

Japan-Mekong Connectivity Initiative

Japan will further promote infrastructure development in the Mekong region and make efforts to enhance institutional connectivity (e.g. improvement of systems, development of SEZs and other industrial bases, industrial promotion measures, improvement of customs procedures etc.) and people-to-people connectivity so that the whole region can benefit from the growth.

This initiative also aims to strengthen the ASEAN Community by promoting regional integration.

【Pillars of Cooperation】

- Japan will develop infrastructure to fill the missing links of East-West and Southern Economic Corridors.
- Japan will connect the Corridors more smoothly through improvement of systems such as customs procedures.
- Japan will promote the land development along the Corridors (e.g. development of industrial parks, industrial promotion measures etc.) and improve access from neighboring areas to Corridors so that the region can develop as a whole.
- Japan will develop industrial human resources who will support the growth in the region and also strengthen a people-to-people network.

【Points to note on implementation】

- ◆ Japan will place importance on the consensus building based on the initiatives among the Mekong countries. Japan will support the Mekong countries by facilitating their own efforts and through trilateral cooperation.
- ◆ Japan will aim for balanced development to benefit the Mekong region as a whole.
- ◆ Japan will try to meet the needs of each Mekong country through a public-private partnership, in close cooperation with Japanese companies operating locally.

【How to promote the initiative】

- * Japan will hold policy dialogues regarding the initiative at the political and senior-level meetings under the existing Japan-Mekong frameworks.
- * Japan and Mekong countries will set up senior-level working groups under the SOM regarding connectivity related to cooperation referred to in "New Tokyo Strategy 2015" and "Japan-Mekong Action Plan for realization of the New Tokyo Strategy 2015".
- * Senior-level Working Group on Economic Corridors will be the first working group to be established to identify the priority of infrastructure projects in the region and to discuss the way forward.

【Upcoming schedule】

- * The initiative will be formally launched at the Japan-Mekong Foreign Ministers' meeting in July.
- * The first meeting of the Senior-level Working Group on Economic Corridors will be convened prior to the Japan-Mekong Summit in September.
- * The details of the initiative, including the implementation plan of the early phase connectivity projects, will be announced at the Japan-Mekong Summit in September.