The Trading Houses: Global Players and Asian Champions: summary

Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland and Germany),
Solicitor (England & Wales and Hong Kong)
Of Counsel, KGP Legal LLC
alexander.ressos@kgplegal.com.sg
www.ressos.com.sg

Singapore's commodity hub consists of some 400 firms, more than 60 per cent of them of Asian origin, ranging from the Asian offices of the global houses to Asian agricultural groups, state-linked traders and Japanese trading companies. The global independents run their Asian trading from Singapore, where Trafigura has also placed its group parent and where the five largest agribusiness groups are present. Wilmar and Olam grew into Asian agricultural champions in Singapore, although Olam's agricultural business passed to majority ownership by the Saudi state fund SALIC in April 2026. State capital is present through the trading arms of national oil companies, PetroChina's takeover of Singapore Petroleum Company, China Aviation Oil and Temasek's holdings, while the failures at China Aviation Oil, Noble, Hin Leong and Petro-Diamond Singapore show that no form of ownership guarantees sound control. Compared with Geneva, Singapore has a larger share of Asian, family-controlled and state-linked firms, while the two hubs function largely as complementary nodes within the same global trading groups.

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. General information only, not legal, tax or investment advice. No client relationship is created. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. More information at SingaporeIQ.com and ressos.com.sg.

Disclaimer

This article is provided for general information only. It is based on publicly available sources as at its date of publication. These sources have not been independently verified against licences, regulatory registers or the records of the entities concerned. It is not legal, tax, financial or investment advice. Nor is it a recommendation to invest in, transact with or use the services of any entity mentioned. Law and regulation change frequently, so the content may be incomplete or outdated. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Dr Alexander Ressos and the publisher of SingaporeIQ exclude all liability for loss or damage arising from the use of or reliance on this article. Readers should obtain advice on their specific circumstances before acting or refraining from action.

Names and trademarks of the entities discussed belong to their owners and are used for identification only. Their mention implies no endorsement, affiliation or allegation of wrongdoing. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. Corrections and updates: contact@ressos.com.

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. This article may be quoted with attribution to SingaporeIQ (SingaporeIQ.com). Reproduction in full and any commercial use require prior written consent. The Legal Terms at https://singaporeiq.com/legal-terms apply.

Author contact: Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP · contact@ressos.com