

Southeast Asia FTA Modernisation Review

Terms of Reference

Matters to be considered by the review

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), working with the Trade 2040 Taskforce, and in collaboration with Southeast Asian partners and relevant stakeholders, including First Nations people, will review Australia's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Southeast Asia¹ to determine priorities for potential agreement upgrade negotiations.

In addressing these matters, the Review will consider:

- whether the rules and commitments contained in our Southeast Asian FTAs remain relevant and fit-for-purpose to assist in addressing the economic challenges confronting Australia and the region
- options for improving trade and investment including, but not limited to, modernising existing FTAs, supporting accessions to regional FTAs or entering into new agreements
- identify gaps and overlaps between Australia's bilateral and regional FTAs with Southeast Asian economies, and options to resolve
- market access commitments, to ensure they remain comprehensive and commercially meaningful
- new and upgraded FTAs concluded by Australia or Southeast Asia with other economies
- recommendations by the Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth inquiry into the understanding and utilisation of benefits under Free Trade Agreements
- putting in place trade data exchange arrangements with regional trading partners to better inform utilisation of trade agreements
- relevant developments in trade and investment policy in international fora, including but not limited to the World Trade Organization, and whether our FTAs have kept pace with relevant international developments
- opportunities for alignment and complementarity with *Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy*
- other matters relevant to Australia's FTAs.

Findings from the Review will be documented in a report with recommendations for prioritisation of new agreements and agreement upgrade and modernisation negotiations.

Timing

An interim report is due 1 August 2025. The final written report will be delivered on or before 1 July 2026 and published on the DFAT website.

¹ For the purpose of this Review, Southeast Asia refers to ASEAN member countries excluding Myanmar, i.e. Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.