

## **AYEYAWADY-CHAO PHRAYA-MEKONG ECONOMIC COOPERATION STRATEGY PLAN OF ACTION 2010-2012**

### ***Introduction***

*The Economic Cooperation Strategy Plan of Action (ECSPA) is a series of plans of action, which has a 10 year time-frame from 2003-2012 to realize the goals of the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> ACMECS Summit in Bagan in 2003. The progress of its implementation shall be reviewed every two years. To facilitate implementation, the proposed programs, projects and cooperation arrangements are divided into phases: immediate-to-short term (2003-2005), medium term (2006-2008) and long term (2010-2012).*

*The ACMECS Plan of Action will conform to the Bagan Declaration, the Declarations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> ACMECS Summits. The ACMECS Plan of Action 2010-2012 is an updated version of the ACMECS Plan of Action 2006, to reflect the inclusion of the Environment sector and the current circumstances, priorities and needs of the ACMECS Countries, to guide the ACMECS cooperation towards the year 2012.*

*In recognition of the need to promote economic cooperation among the ACMECS members and in response to emerging issues in the region, the ACMECS Countries will implement initiatives in the eight priority cooperation areas, including two additional issues, as follows:*

### ***1. Trade and Investment Facilitation***

*The ACMECS Countries shall enlarge the trade and investment volumes amongst the Member Countries, which have increased significantly. The objective is to expand trading activities and improve the flows of goods and services along border areas, in order to increase income and reduce socio-economic disparities.*

- 1.1. Encourage banking facilities and services of ACMECS Countries in order to facilitate trade transactions and the increased use of local currencies for border trade transactions;*
- 1.2. Enhance trade facilitation in customs, for example, by simplifying customs procedures and strengthening customs administration along the borders;*
- 1.3. Strengthen the ongoing exchange of information and cooperation of the ACMECS Business Council;*
- 1.4. Enhance transparency and simplify rules, regulations and policies relating to trade and investment, including rules on, (a) licensing, (b) access to domestic finance, (c) payments and receipts, (d) repatriation of profits by investors; and (e) import and (re-export procedures;*

- 1.5. *Encourage implementation of the Agreements for the Promotion and Protection of Investments, as well as negotiation and implementation of the Agreements for the Avoidance of Double Taxation, amongst the Member Countries;*
- 1.6. *Promote cooperation on joint trade and investment promotion events, trade fairs, and exhibitions amongst the ACMECS Countries, the organizing countries should provide special supports, on the case by case, to the participating countries, such as complementary booths and other auxiliary supports;*
- 1.7. *Accelerate the expansion of the One-Stop Service centers and Single-Stop Inspection points at border checkpoints;*
- 1.8. *Accelerate the implementation of measures as stated in the ACMECS Leaders' Declaration on Facilitation and Promotion of Trade, Investment and Tourism in the 3<sup>d</sup> ACMECS Summit 2008;*
- 1.9. *Encourage and promote the Contract Farming in order to generate the employment and increase production as well as to contribute to the increase in regional and international trade in agricultural products and to guarantee food sufficiency in the ACMECS countries;*

## ***2. Agricultural Cooperation***

*The objective is to strengthen agricultural cooperation by increasing productivity, improving market access, promoting joint production, research development, and information sharing in agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry amongst the ACMECS countries, so that the ACMECS countries can become global suppliers of agricultural produce.*

- 2.1. *Strengthen cooperation in Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards (SPS) between the ACMECS member countries;*
- 2.2. *Improve the information sharing in animal disease control and improve quarantine inspection procedures of cross- border agricultural and forestry products;*
- 2.3. *Enhance cooperation in technology transfer in agricultural production and processing to increase productivity, food security, food safety through the existing agricultural cooperation mechanisms in order to become a regional and global supplier of agricultural produce;*
- 2.4. *Support Joint research and development of potential agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry commodities amongst the ACMECS Countries to promote Contract Farming.*
- 2.5. *Strengthen cooperation in bio-fuel crops production in the ACMECS countries in order to promote materials and inputs for bio-fuel development;*
- 2.6. *Promote support for financial institutions to provide credit for SME entrepreneurs for agriculture related activities under the ACMECS schemes;*

### ***3. Industrial and Energy Cooperation***

*The objective is to promote ACMECS industrial and energy cooperation through the establishment and improvement of infrastructure facilities in strategic areas in particular, and to promote efficient joint utilization of member countries' resources, especially industries along the borders.*

