



Regional: Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion Core Agriculture Support Program (Phase 2)

Project Name	Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion Core Agriculture Support Program (Phase 2)
Project Number	39542-022
Country	Regional
Project Status	Active
Project Type / Modality of Assistance	Technical Assistance
Source of Funding / Amount	<p>TA 8163-REG: Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion Core Agriculture Support Program (Phase II)</p> <p>A.T.F. - Swedish T.A. Grant US\$ 7.50 million</p> <p>TA 8163-REG: Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion Core Agriculture Support Program (Phase 2) (Supplementary)</p> <p>Technical Assistance Special Fund US\$ 500,000.00</p> <p>Nordic Development Fund US\$ 5.00 million</p> <p>TA 8163-REG: Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion Core Agriculture Support Program (Phase 2) (Supplementary)</p> <p>Multi-Donor Trust Fund under the Water Financing Partnership Facility US\$ 1.00 million</p>
Strategic Agendas	<p>Environmentally sustainable growth</p> <p>Inclusive economic growth</p> <p>Regional integration</p>
Drivers of Change	<p>Governance and capacity development</p> <p>Partnerships</p>
Sector / Subsector	<p>Agriculture, natural resources and rural development - Agricultural production</p> <p>Industry and trade - Small and medium enterprise development</p> <p>Information and communication technology - ICT industries and ICT-enabled services</p>
Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	
Description	<p>The proposed RETA will conduct regional studies to identify suitable regional interventions as well as assist the countries in mobilizing required resources to implement the CASP Phase II. Regional fora will be organized to propose harmonization of policies and standards to capitalize on the subregion's locational and other competitive advantages. Technological innovations offer a rich source of opportunity for collaboration and to stimulate emerging business sectors associated with ethical consumerism and sustainable natural resource management. The GMS WGA will work closely with other GMS Working Groups (trade and transport facility, environment, and tourism) to align strategies and maximize impact.</p>
Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy	<p>The proposed RETA will prioritize activities to support Pillars 1 and 2 of CASP Phase II, and synergism between CASP Phase II and the Core Environment Program (CEP) Phase II. Activities on food safety standards, paperless trading, climate friendly agriculture, development of roadmap on synergism between CASP Phase II and CEP Phase II, knowledge sharing activities including GMS agriculture trade exhibition and establishing communities of practice will be undertaken. In addition, the proposed RETA will enable the GMS WGA to respond to the priority needs identified in GMS countries during the Fourth GMS Summit. It will further enhance the GMS WGA to respond to emerging challenges to agriculture development, specifically those linked to expanding cross-border trade in agri-food products, climate extreme and risk mitigation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and food and bio-energy security. Under the proposed RETA, options for financing, partnership facilities and cooperation funding from various sources and modalities will also be explored to ensure the sustainability of the GMS WGA. In light of its pivotal role in ensuring the effective implementation of regional-level activities under CASP Phase II, the GMS WGA will require adequate resourcing in order to drive new regional initiatives and fulfill its role as a forum for knowledge exchange among GMS countries.</p>

Impact

A more integrated, climate friendly agricultural sector in the GMS

Project Outcome

Description of Outcome Enhanced market access for environmentally friendly agricultural products produced by smallholders

Progress Toward Outcome TA Implementation Ongoing.

Implementation Progress

Description of Project Outputs

1. Strengthened regional policy framework and capacity for agri-food quality management
2. Established electronic trade of environmentally friendly agri-food production of smallholders
3. Increased adoption of gender-responsive and climate-friendly agriculture
4. Facilitated knowledge management and dissemination
5. Strengthened regional cooperation on agriculture in the GMS

Status of Implementation
Progress (Outputs,
Activities, and Issues)

Output 1: Establishment of two participatory guarantee system (PGS) pilots per country completed. There were increased attempts by both private and public sector to scale up PGS experience. PGS pilots in five countries demonstrated positive signs of becoming sustainable. Links with markets were facilitated.

The first value chain study on low-input rice value chains have been conducted. The study focused on three rice-producing countries with emphasis on rice that employs sustainable rice intensification practices. Draft working paper is being reviewed.

Efforts have been exerted to arrive at a conceptual framework and operational definition of a safe and environment-friendly agricultural product.

A rapid gender assessment has been conducted with the aim of formulating a gender plan or framework for the capacity building of women farmers on climate friendly agriculture. The appraisal confirmed the increasing role of women in agriculture in the GMS.

Output 2: Facilitated participation of small business operators in regional trade fairs. Support in moderating the Workshop on Promoting Cross-border Agricultural Trade for Sustainable Development in November 2016 provided to UNESCAP. UNNEXt experts as well as experts from FAO, ADB, GS1 and Kasetsart University, Thailand, supported this workshop. Over 40 public and private sector stakeholders from more than 10 countries in the Asia-Pacific region – mainly less developed economies from South and Southeast Asia received training on implementing food safety and quality standards and their related control systems, particularly for fresh horticulture products. Participants received training on business process analysis tools that may be used to streamline control procedures and facilitate cross-border trade. The workshop also included a practical session on fruit and vegetable grading. Preparations for the GMS Pavilion and Business Policy Forum that will be held at the Thaifex International Trade Fair on 31 May-4 June 2017 ongoing.

