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Regional & Local Economic Development  
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# MEKONG FORUM 2019



## GMS LOGISTICS FORUM 2019

### BRIDGING BORDERS: GMS Connectivity for Inclusivity and Sustainability

A JOINT FORUM ON LOGISTICS

July 24-25, 2019

Pullman Hotel,  
Khon Kaen, Thailand



Modern connectivity is proving to be a game-changer.

Indeed, it could not be any more significant in the Greater Mekong Sub-region where the six countries of Cambodia, P.R. China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam are interconnected.

Advances in the freight and logistics sector have been integral in improving cross-border trade in the region. Between 2002 and 2011, movement of freight had increased by three-fourths while exports of goods had tripled. Infrastructural developments – from the construction of the Thai-Lao Friendship bridges to the ongoing railway project connecting Yunnan (P.R. China) and Vientiane (Lao PDR) – have brought in the promise of convenience, ease and speed in the movement of people and goods across provinces and countries. Policy and regulatory initiatives like the Cross-Border Trade Agreement are much-needed complementary mechanisms to resolve constraints in customs operations, border crossings and transit traffic, among many other things.

As developments in the sector continue to gain momentum, it becomes paramount to turn the conversation to the more crucial question: **How do we leverage on these developments to strengthen regional connectivity and promote broader inclusiveness?**

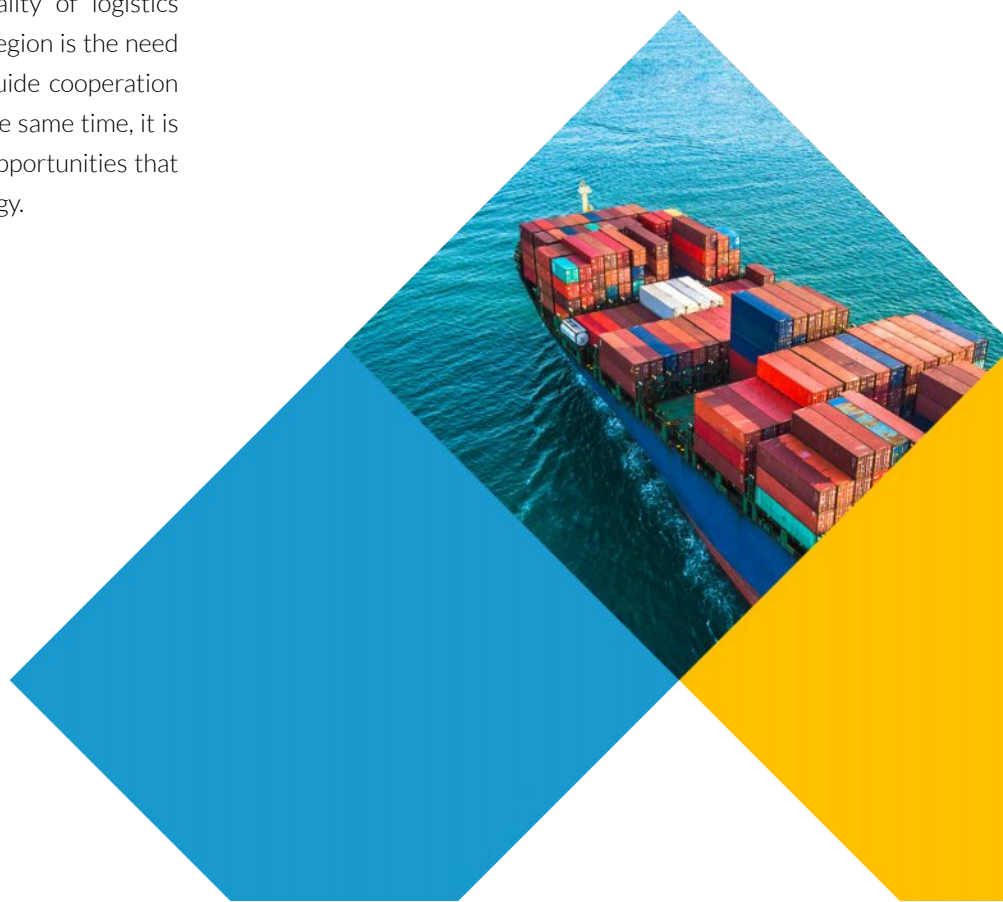
Such a conversation requires us to draw focus on the challenges that must be overcome. Beyond resource-related constraints that impact the quality of logistics infrastructure, a central concern for the region is the need for a strong logistics network that will guide cooperation in cross-border transport and trade. At the same time, it is imperative to inquire into solutions and opportunities that can be tapped particularly digital technology.

