



Greater Mekong Subregion Investment Policy Forum

28-29 March 2012

Government Palace, Sisowath Quay, Wat Phnom, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Advancing Investment Policy Reform

Background

Fuelled by the expansion of trade and investment, the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)¹ has been one of the fastest growing regions in the world and represents a successful example of economic transition and integration. Economic growth is underpinned by new political dynamics at the national level.

Many development challenges nevertheless remain: poverty is still pervasive, especially in rural areas; growth relies on finding sustainable ways to meet demands for energy and power generation; and future trade and investment relies on public administration and financial sector reform and on overcoming physical infrastructure deficiencies. Greater economic diversification would also reduce vulnerability to external shocks.

Addressing both national and regional investment policy challenges to maintain the momentum of recent advances and consolidate the policy frameworks for investment is thus timely. Trade and investment liberalisation have been important components of reform in almost all countries in the subregion, but more could still be done to improve the business environment.

The Policy Framework for Investment (PFI) developed by the OECD (in collaboration with non-OECD partners, international organisations, private sector and civil society) allows developing countries to undertake a thorough self-assessment of the investment climate. Since 2009 the OECD has deepened its cooperation with the ASEAN investment community, through Investment Policy Reviews (Viet Nam 2009, Indonesia 2010), regional dialogues such as the ASEAN-OECD Investment Policy Conference held in Jakarta in November 2010, two Southeast Asia Regional Forums and an annual Investment Policy Training Program with the APEC Study Center in Melbourne. A special dialogue was also held between the ASEAN Secretariat and the Investment Committee in 2010. In addition the OECD and the Asian Development Bank Institute have organised annual high-level investment roundtables since 2010.

The OECD Greater Mekong Investment Policy Forum, organised in conjunction with the ASEAN6 Outbound Investment Mission and funded by the Government of Japan, will allow participating countries to showcase their current reforms on a regional platform and increase the visibility of the subregion to international investors. From an OECD perspective, the Forum will contribute to raise awareness of the investment policy challenges in the region and how international initiatives can help GMS authorities address them.

A special focus on responsible investment in agriculture aims to reflect some of the current investment-related challenges in the region, in line with the G20 work on food security. In addition, this Forum aims to contribute to Cambodia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2012.

¹ Defined here as Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Agenda

28 March 2012	
8:00 – 8:30	Registration
8:30 – 9:00	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E Sok Chenda Sophea, Minister attached to the Prime Minister, Secretary General of the Council for the Development of Cambodia • H.E. Masafumi Kuroki, Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia • Andrea Goldstein, Head of Global Relations, Investment Division, OECD • Glenda T Reyes, Assistant Director, Services and Investment Division - Market Integration Directorate, AEC Department, ASEAN
Session I: Trends & Outlook for Investment in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region	
<p>Fuelled by the expansion of trade & investment, the GMS has been one of the world's fastest growing regions and represents an example of economic transition and integration. Economic growth is underpinned by new political dynamics at the national level, including in Myanmar. Addressing both national and regional investment policy challenges to maintain the momentum of recent advances and consolidate the policy frameworks for investment is thus timely.</p> <p>Session Chair: Peter J. Brimble, Deputy Country Director, Cambodia Resident Mission, ADB</p>	
9:00 – 9:20	<p>Global investment: outlook and policy issues Andrea Goldstein, Global Relations, OECD Investment Division</p>
9:20 – 9:40	<p>Economic and Investment Reforms in Cambodia H.E Chea Vuthy, Deputy Secretary General of the CIB</p>
9:40 – 10:00	<p>The Investment Climate in CLMV Countries Masami Ishida, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO</p>
10:00 – 10:30	Open Discussion
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Investing in Cambodia, sharing of experiences – <i>Interactive Panel</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oudet Souvannavong, Secretary General, GMS Business Forum • Thomas Hartono, Vice Chairman of Indonesia Chambers of Commerce (Cambodian Committee) • Teh Sing, President of Malaysian Business Council of Cambodia, Secretary General of the Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations • Oranooch Pakarat Rutten, Director of Cambodia Air and Sea Logistics (CASL) • Shinobu Washizawa, General Manager of Cambodia Rep. Office and Assistant to CEO, ASEAN Business of AEON Co., Ltd • Kengo Katsuki, Vice-President, MINEBEA Cambodia Co. Ltd
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch and photo session

Session II: Perspectives on Investment Climate

Trade and investment liberalisation have been important components of reform in almost all countries in the subregion, but more could still be done to improve the business environment. A weak investment climate is a major impediment to growth, effective government and poverty reduction in the subregion and also undermines aid effectiveness.

