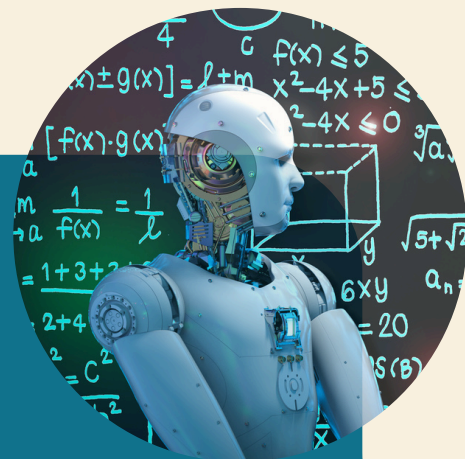1st Annual
RESPONSIBLE AI SUMMIT ASIA

ASEAN AI REGULATORY FRAMEWORK REPORT

NAVIGATING THE ASEAN AI REGULATORY FRAMEWORK: RESPONSIBLE AI ADOPTION IN THE CORPORATE SECTOR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning are transforming how businesses operate across ASEAN

As adoption accelerates, so too does the need to ensure these technologies are used responsibly, ethically, and in compliance with emerging governance standards.

The ASEAN AI Regulatory Framework provides a foundational set of principles designed to guide responsible AI development and use across the region.

This report explores the core elements of the framework, its alignment with national efforts, and how companies operating in ASEAN can apply it to build trust, manage risks, and gain a competitive edge.

01
INTRODUCTION

In an era of accelerated digital transformation, AI technologies are now central to corporate innovation strategies. However, the increasing deployment of AI has raised critical concerns around privacy, fairness, accountability, and human rights.

For companies, this means not only harnessing AI's potential but doing so in a way that aligns with emerging regulatory expectations. This report aims to provide corporate leaders, compliance officers, and innovation teams with a structured understanding of the ASEAN AI Regulatory Framework and practical insights into its application in real-world business settings.

02
OVERVIEW

DIVING DEEPER INTO THE ASEAN AI REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The ASEAN AI Regulatory Framework was endorsed by the ASEAN Digital Ministers in early 2024 as part of a broader initiative to strengthen digital governance and foster regional collaboration on emerging technologies. It was developed under the ASEAN Digital Data Governance Framework by the ASEAN Working Group on Digital Data Governance.

The core purpose of the framework is to establish a unified set of voluntary principles to guide the responsible development, deployment, and use of AI. Rather than imposing hard regulations, the framework serves as a guiding reference to harmonize national approaches, promote trust among stakeholders, and facilitate cross-border cooperation.

Structured around seven key principles, the framework emphasizes human-centric values, ethical integrity, and regional collaboration. It is accompanied by a high-level implementation roadmap that encourages capacity building, knowledge sharing, and public-private dialogue across ASEAN.

1st Annual
RESPONSIBLE
AI SUMMIT ASIA

THE SEVEN CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE ASEAN AI FRAMEWORK

01 HUMAN–CENTRIC AND INCLUSIVE

AI systems should be designed and deployed to augment human capabilities, promote inclusivity, and ensure that no individual or community is unfairly excluded. Companies must prioritize user wellbeing and ensure accessibility, especially for marginalized groups, in the development and application of AI tools.

02 FAIRNESS

Fairness requires that AI systems do not propagate existing biases or lead to discriminatory outcomes. Organizations should implement robust bias detection mechanisms, conduct fairness audits, and embed inclusive datasets in training processes to ensure equitable outcomes across demographics.

03 Transparency and Explainability

To foster trust and accountability, AI systems must be transparent in their functioning and provide explanations that are understandable to users. Businesses should focus on developing AI models that offer explainable outputs and maintain logs that document decision-making processes for both internal review and regulatory compliance.

04 Safety and Reliability

Corporate use of AI should ensure that systems are technically robust, perform as intended, and are subject to continuous validation and monitoring. This includes implementing safeguards against adversarial attacks, ensuring system reliability in high-stakes environments, and routinely testing models for vulnerabilities and performance drift.

