

5.2 Concept Note on MI Contribution to the Reduction of Transboundary Haze in the GMS

Executive Summary

The “Transboundary Haze Reduction Program for the Greater Mekong Subregion” addresses the issue of severe haze pollution caused by large-scale biomass burning which has wide-ranging health, economic, and environmental impacts. Building on existing frameworks such as the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution and national initiatives like Thailand’s CLEAR Sky Strategy, the program adopts a strategic and integrated approach that combines policy, community engagement, and innovation to achieve sustainable haze reduction and enhance climate resilience across the region.

The program’s key focus areas include Sustainable Agriculture which promotes alternatives to agricultural burning, such as mulching and composting, and offers targeted capacity-building to equip policymakers and farmers with essential skills for long-term success. The program highlights regional cooperation to ensure regional alignment of national policies, standardized guidelines, and reliable monitoring practices. The Bioenergy Solutions component aims to minimize the reliance on burning by converting agricultural waste into renewable energy, generating economic opportunities for smallholder farmers and rural communities. Through bioenergy initiatives like biogas digesters and biomass gasifiers, the program supports a circular economy that fully utilizes agricultural residues and maximizes their value. The Green Market and Trade Facilitation efforts encourage investment and expand market access for eco-friendly products, creating a sustainable marketplace that supports zero-burning agriculture and bioenergy solutions.

The program is designed to significantly reduce haze incidents by promoting zero-burning practices and bioenergy alternatives, improving air quality and fostering healthier communities. Strengthened regional cooperation among Mekong countries will align policies and open new markets for green products, creating economic opportunities centered on environmental sustainability. By integrating gender inclusion, community engagement, and digital tools, the program enhances local participation and strengthens monitoring efforts for haze reduction. Robust monitoring systems and a coordinated regional framework will ensure long-term, effective haze management in the region.

Please find the full Concept Note in [Annex 3](#)