The PFI developed by the OECD (in collaboration with non-OECD partners) allows developing countries to undertake a thorough self-assessment of the investment climate. It has been used for Investment Policy Reviews of Viet Nam (2009) and Indonesia (2010). For GMS countries, this work would help to build capacity within governments and develop a multi-stakeholder consensus for investment climate improvements.

Session Chair: Sok Narin, Country Director and Head of Operations (Cambodia), UNIDO

14:00 – 14:20	The Policy Framework for Investment Stephen Thomsen, Head, Investment Policy Reviews, OECD Investment Division
14:20 – 14:30	Connecting SMEs for CLMV Development Yasuhiro Yamada, Special Assistant to the Executive Director of ERIA on CLMV issues, ERIA
14:30 – 14:50	Investment policy reform in Viet Nam Nguyen Viet Cuong, Deputy Head of the FDI Statistics & Information Division of Foreign Investment Agency, Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)
14:50 – 15:10	Investment policy reform in Lao PDR Phonethavong Singhalath, Director, Investment Promotion Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)
15:10 – 15:30	Open discussion
15:30 – 15:50	Coffee Break
15:50 – 16:10	Investment Policy Reform in Thailand Yuthasak Kanasawat, Executive Director of Investment Strategy and Policy, Thailand Board of Investment (BOI)
16:10 – 16:30	Investment Policy Reform in Myanmar Aung Naing Oo, Deputy Director General of Directorate of Investment & Company Administration (DICA) Ministry of National Planning & Economic Development
16:30 – 17:30	Open discussion Kick off intervention by Hajime Matsumura, Deputy Director, OECD Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
18:30 – 20:30	Dinner – Bopha-Titanic Phnom Penh Restaurant <i>Sisowath Quay, Sangkat Wat Phnom, Khan Daun Penh</i> <i>(participants to confirm attendance before / during Session I at the registration)</i>

29 March 2012

Session III: Responsible Business Conduct in Agriculture – Global and Asian Experiences

Agriculture in the GMS is shifting from traditional subsistence to modern commercial farming. Countries in the region are following a path of intensification, specialization, increased agrochemical use and mechanization, at varying paces. Agricultural production has increased steadily during the past 20 years, as a result of farmers adopting 'green revolution' technologies.

For the agriculture sector to play its potentially crucial role in poverty reduction, appropriate responsible business conduct (RBC) practices must be in place. Leading international organizations have developed instruments to guide corporate efforts in becoming more socially responsible economic actors throughout their operations. Asian firms are developing their own initiatives and codes of conduct inspired from widely recognized corporate responsibility standards and principles.

The OECD has adapted the Policy Framework for Investment to the specific circumstances of agriculture. What are the main recommendations and practical guidance provided by major international organisations and how are these recommendations and guidance implemented in practice in the case of the Greater Mekong Sub-region?

Session Chair: Kalyan Mey, Senior Advisor, Supreme National Economic Council

9:00 – 9:10	Promoting responsible investment in agriculture Pascal Liu, Team Leader, International Investment in Agriculture Trade and Markets Division (EST), FAO (<i>video-message</i>)
9:10 - 9:20	Rethinking agriculture in the Greater Mekong Subregion Sumiter Singh Broca, Policy Officer, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, FAO
9:20 – 9:40	The Policy Framework for Investment in Agriculture Mike Pfister, Investment Policy Review Unit, OECD Investment Division
9:40 – 10:00	Cambodia's policy framework for agricultural investment
10:00 – 10:30	Open Discussion
10:30 – 10:50	Coffee Break
10:50 – 11:30	Investing in agriculture-related activities in the GMS: Private sector perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tak Sriratanobhas, Vice-President, Mitphol Sugar Thailand • Rod Bassett, Asia Pacific Market Development Manager, DuPont Crop Protection
11:30 – 12:30	Open Discussion
12:30 – 13:00	Conclusions and next steps H.E Sok Chenda Sophea, Minister attached to the Prime Minister, Secretary General of the Council for the Development of Cambodia

Side Event

Consultations on PFI-based Investment Policy Reviews

27 March, 16:00-18:00, Government Palace

Government officials from CLMV and Thailand

ASEAN Secretariat

OECD

Conference contacts

OECD

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