



The Asia Foundation

Mekong Policy Dialogue: Evolving sub-regional architecture and ACMECS

Banyan Tree Hotel, Bangkok, 27 June 2019

Introduction: Mekong sub-regional architecture is becoming more complex, reflecting increased geopolitical attention and expanding cooperation between Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, their neighbours and partners. Thirteen Mekong-related inter-governmental cooperation frameworks have been established since 1957.

This track 1.5 Mekong Policy Dialogue will focus on evolving sub-regional architecture and the role of Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS).

The purpose of the dialogue is to explore how ACMECS can provide strategic value-add to complement other sub-regional mechanisms. The outcome will be practical suggestions for consideration ahead of the ACMECS Senior Officials' Meeting in August 2019.

Format: The dialogue will bring together:

- Officials from ACMECS member governments
- Partner representatives from Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, United States and others
- Regional experts

The dialogue is organised by The Asia Foundation and Chulalongkorn University's Centre for Social Development Studies.

Structure: Sessions will be structured around:

- Recent developments
- Opportunities
- Governance
- Future of ACMECS

Analytical inputs: Presentations will include:

- Mapping of various sub-regional architecture mechanisms
- Case study research and policy briefs



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AGENDA

0830-0900	Registration <i>Ballroom, 11th Floor, Banyan Tree Hotel</i>
0900-0930	Opening remarks Dr Vilawan Mangklatanakul, Director-General, Department of International Economic Affairs, Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr Paul Stephens, Chargé d’Affaires, Australian Embassy <i>Group Photo</i>
0930-1030	Recent Developments Dr Wararak Chalmermpuntusak, School of Political Science, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (moderator) Mr Benjamin Zawacki, The Asia Foundation – Analysis of sub-regional architecture Mr Kavi Chongkittavorn, Scholar and Journalist – ACMECS in an era of expanding sub-regional cooperation Professor Lyu Xing, Institute of South East Asia Studies, Yunnan University – Lancang Mekong Cooperation
1030-1045	Coffee Break
1045-1230	Opportunities Ms Hang Thi Thanh Pham, UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (moderator) Dr Tran Viet Thai, Deputy Director-General, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam – How is the architecture addressing the needs of ACMECS governments? Dr David J Devlaeminck, Chongqing University – How is the architecture addressing the sharing of transboundary waters? Dr Anoulak Kittikhoun, Mekong River Commission – How to increase cooperation and coordination within multi-layered architecture?
1230-1345	Lunch <i>Saffron restaurant, 51st floor (take elevator to 52nd floor, stairs down one level)</i>

1345-1530	<p>Governance</p> <p>Ms Katy Lin, Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (moderator)</p> <p>Dr Chackrit Duangphastra, Former Director, Chulalongkorn University’s Transportation Institute – Governance arrangements and standards for connectivity and infrastructure</p> <p>Mr Brian Eyler, Director, Southeast Asia Program, Stimson Centre – Trends in Mekong sub-regional environmental and social safeguards</p> <p>Mr Nguyen Huu Thien, Mekong Delta Expert, Cantho – A perspective from Vietnam</p>
1530-1545	Coffee Break
1545-1645	<p>Future of ACMECS</p> <p>Mr Thomas Parks, Thailand Country Representative, The Asia Foundation (moderator)</p> <p>Dr Sok Siphana, Managing Partner, Zico Law – What can ACMECS learn from other sub-regional experiences?</p> <p>Dr U Zaw Oo, Executive Director, Myanmar Centre for Economic and Social Development – A perspective from Myanmar</p> <p>Dr John Dore, Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Reflections from an ACMECS partner</p>
1645-1715	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>Mr Nikordej Balankura, Deputy Director-General, Department of International Economic Affairs, Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Mr Paul Stephens, Chargé d’Affaires, Australian Embassy</p>
1715 – 1830	<p>Informal Reception</p> <p><i>Living Room II, 12th Floor, Banyan Tree Hotel</i></p>