Singapore and Ecuador look to turn food and trade into new Pacific partnership

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The countries are exploring deeper economic cooperation, combining Ecuadorâ??s agricultural resources with Singaporeâ??s strengths in trade, logistics and supply-chain connectivity

Singapore and Ecuador are laying the groundwork for a broader economic partnership spanning food security, agricultural trade, logistics and digitalisation, as the two Pacific-facing nations look to strengthen commercial links between Southeast Asia and Latin America.

The countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding on development cooperation on August 24 during Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa Azín’s state visit to Singapore. The two-day visit marked the first time an Ecuadorian president has made an official visit to the city-state, giving the occasion added significance for bilateral relations.

Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong and President Noboa discussed opportunities to deepen cooperation across areas including food security, trade, logistics and digitalisation, as both countries seek to create stronger economic connections across the Pacific.

The agreement could prove particularly significant for agriculture and food trade. Ecuador brings substantial agricultural and marine resources to the partnership, including bananas, cocoa and shrimp, while Singapore offers its position as a major trading, maritime and logistics hub with extensive links to Southeast Asia and wider Asian markets.

Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam described the two countries as potential gateways to their respective regions. Ecuador, positioned on the Pacific coast of South America, could provide Singaporean companies with greater access to opportunities in the Andean region and Latin America. Singapore, meanwhile, could serve as a platform for Ecuadorian companies seeking to expand their supply chains and reach investors and consumers across Southeast Asia.

Agriculture is already emerging as a practical foundation for that relationship. Singapore-based agri-trade company DiMuto has worked with Ecuadorian partners to digitise and trace agricultural exports destined for Asian markets, demonstrating how technology and trade infrastructure can be combined to create greater value within food supply chains.

The potential for deeper cooperation also extends to maritime logistics. PSA Marine already provides pilotage and boat services at Ecuador's Guayaquil and Posorja ports, offering another example of Singaporean capabilities being deployed in the Latin American market.

For Singapore, stronger engagement with Ecuador also fits into a broader strategy of expanding economic relationships with Latin America. The Pacific Alliance-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, involving Singapore, Chile and Peru, came into force in May 2025. Singapore has also welcomed Ecuador's application to become an associate state of the Pacific Alliance, a move that could create further opportunities for trade and investment.

The new Memorandum of Understanding is intended to serve as a starting point for wider cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including trade, education, governance, digitalisation and public health.

But food and agriculture could emerge as one of the partnership's most commercially significant areas. Ecuador's position as a major producer of agricultural and marine commodities, combined with Singapore's expertise in logistics, food trade and supply-chain connectivity, creates opportunities to strengthen the movement of products from Latin America into Asian markets.

The discussions also come as food security is becoming an increasingly important strategic priority for Singapore. With limited domestic agricultural land, the country has been actively building a more diversified network of food suppliers and exploring technology-driven solutions to strengthen supply-chain resilience.

For Ecuador, closer links with Singapore could provide an additional gateway into Southeast Asia, one of the world's most dynamic consumer and food-importing regions.

The broader opportunity lies in combining Ecuador's production capabilities with Singapore's strengths in trade, logistics, financing and digitalisation. Digital traceability, in particular, could become an important bridge between the two economies, helping agricultural exporters meet growing expectations around transparency, supply-chain visibility and product quality.

The agreement signed during President Noboa's visit does not itself create a trade pact, but it establishes a framework for the two governments to explore and develop cooperation across areas of shared priority.

As Singapore looks west across the Pacific for new economic partnerships and Ecuador seeks to strengthen its connections with Asia, the relationship could increasingly be defined by a simple proposition: Ecuador can offer access to Latin America's agricultural and resource economy, while Singapore can provide a strategic bridge to Southeast Asian markets.

The new MOU marks an early step in that process, but the combination of food security, agricultural trade, maritime logistics and digital technology gives the Singapore-Ecuador partnership a potentially broader commercial significance than a conventional diplomatic agreement.