- 3.1. Enhance development of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and strengthen promotion of best practices and appropriate standards;*
- 3.2. Promote utilization of renewable energy resources, including biomass, bio-fuels, solar, wind, hydro, and other locally-available energy;*
- 3.3. Promote the development of power transmission lines and networks across the ACMECS Countries;*
- 3.4. Promote clustered networking and strategic alliances with the private sector to develop investment opportunities;*
- 3.5. Strengthen investment in industrial infrastructure particularly supporting and logistic industries as well as Special Border Economic Zones along the economic corridors and the 'inter-corridor linkages';*
- 3.6. Promote and enhance the competitiveness of the ACMECS SMEs, especially investment in SMEs development amongst the ACMECS Countries and promotion of SMEs along the borders;*
- 3.7. Develop co-production ventures in industrial estates in strategic areas;*
- 3.8. Encourage Member Countries to utilize the comparative advantage in resources endowment to promote industrial complementarities amongst the ACMECS Countries.*

### ***4. Transport Linkages***

*The objective is to develop and utilize transport linkages amongst the ACMECS Countries to facilitate trade, investment, agricultural and industrial production, and tourism.*

- 4.1. Promote the participation of the private sector in different forms of cooperation, including PPP in transport infrastructure linkage development;*
- 4.2. Enhance the developments in transport linkages particularly in the remaining missing link/bottlenecks of the 'economic corridors' and 'inter-corridor linkages';*
- 4.3. Strengthen the development of infrastructure for tourism routes, cultural and natural heritage sites in the ACMECS Countries; and*

4.4. *Enhance the development of air linkages among major cities in order to increase trade, investment and tourism flows;*

4.5. *Advance the technical cooperation in areas related to transport linkages;*

### **5. Tourism Cooperation**

*The objective is to promote joint strategy for tourism cooperation among the ACMECS countries in order to facilitate travels of people both inter and intra-regionally.*

5.1. *Promote the “Five Countries, One Destination” concept, in order to increase regional tourism flow, through the ACMECS Single Visa Scheme as well as joint tourism marketing and promotion;*

5.2. *Advance the simplification of immigration procedures at border checkpoints to promote cross-border travel into and within the ACMECS Countries;*

5.3. *Enhance closer coordination in the development of the ACMECS Countries’ tourism websites and information database;*

5.4. *Develop new forms of tourism, such as eco-tourism in which the natural and cultural resources are preserved;*

5.5. *Promote the human resource development for tourism, with priority given to the programs and projects for skill training in community-based tourism development, tour guides, marketing, tourism planning and management; and*

5.6. *Encourage the appointment of central agencies as the focal point for sharing information related to border trade, investment and tourism in order to coordinate all local agencies to promote regional tourism in the same direction;*

### **6. Human Resource Development**

*The ACMECS Countries shall cooperate to enhance the well-being and livelihood of their peoples through building the capacity of their peoples and institutions for their labour force as well as coping with the global and regional challenges, through the following activities:*

6.1. *Encourage partnership cooperation amongst academic institutions, in particular higher education and vocational training in the ACMECS Countries for the development human resource capacity;*

6.2. *Promote existing institutional linkages, vocational training institutions, and university networks;*

6.3. *Encourage Development Partners to participate in ACMECS training projects and to provide financial and technical assistance for the ACMECS Countries in Human Resource Development;*

- 6.4. *Advance the number of scholarship and fellowship programs in the sectors of ACMECS Cooperation;*
- 6.5. *Promote the participation of the ACMECS Countries in the integrated Human Resource Development Strategy;*
- 6.6. *Enhance cooperation on development of competency standards and skills certification system amongst the ACMECS Countries;*
- 6.7. *Establish a labour market information network including forecasting of labour market trend; and*
- 6.8. *Share experiences in managing oversea workers with the support of receiving countries and in protecting migrant workers.*

## ***7. Public Health***

*The objective is to forge closer national and regional cooperation at all levels, within ACMECS and with other regional cooperation frameworks such as ASEAN and Mekong Basin Disease Surveillance Cooperation (MBDS), to prevent and control the spread of infectious diseases by enhancing national and regional preparedness and response capacity with integrated approaches, through the following activities:*

- 7.1. *Build up national and regional surveillance and response including laboratory capacity both in human and animal sectors;*
- 7.2. *Facilitate the information sharing particularly through the International Health Regulation (2005) National Focal Point on infectious disease surveillance, prevention and control through collaborative activities and existing information sharing system and network;*
- 7.3. *Promote prevention and control of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases at cross-border areas, particularly Avian Influenza and Pandemic Influenza;*
- 7.4. *Strengthen collaborative efforts amongst the ACMECS Countries and with other existing regional frameworks, such as ASEAN and MBDS on human capacity building, information sharing and disease surveillance, prevention and control at cross-border checkpoints, taking into account the core capacity requirements under the International Health Regulation (2005) for designated airports, ports and ground-crossing; and*
- 7.5. *Advance national coordinating epidemic preparedness plan of the ACMECS Countries, particularly at border provinces and border checkpoints;*

## ***8. Environmental Cooperation***

*The main objective is to effectively implement the decision of the Third ACMECS Summit's Declaration. To achieve ACMECS environmental goals can be achieved through the following areas of activities:*