Output 3: In December 2014, the first LOA was signed with Cambodia and the LOAs with the other GMS countries were signed in 2015. The adoption of the LOA greatly enhanced country ownership of TA activities. A total of 28 subprojects had been implemented through this mechanism. The first round of LOA pilot subprojects have been successfully completed in the third quarter of 2016. The Ministries of Agriculture of the GMS have committed to expanding the good agronomic practices and value chains of safe and environment-friendly agro-based products. Additional subprojects on green water management and nitrogen-use efficiency have been facilitated.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was initiated to provide a platform for CASP2 to work with private companies and NGOs. The MOU is intended to help farmers acquire knowledge, technologies, and experiences on climate-friendly agriculture (CFA) and access markets for their CFA products. The first MOU was signed with a firm in Thailand in September 2014 and six others were signed thereafter.

Output 4: A strategic communication perspective that would take into consideration the visibility and outreach of CASP2 among different publics was initiated. The elements consisted of a media outreach plan for use by the respective NSSUs for regional activities or in-country activities with regional relevance. Materials produced internally and which have been used in the public domain include the trifold brochure entitled, ‘Overview of the CASP Phase II and Future Perspectives’, the new audiovisual production on the CASP 2 vision and message as well as a new documents folder, ‘SEAP for All’. Other materials have also been developed such as an OP-ED article on Food Safety and draft press releases on the strategy consultations and other related postings for Facebook and the website

The midterm review undertaken in 2016 opined that the continuation of the agriculture information network services (AINS) in the present form of a website was not strategic. This was because there was not much ownership for the tool among the GMS WGAs except for PRC. To validate this proposition, two studies to assess the importance and viability of reinvigorating the AINS have been conducted. In parallel, the Bangkok-based TA experts conducted a needs assessment for regional agricultural information services. Both works concluded that: (i) there was still a need for agriculture related information from among the various agri-based stakeholders in the GMS, whether these be the public or private sector; (ii) the huge information gap was about the emerging SEAP: what these are, where they can be sourced, who/which companies supply them, what are the markets and features of the consumers of SEAP, what are the technologies and government-related regulations pertaining to the SEAP market, etc.; and (iii) the use of smart phones and social media for SEAP communications was the way to go for AINS.

Output 5: The WGA Secretariat had been established in Bangkok, Thailand and strengthened as well. The 12th and 13th WGA annual meetings were successfully conducted (WGA-AM12 held in Thailand in 2015; WGA-AM13 held in Viet Nam in 2016). The draft ‘GMS Strategy and Action Plan for Promoting Safe and Environment-Friendly Agro-Based Value Chains’ was presented and notated in the 21st GMS Ministerial Conference in 2016. Preparations for the 14th WGA Annual Meeting and 2nd GMS Agriculture Ministers Meeting ongoing. National and regional consultations have been conducted on the strategy preparation and action plan development. A major policy forum, and GMS Pavilion are being organized at THAIFEX 2017 in Bangkok with a focus on food safety as a lead up to the 2nd GMS Agricultural Ministers Meeting planned for September 2017.

Geographical Location

Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects

Environmental Aspects

Involuntary Resettlement

Indigenous Peoples

Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation

During Project Design	Close consultations with WGA, concerned ministries and government agencies, and stakeholders were carried out to obtain their views on needs of the GMS, priorities of the GMS countries, and support for the agriculture sector during project design and formulation.
During Project Implementation	Regular communications and consultations with stakeholders are being maintained to ensure effective implementation of the project.

Business Opportunities

Consulting Services	ADB will engage international and national consultants to provide about 700 person-months of consulting services to assist the GMS countries to expand subregional cooperation: (i) develop roadmaps and plans and implement each pillar of the CASP Phase II by conducting studies and pilot projects for scaling up regional investments, consistent with GMS Master Plan; (ii) mobilize resources from development partners and private sector to support CASP Phase II; and (iii) enhance institutional capacity for regional cooperation and ensure collaboration of R-PATA activities and outputs with activities of other GMS Working Groups and of development partners. In addition to international consultants, the TA will provide 546 person-months of individual national consultants to work together with international consultants in supporting the implementation of CASP Phase II. ADB will select and engage consultants in accordance with its Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (March 2013, as amended from time to time). Disbursements under the TA will conform to ADB's Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook (May 2010, as amended from time to time). All procurement will be done in accordance with ADB's Procurement Guidelines (March 2013, as amended from time to time).
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Responsible Staff

Responsible ADB Officer	Ramachandran, Pavit
Responsible ADB Department	Southeast Asia Department
Responsible ADB Division	Environment, Natural Resources & Agriculture Division, SERD
Executing Agencies	<i>Asian Development Bank 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City 1550, Philippines</i>

Timetable

Concept Clearance	14 Sep 2012
Fact Finding	09 Jan 2012 to 16 Feb 2012
MRM	-
Approval	14 Sep 2012
Last Review Mission	-
Last PDS Update	27 Apr 2017

TA 8163-REG

Milestones					
Approval	Signing Date	Effectivity Date	Closing		
			Original	Revised	Actual
14 Sep 2012	-	14 Sep 2012	14 Sep 2017	14 Sep 2018	-

Financing Plan/TA Utilization						Cumulative Disbursements		
ADB	Cofinancing	Counterpart				Total	Date	Amount
		Gov	Beneficiaries	Project Sponsor	Others			
500,000.00	13,500,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	14,000,000.00	14 Sep 2012	7,335,883.67

Project Page	https://www.adb.org/projects/39542-022/main
Request for Information	http://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form?subject=39542-022
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