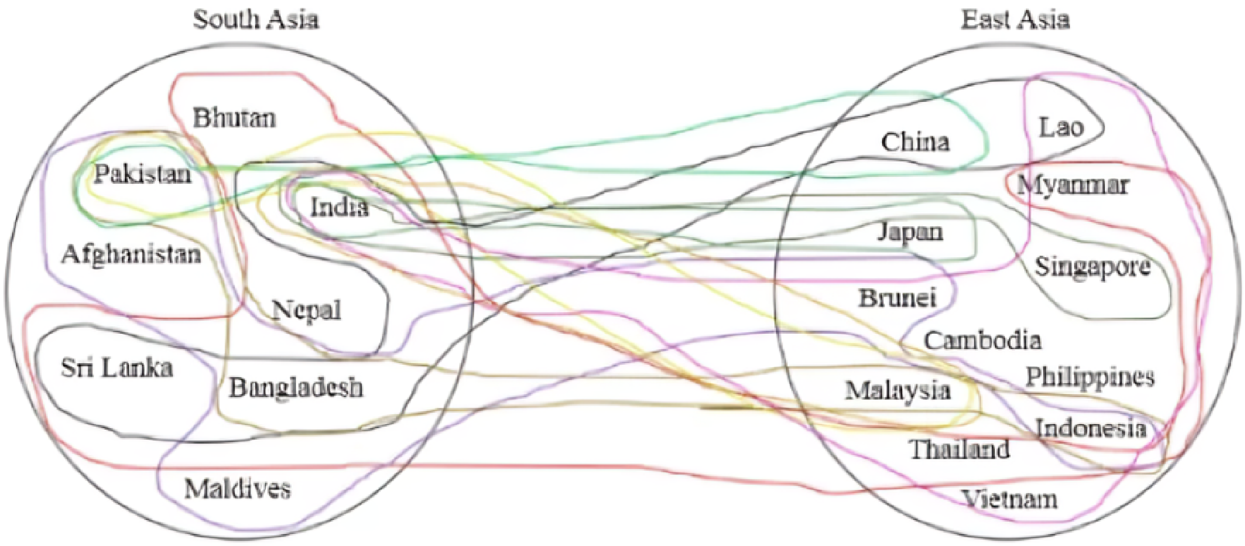
Spaghetti Bowl Phenomenon

The turmoil over regional trade policies and proliferating **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)** reignited discussions on the **Spaghetti bowl phenomenon.**

- According to the **World Bank,** the Spaghetti Bowl Phenomenon refers to the confusing and overlapping network of **multiple FTAs between countries,** which end up complicating trade instead of facilitating it.
    - As each FTA comes with its own set of **Rules of Origin (ROO),** which makes it challenging for producers to meet the varied criteria when trading across multiple FTAs.
    - The term **"Spaghetti Bowl Phenomenon"** was coined by **Jagdish Bhagwati in 1995,** where he criticized FTAs for being counterproductive, complicating global trade rather than promoting openness.
    - The **"spaghetti"** metaphor compares the tangle of trade rules to a bowl of spaghetti (messy and hard to navigate).
- **Impact:** Despite more FTAs, trade volumes between regions (like South Asia and East Asia) often remain stagnant due to this complexity.



Depicting Spaghetti Bowl

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