- 8.1. *Assess the ecological health and environmental status of the Ayayewady Chao Phraya- Mekong rivers;*
- 8.2. *Integrate the environmental goals into all the ACMECS programmes on economic development;*
- 8.3. *Promote the trans-boundary environmental impact assessment activities towards a commitment of the ACMECS Countries in resolving trans-boundary environmental issues;*
- 8.4. *Promote environmental protection campaigns in the tourist sites in the region with a view to support the ACMECS initiative on “Five countries – One Destination” under the Tourism program;*
- 8.5. *Develop guidelines for environmental protection and management at the tourism site;*
- 8.6. *Strengthen the commitment amongst the ACMECS Countries to the environmental protection at the tourist site to attract more tourists to the region;*
- 8.7. *Formulating a mechanism to cooperate and coordinate with all the environmental cooperation frameworks under the context of existing regional cooperation mechanism such as GMS, MRC.*
- 8.8. *Formulate a program to enhance the cooperation among the ACMECS Countries on measures to prevent the rising of sea-water level and to promote the climate change adaptation taking into account the current efforts of the countries in the region and international cooperation on this area;*
- 8.9. *Promote agreements and commitments of the ACMECS Countries on environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources and integration of those commitments into their national plans and policies.*
- 8.10. *Develop awareness and capacity building programs on environment;*
- 8.11. *Building a network of leading environmental institutions in the region and formulate exchange programs amongst different environmental institutions, particularly to exploit their strengths to support each other.*
- 8.12. *Establish the regional database on environment and related themes.*
- 8.13. *Organize annual meetings and conferences amongst the ACMECS Member Countries to validate results achieved during a year and plan for next year.*
- 8.14. *Encourage local people to participate in biodiversity preservation through community organization in order to generate their income from the ecotourism;*
- 8.15. *Promote cooperation on disaster risk management amongst the ACMECS Member Countries; and*

8.16. *Promote cooperation on environmental research amongst universities in the ACMECS Member Countries.*

## **9. Development Partners**

*The ACMECS Countries will encourage Development Partners to participate in the ACMECS Countries activities, in order to jointly implement ACMECS projects. The strengthening of partnerships between ACMECS and Developing Partners will be conducted through the following activities:*

- 9.1. Initiate Guidelines for Development Partners Participate in ACMECS Projects and develop the list of the flagship ACMECS projects for Development Partners' consideration;*
- 9.2. Encourage Development Partners to provide financial and technical assistance for ACMECS Countries in relevant projects;*
- 9.3. Encourage Development Partners to work closely with the ACMECS Countries in priority projects and on the development of human capacity programs;*
- 9.4. Diversify the Development Partners' Participation in ACMECS Projects with different levels and scopes, including bilateral, trilateral and multilateral frameworks; and*
- 9.5. Encourage coordination and cooperation amongst major donors/development partners to for more effective resource mobilization.*

## **10. Engagement with Local Communities**

*The ACMECS Countries will encourage the participation from local communities, especially in border provinces to promote cross-border trade, investment and tourism. These objectives will be accomplished through the following activities:*

- 10.1. Promote the investment in industrial infrastructure of Special Economic Zones in order to enhance cooperation and development of border provinces which will help accelerate the implementation of the ACMECS Cooperation on facilitation and promotion of trade, investment and tourism;*
- 10.2. Encourage the establishment of Sister Cities and the cooperation arrangements amongst border provinces to promote dialogue amongst provincial authorities in the implementation of ACMECS projects and cooperation;*
- 10.3. Promote the establishment of trade and commerce associations and encourage cooperation amongst the chambers of commerce, federations/boards of industries of the ACMECS Countries;*
- 10.4. Facilitate the sharing of information and networking between existing SMEs and Agriculture Cooperatives in strategic areas of cooperation within local communities.*

- 10.5. *Promote the participation of local communities in major projects/activities along the economic corridors;*
- 10.6. *Promote the sub-contracting in manufacturing and service sectors to local communities to generate incomes and to upgrade their living standards;*
- 10.7. *Promote and empower the local authorities in decision-making for approval of specific investment programs in their areas.*

### ***Conclusion***

*In order to facilitate implementation of the ACMECS Plan of Action 2010-2012, the ACMECS Countries will carry out projects agreed upon by the Sectoral Working Group in each area of cooperation.*

*In addition, the Coordinating Countries will regularly report the progress in their respective sectors of cooperation to the ACMECS Member Countries through diplomatic channels. Furthermore, a review will be conducted every two years.*

*A review on the ACMECS Plan of Action 2010-2012 will take place in 2011 to consider projects for the last phase (2011-2012).*

*The ACMECS Plan of Action 2010-2012 was adopted by the Leaders of the ACMECS Countries at the 4<sup>th</sup> ACMECS Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010.*

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