

Australian instrumental in merging Asian science academies

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Singapore: Science in Asia will be more visible and effective under a merger between the two groupings of Asian science academies, facilitated over several years with leadership from the Australian Academy of Science.

Professor Kurt Lambeck, president, Federation of Asian Scientific Academies and Societies (FASAS) and immediate former president of the Australian Academy of Science, has been instrumental in bringing about a merger with the Association of Academies of Sciences in Asia (AASA). The new entity is called the Association of Academies and Societies of Sciences in Asia (AASSA).

"The region is faced with many challenges whose long-term resolution requires science-based advice," Professor Lambeck said. "Through the merger of FASAS and AASA we have created a re-invigorated organization that can make an important contribution to providing that advice, as well as its communication to the wider community."

A union of 16 member institutions, FASAS was formed in 1984 to promote the advancement of science and technology in Asia, and to foster greater awareness of the role of science and technology in national and regional development. AASA was established in 2000 to promote solidarity and cooperation among the scientific and technological academies in Asia and Australasia. Nine of its 27 member academies were also members of FASAS.

"The complementary nature of both Academies led to general agreement to unite into the Association of Academies and Societies of Sciences in Asia," Professor Lambeck said. Professor Lambeck co-chaired a transition committee to finalise the new constitution for the combined organisation over the last year.