This conversation also becomes doubly relevant as Thailand assumes the chairmanship of the ASEAN this year. Bringing into focus the advancement of partnerships for sustainability, Thailand as ASEAN Chairman places great importance on enhancing connectivity across the region. Rightly so, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 identifies “seamless logistics” as one of its strategic objectives.

**The Joint Mekong Forum and GMS Logistics Forum 2019**, with the theme, **Bridging Borders: GMS Connectivity for Inclusivity and Sustainability** aspires to serve as a timely and critical platform for exploring ideas surrounding this subject.

Discussions in this Forum aim to *expound on the critical infrastructures and legal frameworks to support trade flow in the GMS; broaden awareness on the capacity needs of the region's connectivity network; and share ideas on the many ways digital technology can uplevel the region's logistics industry.*

Drawing on our focus on connectivity, the Mekong Forum – GMS Logistics Forum 2019 also features a business matching event to serve as a specially-designed platform for logistics service providers and enterprises in the logistics sector to exchange business insights and practices and grow their connections. In this way, this year's Forum will serve to be a concrete step forward in supporting one of the key messages of this year's ASEAN Chairmanship – ‘*connecting the connectivities.*’





## WHAT IS THE MEKONG FORUM – GMS LOGISTICS FORUM 2019

Initiated by **Mekong Institute** and co-hosted by the **Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau**, the Mekong Forum – GMS Logistics Forum 2019:

- brings together opinion leaders to discuss the most pressing issues facing the GMS;
- engages multiple stakeholders in collaborative efforts to shape the development agenda of the region; and
- serves as a platform for interaction, dialogue and networking among scholars, business and government leaders, and development experts and practitioners.



## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

**Members of the GMS countries, development practitioners, stakeholders, and executives or senior officials of development organizations, particularly those working at the regional (GMS/ASEAN) level** are highly encouraged to join.

The forum also welcomes participants from government/intergovernmental, non-government/civil society, private and non-profit development organizations, research institutes, the academe, as well as support agencies within the region.



## WHAT TO EXPECT

The forum offers:

- action-oriented ideas and proposed programs, including initiatives for the further development of the GMS; and
- a network of participants engaged in and/or knowledgeable in development cooperation and technological innovations.





## DATE & VENUE

Mekong Forum – GMS Logistics Forum 2019  
will be held on July 24, 2019  
at Pullman Hotel, Khon Kaen, Thailand.

The GMS Logistics Forum Business Matching for selected  
logistics enterprises and service providers from the GMS will  
be held the next day, July 25, 2019.



## REGISTRATION

To register for the Forum, please visit the Mekong Forum  
website.

A separate guideline is provided for the targeted enterprises  
that will join the GMS Logistics Forum Business Matching.



## COST

Participants to the Forum discussions are expected to shoulder  
all expenses related to their international and domestic travel  
and accommodation. MI will provide meals (coffee breaks and  
lunch) during the event.

Expenses of invited speakers and panelists will be shouldered  
by MI.



## CONTACT

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# PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND AGENDA

## July 23

15:00 – 18:00

*Side event 1:*

**GMS Freight Transport Association (FRETA) Meeting**

*By invitation only*

19:00 – 21:30

Reception Cocktails

## July 24

08:30 – 09:00

Registration

09:00 – 09:10

**Welcome Remarks**

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director, Mekong Institute

09:10 – 09:20

**Opening Remarks**

Mr. Salanroj Sutaschuto, Director of Domestic MICE, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau

09:20 – 09:45

**Opening Remarks & Keynote Address I: Bridging Borders: GMS Connectivity for Inclusivity and Sustainability**

Dr. Narongchai Akrasanee, Chairman, Mekong Institute Steering Committee

09:45 – 10:00

**Keynote Address II: Strengthening Cooperation in Building Connectivity and Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Development**

Mr. Zhang Guohua, Vice Governor of The People's Government of Yunnan Province, P.R. China