05 Accountability and Responsibility

Clear accountability structures must be established across the AI lifecycle—from data collection and model design to deployment and impact assessment. Companies should assign specific roles for AI governance, define escalation protocols, and ensure that third-party vendors adhere to the same standards of responsibility.

06 Privacy and Data Governance
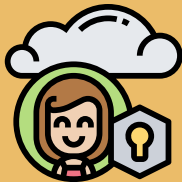
Respect for user privacy and adherence to strong data governance practices are essential. Organizations must implement data minimization principles, ensure lawful and transparent data use, and comply with regional privacy regulations such as Singapore's PDPA or Malaysia's PDPA, aligning with the broader ASEAN cross-border data flow agenda.

07 Collaboration and International Cooperation

The framework encourages cross-border partnerships, especially in areas such as research, standards development, and ethical AI practices. Companies should engage in international forums, participate in regional sandbox projects, and contribute to shaping shared norms and best practices.

REGULATORY LANDSCAPE ACROSS ASEAN MEMBER STATES

While the ASEAN AI Framework offers regional guidance, its application depends on national regulatory environments. Here is a snapshot of key developments across member states:

SINGAPORE	has been a frontrunner, with its Model AI Governance Framework and active initiatives by IMDA to guide ethical AI use.
MALAYSIA	released a National AI Roadmap and is integrating responsible AI principles into digital government strategies.
THAILAND	has issued AI ethics guidelines under its Ministry of Digital Economy and Society.
VIETNAM	is rolling out its National Strategy on AI with a focus on research, training, and responsible implementation by 2030.
INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES	are in the early stages, with frameworks under consultation or aligned with broader data governance strategies.

While national regulations vary, there is a growing convergence around the core values of ethics, accountability, and human rights, making the ASEAN AI Framework a useful benchmark for regional harmonization.

1st Annual
RESPONSIBLE AI SUMMIT ASIA

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMPANIES OPERATING IN ASEAN

COMPANIES OPERATING ACROSS ASEAN MUST TAKE A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO AI GOVERNANCE TO ENSURE ALIGNMENT WITH BOTH NATIONAL LAWS AND ASEAN-WIDE PRINCIPLES:

AI Risk Assessment and Governance	Implement internal frameworks to identify, monitor, and mitigate AI-related risks. Establish AI ethics boards and include responsible AI in risk registers.
Data Governance & Privacy Compliance	Harmonize data use with multiple local privacy laws, ensuring transparency, consent management, and secure cross-border data flows.
Ethical AI Deployment	Prioritize equity and non-discrimination in AI tools used for recruitment, credit scoring, or customer service. Ensure algorithmic decisions are auditable and defensible.
Cross-Border Operations	Navigate different AI and data regulations when operating across ASEAN. Establish compliance processes that support interoperability and transparency.
Trust Building with Stakeholders	Use responsible AI practices as a lever to build trust with customers, partners, regulators, and investors, reinforcing the brand's commitment to ethical innovation.

1st Annual
RESPONSIBLE AI SUMMIT ASIA

06
STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORPORATE LEADERS

TO OPERATIONALIZE RESPONSIBLE AI, SENIOR LEADERS SHOULD:

- Establish Internal Governance Structures: Set up ethics committees or steering groups that oversee AI strategy, risk management, and policy compliance.
- Conduct AI Impact Assessments: Evaluate the societal, ethical, and legal implications of AI projects before deployment, using structured frameworks.
- Invest in Explainable AI (XAI): Ensure users and regulators can understand how decisions are made, particularly in high-risk domains like finance or healthcare.
- Upskill Teams on Responsible AI: Equip staff with training on ethical AI use, data protection, and digital governance.
- Engage with Regulators and Industry Bodies: Proactively contribute to consultations, participate in regulatory sandboxes, and help shape future policy directions.

CONCLUSION

The ASEAN AI Regulatory Framework is a strategic initiative to guide the ethical and responsible use of AI in the region.

While it is non-binding, its principles offer a clear roadmap for companies seeking to future-proof their operations, build stakeholder trust, and contribute to a sustainable digital economy.

Early adopters that align their practices with the framework stand to gain long-term competitive advantages and regulatory goodwill.

RESPONSIBLE
AI SUMMIT