

*Intellectual Drivers of China-ASEAN Relations: A Case Study of the Knowledge-Policy Nexus**

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Abstract

Research on China-ASEAN relations often focuses on macro strategies or specific areas of cooperation, while overlooking the mechanisms for designing and implementing China's Southeast Asia policy. In fact, Chinese scholars specializing in Southeast Asia have established a strong knowledge-political nexus with official decision-making bodies, and they also maintain certain connections with ASEAN scholars and officials. Intellectual factors not only attract the attention of policy-makers but also play a key role in promoting international interactions among Chinese scholars, thereby becoming a micro-element driving the development of China-ASEAN relations. This article focuses on the involvement of Chinese scholars in the formulation of China-ASEAN cooperation policies and strategies. It analyzes the impact of institutions such as the China-ASEAN Joint Expert Group, the China-ASEAN Eminent Persons Group, and the Network of ASEAN-China Think Tanks. The study examines how policy documents, crafted with the participation of these scholars, influence China-ASEAN relations.

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