



# 5th GMS Summit

## PROGRESS REPORT TO THE LEADERS



# 5<sup>th</sup> GMS SUMMIT

Kingdom of Thailand

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20 December 2014

This **Progress Report to the GMS Leaders** provides a summary of key achievements under the GMS Economic Cooperation Program since the last GMS Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 20 December 2011. The achievements over the past three years represent important building blocks for implementing the **GMS Strategic Framework 2012-2022** and reflect the commitment of the GMS countries to further strengthen connectivity, competitiveness and community within the subregion.

## New Strategic Directions and Plans of Action for the GMS

- The **GMS Regional Investment Framework** (RIF), endorsed by the GMS Ministers in December 2013, defines a pipeline of priority investment and technical assistance projects for the third decade of the GMS Program, from 2013 to 2022. The RIF contains more than 200 projects across 10 sectors with an estimated investment cost of more than \$50 billion.
- The **RIF Implementation Plan**, a key deliverable at the 5<sup>th</sup> GMS Summit, provides an implementation plan and monitoring and evaluation system for the RIF projects prioritized for financing and implementation over the medium term, from 2014 to 2018.

## Progress in Physical Connectivity Infrastructure

- The **Fourth International Mekong Bridge at Chiang Khong-Houayxay** was opened in December 2013 which completes the final missing link in the **GMS North South Economic Corridor (NSEC)** extending more than 1,400 kilometers from Kunming to Bangkok.
- Also along the eastern part of the NSEC, the 240-kilometer **Noi Bai-Lao Cai Expressway** in Viet Nam, one of the largest GMS infrastructure projects, was opened in September 2014.
- Extension of the **GMS East West Economic Corridor** is progressing with road construction from **Myawaddy to Kawkaeik in Myanmar** expected to be completed in July 2015.
- Along the **GMS Southern Economic Corridor**, the **Mekong Bridge at Neak Loeng** is nearing completion and will further strengthen connectivity along the Phnom Penh – Ho Chi Minh City Highway.
- The **Southern Cambodia Railway Line** from Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville was completed and opened for commercial traffic in December 2012.

## Progress in Institutional and Software Connectivity

- The MOU for the **Establishment of the Greater Mekong Railway Association** (GMRA) has been signed by all six GMS countries and provides the necessary institutional forum to address both physical and software constraints to connecting the GMS railways.
- All GMS countries have also signed the MOU for the **Establishment of the Regional Power Coordination Center** (RPCC), which will serve as a permanent institution for enhancing regional power trade and implementing regional power interconnection projects.
- Two new studies on the GMS energy sector were completed, namely, **Strategic Environment Assessment for the GMS Regional Power Development Planning**, and **GMS Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Development**, providing guidelines for power development planning and identifying the potentials of pursuing renewable energy and energy efficiency in the GMS.

- The **Three-Year Blueprint for Transport and Trade Facilitation** was endorsed by the 4th Joint Committee Meeting for the Cross Border Transport Facilitation Agreement (CBTA) in November 2013 which reaffirmed the relevance of the CBTA, but also acknowledged remaining challenges in its implementation.
- The **Mid-term Review of the Transport and Trade Facilitation Action Plan** technical assistance project was completed in June 2014 and provided the necessary framework for the remaining scope of technical assistance to facilitate land-based cross-border transport and trade in the GMS.

## Progress in the Environment and Agriculture Sectors

- **Phase 2 of the Core Agriculture Support Program (2011-2020)** is under implementation through technical assistance projects for controlling transboundary animal diseases, expanding cross-border trade in safe agricultural food products, building capacity in biotechnology and biosafety, and strengthening the GMS Agriculture Information Network Service.
- The **GMS Core Environment Program Phase II (2012-2016)** is well underway and focusing on the subregion's natural capital to promote an environmentally friendly and climate resilient GMS Program. Achievements include undertaking strategic level environmental assessments, strengthening environmental safeguards capacities, increasing awareness about climate adaptation and resilience, and promoting low carbon technology.

## Progress in Tourism and Human Resource Development

- **Tourist arrivals in the GMS rose to a record 52 million in 2013**, at least partly due to initiatives under the **Refocused GMS Tourism Sector Strategy and Road Map for 2011-2015**, including the GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project and technical assistance to strengthen the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office. These initiatives are also helping to enhance marketing and product development to promote the GMS as a single tourist destination.
- The **GMS Human Resource Development Strategic Framework and Action Plan (2013-2017)** supports the preparation of a new framework for the mutual recognition of technical skills and qualifications, awareness campaigns for safe labor migration and HIV/AIDS prevention projects. A second phase of the **Communicable Disease Control Project** is focusing on diseases such as dengue, malaria, avian and swine flu in vulnerable populations along economic corridors and in border districts. The **Asia Pacific Leaders' Malaria Alliance**, whose Secretariat is ADB, will also be working closely with the GMS and other regional bodies to identify the key regional priorities to achieve elimination of malaria by 2030.
- The **Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management** has conducted more than 25 capacity building and training programs for more than 600 senior GMS officials since the last GMS Summit. Key topics discussed in these courses included economic corridors development, energy, agriculture, tourism, project management, monitoring and evaluation, and social protection in the GMS.

## Progress in Urban Development and Economic Zones

- A **GMS Urban Development Strategic Framework** is under preparation to assist GMS countries coordinate their national urban strategies; identify priority areas for major investments in urban infrastructure, and promote exchange of knowledge and good practices on industrialization and urbanization. The first **Corridor Towns Development Project** is being implemented to support the development of competitive and environmentally friendly cities along the GMS economic corridors. The GMS countries have also gained a better understanding of **cross-border economic zones** and their potential contribution to developing the GMS economic corridors.



## The Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Program

The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) is made up of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China (PRC, specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. In 1992, with assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and building on their shared histories and cultures, the six countries of the GMS launched a program of subregional economic cooperation—the GMS Program—to enhance their economic relations, initially covering the nine priority sectors: agriculture, energy, environment, human resource development, investment, telecommunications, tourism, transport infrastructure, and transport and trade facilitation. The GMS Program, with the support of ADB and other development partners, is helping the participating countries achieve Millennium Development Goals through increased connectivity, improved competitiveness, and a greater sense of community (the three Cs).

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