



Andrea Frenzel

**President, South & East Asia, ASEAN, and
Australia/New Zealand, BASF**

Congratulations on becoming President, Regional Division South & East Asia! Which aspect of your new position at BASF are you most looking forward to?

Andrea: I have already had a fascinating and challenging journey over the first few months as I have travelled around the Asia Pacific region. I am especially looking forward to identifying and driving the optimal business approaches to the specifics of the various countries and our businesses. Looking at our excellent talent in Asia Pacific and their diversity and experience I am very confident that this diversity enables our business growth as we reflect our customers and markets.

Can you outline BASF's plans for development in the region?

Andrea: Asia Pacific remains the driver of global growth, led by emerging markets such as China, India and Vietnam. It is home to many of our customers that operate globally, as well as local champions and industries that still hold great potential for us.

It is important to recall that Asia Pacific is not one market. We are active in 17 countries and operate around 100 production sites in the region. We will continue to stay close to the market and invest where our customers are. By further expanding our production, and sales and marketing networks, we can offer local customers tailor-made solutions in a faster and more efficient manner.

Building our local presence is not enough. We must always be investing in innovation to strengthen our R&D capabilities and make sure we continue contributing to our customers' success in the future. In the long run, BASF plans to conduct around 25% of its global research activities in Asia Pacific. This will also help us to actively contribute to the sustainability challenges such as providing advice and new products to farmers for more eco-efficient food production (or example from construction).

In addition, we will continue to explore untapped markets, such as Myanmar and Cambodia. These areas present future opportunities for our solutions that contribute to affordable mass housing, food fortification, wind energy, and water purification. This year we are planning to build our first manufacturing plant in

Myanmar. It will be designed to produce tailor-made construction chemical solutions support growth of local construction industry.

What do you think would be the most challenging part about working in ASEAN?

Andrea: ASEAN is an extremely diverse and complex region. Each country has its own unique culture and way of doing business – what works in Indonesia may not work in Thailand or Vietnam. The challenge for us is to understand individual customer's needs in one country but also to identify synergies between countries, and to adapt our products and services quickly to help our customers capture the market opportunities.

I can give you an example from Indonesia. BASF completed a surfactant capacity expansion project at its Cimanggis site in Indonesia for personal care and home care applications. With the completion of the optimization project, Cimanggis site has newly received *Halal* certification, which qualifies BASF to produce ingredients that are in line with *Halal* requirements. This enables us to adequately and quickly respond to the needs of Muslim populations and offer products that are considered to be pure in accordance with Islamic Law. Thus, we can better serve our customers in the predominantly Muslim countries in Asia.

How do you balance your new role with your current lifestyle?

Andrea: I depend on my excellent support staff and the BASF teams in the countries and in our regional headquarters in Hong Kong. The heavy travel schedule also means I don't have as much time as I like to spend with my family. Whenever I am at home, as I am an avid amateur violinist, I also make sure to reserve some time for music.

Are there any particular CSR programmes at BASF you are particularly passionate about?

Andrea: At BASF, we build sustainability into the core of the business: we have articulated our corporate purpose as, "We create chemistry for a sustainable future." This means that we contribute to a world that provides a viable future with enhanced quality of life for everyone. For example, we invest the majority of our research activities into creating so-called "Accelerator" solutions – those which have the greatest sustainability impact when applied to our customer's products.

We additionally have established a global Social Engagement strategy, through which BASF is further developing its social commitment activities worldwide. The purpose of these activities is to improve quality of life in the communities around our sites. For example, we recently broke ground on a new school renovation project for a primary school located in a needy area of Hậu Giang Province in Vietnam, facilitated by a local NGO. With support of BASF materials and in cooperation with our customer, the project will renovate classrooms and hygiene facilities for primary students and pre-schoolers.



Under this strategy, BASF Kids' Lab holds a special place in my heart. This program is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. It is a hands-on and fun chemistry education program designed to allow children aged 6 to 12 years to discover the world of chemistry through simple and safe experiments. First established in Germany in 1997, BASF Kids' Lab has also been held in Asia Pacific since 2002, with more than 300,000 children participating to date.

Did you always see yourself working in such a position or was there a particular defining moment that pushed you into taking on being President of South & East Asia?

Andrea: A long career with BASF, as I have had, is not unusual in the company. However, I have been particularly fortunate in having a multitude of challenging and equally inspiring opportunities to work. Having worked in a variety of global roles within our corporate headquarters in Ludwigshafen, but also in our North America regional headquarters I had only know Asia from business travel. Getting the chance now to work in Asia Pacific is a really intriguing and educating experience given the dynamism and power of the region.

Since starting your new role 4 months ago, is there anything you already feel a need to change or create more value from?

Andrea: I am convinced that we are only starting to see the potential of the Asia Pacific region and in particular the ASEAN region. While China will naturally dominate the chemical industry in the next decade, there are also enormous opportunities to meet our customers' needs in the ASEAN region – whether by providing solutions for better nutrition, more sustainable agriculture, lighter weight vehicles, or more environmentally friendly coatings – and it will be my job to ensure we are making these opportunities into reality.

Thank you for your time, Andrea!