

WHAT'S INSIDE

Mekong Forum-GMS Logistics Forum 2019
Champions Seamless Logistics for
Connectivity

Regional Workshop Underscores SEZ
Development and Coordinated Border
Management for Enhanced Connectivity
in Lancang-Mekong

Capitalizing on Communication Skills for
Regional Cooperation and Integration

Mekong Media Take a Closer Look
on Food Safety

Maize Growers Brush Up on Soil, Seed
and IPM Knowledge



TRAINING/WORKSHOP/SLV ACTIVITIES

MI Successfully Concludes Modular Training on Project Management and Evaluation of Regional Cooperation Projects



Representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and concerned line ministries of the six Lancang-Mekong countries attended the training on *Project Management and Evaluation of Regional Cooperation Projects* held on June 24-28, 2019. The training program aimed at strengthening sub-regional cooperation through efficient and streamlined implementation of both national and multinational projects. [Read more.](#)

PROSAFE Project Launches New Course on Food Safety Risk Management and Traceability



MI, with the support of the New Zealand Aid Programme, delivered a regional training program on *Food Safety Risk Management and Traceability in the Supply Chain* on July 1-12, 2019. Organized under the PROSAFE Project: Promoting Safe Food for Everyone, the new safe food course gathered 27 participants from food safety agencies and enterprises as well as academic institutions from CLMV to equip them with capacities on the management and risk-based approach to food safety issues, especially in the fruit and vegetable value chains. [Read more.](#)

MI Inks New Cooperation Agreement with Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences



MI and the Institute of Scientific and Technical Information (ISTI) of the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS) signed an MoU on July 1 that formalizes the new cooperation agreement between the two organizations in the area of agricultural research. The cooperation agreement was signed between MI's Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath and Secretary of ISTI, CATAS Mr. Zhao Snoglin at the CATAS headquarters in Haikou, Hainan Province, P.R. China. [Read more.](#)

Mekong Institute, Thai Beverage Logistics Team Up to Build Logistics Capacities for Trade in GMS

On July 5, Mekong Institute signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Thai Beverage Logistics Company (TBL) for building logistics capacities and driving forward cross-border trading in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). The five-year agreement covers collaborative research projects, trainings and workshops, as well as promoting information exchange and publications in view of developing the GMS resource and information network. The signing ceremony between TBL and MI was held at MI's Residential Training Center in Khon Kaen, Thailand. [Read more.](#)



Regional Workshop Underscores SEZ Development and Coordinated Border Management for Enhanced Connectivity in Lancang-Mekong

Mekong Institute (MI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand, conducted a regional workshop on *Business Connection and Information Sharing Among SEZs in Lancang-Mekong (LM) Countries Cum Synthesis & Evaluation of Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Training*. The workshop aimed to review learning from the CBM training program and results of action plan implementation by training participants. About 19 participants from P.R. China, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, including representatives from Ministries of Commerce, Planning and Investment, Agriculture and Forestry, Board of Investment, Customs Departments, one-stop service (OSS) centers and special economic zone (SEZ) policy development and monitoring agencies, attended the activity on July 8-10, 2019 at MI's Residential Training Center. [Read more.](#)



Capitalizing on Communication Skills for Regional Cooperation and Integration



MI hosted 34 government officials from Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, representatives of state-owned enterprises from Yunnan Province as well as MI young scholars and staff in the two-week training on *Communication Skill Capacity Building for Regional Cooperation and Integration in the Lancang-Mekong Region* held at MI on July 15-25. In collaboration with the People's Government of Yunnan Province, P.R. China, the training aimed to enhance participants' English proficiency and comprehension, especially when working in a cross-cultural setting. [Read more.](#)



Mekong Forum-GMS Logistics Forum 2019 Champions Seamless Logistics for Connectivity

Mekong Institute, together with the Federation of Thai Industries-Khon Kaen Chapter and the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), held the Joint Mekong Forum and GMS Logistics Forum 2019 on July 24-25 in Khon Kaen. Gathering a 300-strong crowd of regional logistics stakeholders, the forum oriented the attendees on the role and prospects of the logistics sector in fostering better connectivity in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS).

