

Public Talk – EU-ASEAN Relations

# EU-ASEAN Cooperation in Sustainable Tourism

By Richard Werly, European Bureau Chief, *Le Temps*

The European Union is ASEAN's first overall trading partner and biggest source of foreign direct investments. In 2008, the total trade between EU and ASEAN amounted to € 134.6 billion, and investments from EU to ASEAN have also seen strong growth. With the growing economic partnership, EU and ASEAN have entered into negotiations for a FTA in 2007. Eco-tourism, as a niche sector of Tourism, has been identified as one of the key areas for deeper cooperation.

Thailand, who is eyeing the conclusion of an EU-Thailand FTA, has been sold on the beneficial spillover effects of the FTA on tourism. She is gearing up to explore ways and opportunities for developing sustainable and community-based tourism. As one of the efforts towards developing sustainable eco-tourism, the Thai authorities with the support of UNEP and Greenpeace have commissioned the production of the first guidebook on Ecotourism entitled "Travel Green Thailand". Besides giving foreign visitors plenty of useful travel advice and tips, the guidebook also highlights the benefits of a stronger EU-ASEAN cooperation in this field of sustainable tourism, importing some of the standards, norms and good practices developed within the European Union. Examples range from "Homestay" accommodation to national parks management.

"Travel Green Thailand" is viewed as a first step of a future Southeast Asian collection of Eco-tourism guidebooks and manuals, making itself a platform for future cooperation between the various stakeholders in the development of a more sustainable, low carbon emissions Tourism. Mr Richard Werly, the main author of "Travel Green Thailand", will be sharing his insights and perspectives on an area of cooperation that the EU and ASEAN could potentially develop and deepen for sustainable development of the Southeast Asian region.

## About the Speaker



Richard Werly, is the European Bureau Chief, based in Brussels, for the Swiss daily "Le Temps". He covers, in this capacity, the European Union and Nato. A former correspondent in Bangkok and Tokyo, Mr Werly has kept in regular touch with Southeast Asia since the beginning of the 90's, reporting on numerous crucial events for the region such as the 2004 Tsunami, on which he authored a bestselling essay, critical of the post-catastrophe wave of international humanitarian assistance: "Tsunami, la vérité humaine". He was awarded in 2007 the Nicolas Bouvier Swiss Press Award for his essay on the Southeast Asian Tsunami.

## Details

**Date:** Thursday, 15 October 2009  
**Time:** 4.00pm – 5.30pm  
**Venue:** ASEF Conference Room  
Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)  
31 Heng Mui Keng Terrace  
Singapore 119595 [[Map](#)]

Please register  
[online](#) by  
**Wednesday, 14  
October 2009,  
noon. Thank you.**