10:00 – 10:25

Group Photo, Refreshments and Networking

10:25 – 10:45

**Keynote Address III: Financing Infrastructure and SME for Sustainable Growth in Asia: Importance of Connectivity**

Prof. Dr. Naoyuki Yoshino, Dean/Chief Executive Officer, ADB Institute (ADBI)

10:45 – 12:00

**Session I: Boosting border trade with streamlined frameworks**

*The ultimate objective of a seamless logistics sector is an efficient supply chain that drives forward the region's economic growth. This session will tackle issues concerning infrastructural and legal frameworks that are vital to enabling an environment conducive to cross-border trade.*

- **Mr. David Martin**, High Level Economic Integration Advisor, Asian Development Bank
- **Ms. Tanapak Songkhramchai**, Transport Technical Officer, Department of Land Transport, Thailand
- **Mr. Kettivit Sittisoontornwong**, President, Thai International Freight Forwarders Association

**Moderator:** Ms. Maria Theresa Medialdia, Director, Agricultural Development and Commercialization Department, Mekong Institute

12:00 – 13:00

Networking Lunch

13:00 – 14:45

**Session II: Linking logic with logistics capacities**

*A strong technical knowledge and resource base are integral in building a robust and agile logistics network. This session will expound on the capacity building needs of the region's logistics industries (freight and transport, maritime and airways) and thereby offer a guidepost for policy, human resource and infrastructural interventions.*

- **Mr. Chalot Wongsanguan**, Chairman, GMS-FRETA Thailand and Managing Director, SCG Skills Development Co., Ltd.
- **Dr. Ammarin Daranpob**, Assistant Vice President, Loxley Public Company Limited
- **Mr. Oudet Souvannavong**, Chairman of GMS Business Council and President of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- **Mr. Jens Thraenhart**, Executive Director, Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office

**Moderator:** Mr. Sudam Pawar, Director, Innovation and Technological Connectivity Department, Mekong Institute

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND AGENDA

14:45 – 15:15

Refreshments

15:15 – 17:00

## Session III: Transforming logistics processes with digital tech

Digital technologies offer immense potentials for the GMS Logistics sector to fully become a dynamic driver of regional connectivity, bridging the Mekong countries physically and virtually. This session will discuss ways by which logistics industries – freight and transport, maritime and airways – are transforming the way they do things through digital technology.

- **Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina**, Chief, Transport Connectivity and Logistics Section, Transport Division, UNESCAP
- **Mr. Steve Tipman**, Executive Director, TFO Canada
- **Dr. Eakapong Tungsriranguan**, Chief Financial Officer, JWD InfoLogistics Public Company Limited
- **Mr. Nat Lertlaksana**, Assistant General Manager - Commercial (Head of Partnership Management), Kerry Express (Thailand) Limited

**Moderator: Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta**, Director, Trade and Investment Facilitation Department, Mekong Institute

17:00 – 17:30

## Synthesis and Way Forward

**Dr. Watcharas Leelawath**, Executive Director, Mekong Institute

## July 25

09:00 – 12:00

## GMS Logistics Forum Business Matching

The business matching event will gather a selected number of logistics service providers, freight and transport companies, and other enterprises working in logistics in Cambodia, P.R. China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The business matching session will offer these companies an opportunity to exchange business information and discuss possible areas for collaboration.

By application; see attachment for more details

09:00 – 11:00

Side event 2:

## Dissemination Workshop – Trade Facilitation Office (TFO), Canada

The Trade Facilitation Office Canada invites policymakers, academics and members of the private sector to a dissemination workshop of TFO's initiative and projects directed at enabling better trade opportunities and creating a conducive market environment for agro-food enterprises in the Mekong countries.

11:05 – 12:30

Side event 3:

## Seminar on Water Infrastructure Challenges in Mekong Region – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Mekong Institute, ADBI

Investment in expanding and upgrading infrastructure will be critical in driving growth and development in the Mekong region. Water-related infrastructure, in particular, could contribute significantly to the development of the region, improve wellbeing and human development, including improvements to health and safety. Some water-related infrastructure opportunities are the use of inland waterways for economic corridors and maritime shipping.

This seminar will discuss water infrastructure in the Mekong region, the potentials of maritime shipping and private financing for water supply by the use of spill over tax revenues, based on a new project prepared jointly by the OECD, Mekong Institute and ADBI.

12:30

Networking Lunch



Forum website



Evaluation form