The event was made possible with the support of other partners, including Thai Smile; The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (Thailand); Tourism Authority of Thailand; GMS Freight Transport Association; Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor Project; Asian Development Bank Institute; Trade Facilitation Office-Canada; and the OECD Development Centre. [Read more.](#)



Mekong Media Take a Closer Look on Food Safety



To strengthen CLMV journalists' awareness and understanding of key food safety concepts as well as emerging global and local safe food issues, MI organized the one-week regional media training on *Communicating Food Safety* under MI's PROSAFE Project. Twenty-eight science journalists and media professionals from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam attended this workshop from July 29 to August 2 at the MI Residential Training Center. [Read more.](#)



EWEC (SDC) PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Media Outlets Help Boost Rice Market Development



Advertisements on rice quality have helped rice millers in Lao PDR to strengthen market development and create wider market opportunities as more customers learn and inquire about their products. Promotions were aired on Khammouane and Savannakhet radio stations while print ads were published on dailies such as *Vientiane Mai*, *Social Business* and *Champa Muang Lao Magazine*.

MI and DoA Join Forces for Project Survey in Myawaddy



On July 14, the Myanmar Field Office tapped on the Department of Agriculture to help redesign and implement the survey, which will be used in August to quantify the total maize farmers, maize cultivated land area and other useful information related to assessing project reach and impact. To date, the project has increased the household income of nearly half of the 2,000-targeted maize farmers.

Khammouane Working Group Conducts Field Assessment at Naphao Border

On July 17-18, the EWEC Lao Field Office visited the Naphao International Border as part of efforts to increase awareness and transparency on import-export regulations by installing information displays at the border crossing point. The Working Group, in consultation with the border agencies, gathered data on cross-border fees and procedures as well as other relevant information to be displayed on the signboards. Monitoring and evaluation field trips will be scheduled after the signboards have been installed to assess the effectiveness of such CBTF measures.



Meeting Links Microfinance Company and Smallholder Farmers



EWEC Myanmar organized a meeting on July 24-25 between Microfinance Delta International Company Ltd. (Mifida) and maize farmers in Northern and Southern Myawaddy to facilitate farmer access to loans. The meeting served as an opportunity for Mifida Company to offer and explain their seasonal loans and at the same time, help farmers understand the terms and conditions, requirements and payment modalities affixed to the loans.

Maize Growers Brush Up on Soil, Seed and IPM Knowledge



A training on soil, seed and plant protection was conducted on July 30, 2019 in Pha Lu Gyi Village in Myawaddy, Myanmar. Gathering 70 maize farmers from seven villages, the training intended to improve the knowledge of smallholder farmers on the proper management of maize production to help increase their product quality and market competitiveness. Experts from the Department of Agriculture discussed best practices along the value chain including Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and how to effectively control Fall Armyworm (FAW) which is a common problem among farmers in the Myawaddy region.





MI Highlights TH-LAO Agri Trade in Import-Export Training Program

A total of 50 cross-border traders, farmers, farm managers and agricultural merchants joined the training on *Cross-border Trade Procedures of Agricultural Products* held on July 30-31, 2019 in Nakhon Phanom, Thailand. Aimed at strengthening import-export transactions between Nakhon Phanom and Khammouane, Lao PDR, the training covered topics on cross-border trade standards and policies as well as up-to-date practices and procedures. The training program was jointly organized by MI and the Office of Commercial Affairs, through the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

MI Speaks at ESCAP Meeting on Non-Tariff Measures

MI Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath served as one of the discussants in the expert group meeting on *Navigating Non-Tariff Measures toward Sustainable Development* held on July 11-12, 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. Dr. Leelawath provided insights on how non-tariff measures and trade agreements promote the use of international standards, with reference to the food and agriculture sectors.

Meeting with GMS-FRETA and JSCCIB Explores Avenues for Collaboration

On July 15, MI attended a meeting with the GMS Freight Transport Association and the Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking to discuss potential areas for cooperation following their support at the Joint Mekong Forum and GMS Logistics Forum 2019. MI Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath made a presentation on MI projects in promoting cross-border trade and logistics with Thailand and neighboring countries. The respective organizations affirmed commitment to advancing logistics development in the region.

MI Supports The 40th PAFTAD Conference

MI, along with other partner organizations, participated in PAFTAD 40: *New dimensions of connectivity in the Asia Pacific* last July 17-19, 2019. Held in Bangkok, Thailand, the conference gathered opinion leaders and development actors to weigh in on issues, challenges and opportunities of regional integration, connectivity and inclusive growth. As one of the session discussants, Dr. Watcharas Leelawath talked about the impacts of urbanization and infrastructure development in the GMS.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

AUG

12-16

Regional Training Program on Packaging and Labeling of Processed Agri-food

20-2 SEP

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: Sharing Experiences of Thailand

MEKONG INSTITUTE

123 Mittraphap Rd.,
Muang District
Khon Kaen 40002,
Thailand

+ 66 (0) 43 202 411 to 2
+66 (0) 43 204 041 to 2
+ 66 (0) 43 203 656
information@mekonginstitute.org