain Management Alliance Germany has been conducting projects in the field of food innovation in collaboration with Food Innopolis / STI Thailand since 2016. The AEBIC event offered us an excellent platform to foster existing but also initiate new partnerships with representatives from the government, academic and private sector from Thailand and the ASEAN region. The variety of topics presented such as novel food, food standards, logistics, digitalization and industry 4.0, the feedback and fruitful discussions with some of the more than 140 participants and the strong commitment by Thai stakeholders are very promising indicators and encourage us to intensify and extent our mutual collaborations in the field of food innovation in Thailand”.*

The plenary sessions were rounded off by a discussion of Thailand’s **Food Industry 4.0** policy by a panel of experts composed of **Dr. Akkharawit Kanjana-opas**, *Deputy Secretary General, National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Office (STI)*, and *Chief Executive Officer, Food Innopolis, Thailand*; **Mr. Alexander Samuel Grimm**; **Mr. Anan Chaikitwattana**, *Department Manager of Ingredient Business, Tipco Biotech*; and **Dr. Magnus Bergkvist**, *Open Innovation Lead, Global Innovation Incubator, Thai Union Group*. The discussion, moderated by STI’s Dr. Porramate Chumylin, raised several points relating to the impact and future of Thailand’s food industry, including the Thai government’s effort to build an open innovation ecosystem and infrastructure to assist the food industry in doing research and responding to global food requirements. The panel of experts pointed out that the food and beverage industry is changing, and global food requirements are becoming increasingly individual. Therefore, both technology-based flexibility to create new business models and international networks for collaboration are important for companies in order for them to adapt to change. In addition, the panel agreed that education is key in creating a more innovative mindset.

On **Day 2**, delegates visited the **Food Innopolis at the Thailand Science Park** and were introduced into its service platforms, such as joint R&D or contract research, raw materials or ingredients sourcing, database of experts, one-stop-shop for related government transactions, etc., as well as its infrastructure for leasing of equipment, pilot plants and laboratories.

The AEBIC Bangkok is organized by the Center for strategic intercultural communication GmbH and the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation ASEAN Regional Office Thailand. Co-organizers are **the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) Thailand, the National Science Technology and Innovation Policy Office (STI) Thailand**, the Thailand Management Association, The Food

Innopolis Technopark, and the Association of Medium-Sized Enterprises - MITTELSTAND INTERNATIONAL.
The main industry sponsor of the AEBIC event in Thailand was **Siemens Thailand**.

To visit the Congress website, please click here: www.business-innovation-congress.com