



# SOUTHEAST ASIA PROBIOTICS SCIENTIFIC & REGULATORY EXPERTS NETWORK (SEA PROBIOTICS SREN)



## An Organization Profile

... advancing probiotics science and regulations for human well-being...

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# Background

Probiotics have become an increasingly popular functional foods, with growing clinical evidence supporting the effectiveness of probiotics in general health maintenance and disease treatment, especially conditions related to digestive tract, the immune system and respiratory functions. According to Mordor Intelligence (2019) the market growth of probiotics has increased significantly, especially in the Asia Pacific region. The number and type of probiotic foods and drinks have increased considerably and are increasingly being promoted by health professionals.

Regulations on probiotics have been gazetted only in a few countries in Southeast Asia (SEA). These regulations have been developed independently and have taken on different approaches. Although there is a FAO/WHO definition of probiotics, the sale of products that do not meet this definition have been reported. The lack of harmonized regulations and scientific guidelines on clinical studies on probiotics have been recognized to lead to issues and concerns for the regulators, industry and even consumers.

In view of these developments, the Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia (PERGIZI PANGAN Indonesia) with partners initiated the formation of a network among experts of key stakeholder organizations in the Southeast Asia, called Southeast Asia Probiotics Scientific and Regulatory Experts Network (SEA Probiotics SREN). The inaugural workshop of the Network among the key stakeholders was held in Jakarta on 16 December 2019 to chart its directions. Twenty five experts in various fields of probiotic research and regulations from five countries in Southeast Asia participated in the first workshop. They recognized the significant developments on the studies and probiotics regulation in the Asia Pacific region, with the need and relevance of setting up the probiotics network among experts from government, academia, professional bodies and industries. The participants of the first workshop agreed that Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia (PERGIZI PANGAN Indonesia) shall serve as the Secretariat to organize the SEA Probiotics SREN programs. When future meetings are organized in other countries, local host(s) shall be identified to co-organize the meeting with PERGIZI PANGAN Indonesia.

The Network provides a platform for discussions on scientific and regulatory aspects of probiotics. In a follow-up workshop on 16 February 2020 in Surabaya, the Network was formally launched and its activities planned with specific actions in two streams: 1) regulations on probiotics in Southeast Asia, and 2) clinical studies on probiotics in Southeast Asia.



## Vision



Be a credible network in advancing probiotics science and regulations for human well-being in Southeast Asia

## Mission

1. To share updates on the latest probiotics and microbiome research and knowledge through publications and scientific meetings.
2. To provide a common platform for sharing of probiotics clinical trial guidelines and regulations within the region.
3. To provide information for updating Southeast Asian probiotics regulations in line with latest international standards and guidelines.

## Core Values

The core values of the network are intelligence, local wisdom, confidence, trust and respect that are beneficial to members and stakeholders with a collaborative spirit.



# Objectives



1. To provide a forum for discussion on scientific matters related to probiotics, including clinical trials, among experts of key stakeholders (government, academia, professional organization and private sector)
2. To enable regular updates on global and regional status of regulatory framework for probiotics including Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) and other related Codex Committees
3. To enable sharing of appropriate approaches to study and regulate probiotics, including applications for health claims
4. To develop a roadmap for continuous engagement among related probiotics key stakeholders

# Main Initiatives

1. Strengthen communications among participants and stakeholders of the Network
2. Support updating of probiotics regulations in the region
3. Organize series of Network meetings in conjunction with related seminars, symposia, and congress
4. Conduct original study on consumer perception and understanding on probiotics in Southeast Asia
5. Publish books and articles related to the Network activities

# Organization and Management

## Initiators

The Southeast Asia Probiotics Scientific and Regulatory Experts Network (SEA Probiotics SREN), initiated by the Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia (PERGIZI PANGAN Indonesia, Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM), DuPont Nutrition and Biosciences, and Indonesian Food and Beverage Association (GAPMMI), is a not-for-profit network of experts from four main groups of stakeholders.

- Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia (PERGIZI PANGAN Indonesia) (represented by Prof Dr Hardinsyah MS, President)
- Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM) (represented by Dr E-Siong Tee, President)
- DuPont Nutrition & Biosciences (represented by Ms Cyndy Au, Regional Director, Regulatory & Scientific Affairs, Asia Pacific)
- The Indonesian Food and Beverage Association (GAPMMI) (represented by Mr Adhi Lukman, Chairman)



## Leadership



**Chair:**  
**Prof Dr Hardinsyah, MS**  
President, Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia



**Co-Chair:**  
**Dr E-Siong Tee**  
President, Nutrition Society of Malaysia



## Advisors



**Assoc Prof Dr Lee Yuan Kun**  
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine,  
National University of Singapore



**Prof Dr Chalut Santivarangkna**  
Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol  
University, Thailand



**Prof Dr Lilis Nuraida**  
IPB University, Bogor, Indonesia



**Ir Tetty Helfery Sihombing, MTP**  
Independent Food Regulatory  
Expert, Jakarta, Indonesia

## Members

*Types of members*

Southeast Asia Probiotics  
Scientific and Regulatory  
Experts Network

The Network has a multi-stakeholder membership, in line with its vision and mission, namely (a) regulatory authorities, (b) academic institutions, (c) professional organization, and (d) related food industries. The experts from this multi-stakeholder network, have a common vision and mission of promoting scientific and regulatory development of probiotics in the region, comprising regulatory officials, experts in standards/guidelines, clinical epidemiologists, and microbiologists from Southeast Asia countries. As such, the Network welcomes relevant organizations or individual experts with the same common goal of promoting scientific and regulatory aspects of probiotics to join as members.

There are three types of members:

***Institutional members***  
*comprising government agencies (e.g. Food and Drug Administration and appropriate departments of the Ministry of Health), professional bodies and research groups on probiotics.*

***Food industry members***  
*comprising science-based companies related to probiotics. (The company has to demonstrate that it has invested in conducting research, either on its own or in collaboration with other research groups, with proof of research reports or research publications by the company).*

***Individual members who***  
*are scientific and regulatory experts in probiotics.*

### *Benefits and responsibilities of members*

Members of the Network shall be invited to participate in activities of the Network, including scientific meetings, email communications, access to website and preparation of publications. They will be invited to share their expertise and experience in Network activities and projects.

All members shall be mindful of the primary goal of the Network at all times i.e. of establishing a credible network in advancing probiotics science and regulations including but not limited to updating on the clinical studies, regulatory status and sharing of challenges and opportunities in the probiotics scientific and regulatory domain. In this regard, neither the Network nor its members shall be engaged in activities only to promote specific company products

### *Recruitment of members*

There are two ways to join as members of the SEA Probiotics SREN:

1. Potential candidates (organizations or individual experts) may be invited to join the Network by the Chair of the Network, in consultation with the initiators or advisors.
2. Interested organizations/individuals may actively approach the Network to join as members.

All invitations or applications shall be considered by the initiators and advisors who shall make a collective decision, upon reviewing the profile of these organizations or individuals. A main consideration for approval of membership shall be to safeguard the credibility of the Network. Membership shall be kept small for better management of activities.

### *Membership dues*

1. Institutional members comprising government agencies, professional bodies and research groups on probiotics are not required to pay membership fee.
2. Food industry members comprising science-based companies related to probiotics are required to pay a biennial (once every two years) membership fee of USD30,000 for multinational companies or USD20,000 for local/national companies to finance the activities of the Network.
3. Individual members, who are scientific and regulatory experts in probiotics can apply to join the Network with peer reviewed scientific publications by initiators and advisors comprising of experts in this field, with an application and a biennial administration fee of USD450.



# Logo



The logo of SEA Probiotics SREN was launched in 16 February 2020 in Surabaya at the official launched of the Network. The meaning of the logo is as follows:

1. SEA Probiotics SREN is an abbreviation of the name of the network i.e. Southeast Asia Probiotics Scientific and Regulatory Experts Network.
2. Oblong oval shapes symbolize probiotics, the common cause of the network.
  - The main oblong oval shape with the map of Southeast Asia describes the united, regional spirit working together towards realizing the vision of being a credible network in advancing probiotics science and regulations for human well-being in Southeast Asia.
  - Five smaller oblong oval shapes under the main oblong oval shape describes the five countries that participated in the inaugural workshop, and the five representative countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand & Vietnam) that support the formation of the Network in 16 December 2020 in Jakarta.
3. Blue color represents the values of the network – intelligence, local wisdom, confidence, trust and respect that are beneficial to members and stakeholders.
4. White color represents sincere collaboration, wide perspectives and positive thinking to innovate to enlighten and bring betterment to others.

# Contact and Media

For enquiries, please contact:

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PANGAN Indonesia)  
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[hardinsyah2020@gmail.com](mailto:hardinsyah2020@gmail.com)

## Media

Website: <https://pergizi.org/sea-probiotics-sren/>  
Social Media Instagram/Facebook/LinkedIn: SEA  
PROBIOTICS SREN

