

Report for Institutional Program for Younger Researcher Overseas Visits  
Center for Southeast Asian Studies  
Kyoto University

<b>Name:</b> PICHAI UAMTURAPOJN	<b>Date:</b> 13/09/11
<b>Position in CSEAS:</b> Researcher	
* Check an appropriate entry (Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Research Assistant, Postdoctoral, Ph. D. Student, Master's Student, Undergraduate Student)	
<b>Host Institute (Counterpart, Institute and Country):</b> Ms. Maria Theresa Medialdia, Mekong Institute, Thailand and Dr. Tran Mai Kien, Mekong River Commission, Lao PDR	
*Circle the appropriate entry for host institute ( University · Research Institute · Company · <b>Inter-government Organizations</b> )	
<b>Position at Host Institute:</b> Visiting Researcher	
<b>Term:</b> 04/07/2011 - 04/09/2011 (63 days)	
<b>Research Purpose:</b> * Check any appropriate entries.	
1 Research/ Laboratory Work ② <b>Fieldwork</b> ③ Seminar ④ Internship ⑤ Take course or class ⑥ Attend Academic Meeting ⑦ Earn credits ⑧ Other	
<b>Research Area:</b> * Circle the appropriate entry.	
1 Humanities ② Social Sciences ③ Mathematics and Physics ④ Chemistry ⑤ <b>Engineering</b> ⑥ Biology ⑦ Agriculture ⑧ Medical Science, Pharmacy and Dentistry ⑨ <b>Integral Area of Studies</b> ⑩ New Multidiscipline	
<b>Outline of Overseas Visits</b>	
<p>Beginnings of these overseas visits were arranged to collect the updated information of cross-border transport facilitation among GMS countries with Ms. Maria Theresa Medialdia at the Mekong Institute's resource center in Khon Kaen. Besides, I participated the Mekong Forum for gathering the policy-related cross-border practices. Then, I visited Nongkhai province in order to observing the local stakeholders and their cross-border activities at both (formal) international bridges and registered river ports and (informal) local river ports. Interviewed with local fishermen and border traders, I visited 5 districts along the Mekong River named: Nai Mueang, Mi Chai, Pho Chai, Kuan Wan, and Wiang Khuk. Furthermore, I collected the statistical information related to cross-border transport and trade facilitation from the Office of Commercial, Department of Customs, Office of Immigration, Municipality, and Department of Public Works and Town &amp; Country Planning. Focused on cross-border activities at the border control points, two transport modes were investigated: 1) land transport based on the 1<sup>st</sup> Mekong International Bridge at Jommanee village and 2) inland water transport based on the Nongkhai river port at Wat Hai Sok. I particularly observed border-crossing activities, actors, and involved stakeholders prior to time scales. In August, I crossed the Mekong River to visit Ban Thanaleng in Vientiane in order to examine the local transport demands in this area. Interviewed with immigration officers and variety of local transport users, I aimed to explore the demand-supply coordination based on those cross-border activities. I further visited Dr. Tran Mai Kien at the Mekong River Commission to collect the official documents related to inland water transport and Mekong navigation information. Besides, I observed and interviewed with local villagers, transport service users, and cross-border retail traders.</p>	
<b>Research Achievement on this Program</b>	
<p>Efforts of this fieldwork were gradually focused on the relationships between cross-border transport demands and infrastructure facilitation and supplies in particular to both land and water transport modes. Multimodal transport stands as one of transport tools for increasing connectivity of GMS's competitive transport networks. However, rapid changes through large-scaled construction of expanded land transport capacity and upgraded river ports, these are consistently increasing the gap among complex demands of local users. Recognized different priorities between both modes, activities such as construction of bank protections and port improvement were considered national projects, and did not involve to regional transport development plans. The declining trend in IWT demands not only reflects the impact of an expansion of road networks, but also points the lack coordination and interests throughout in-line transport agencies. Due to slow, old-fashioned and outdated perceptions, the IWT mode has been neglected and remains outside the development plan, where cross-border users and traditional livelihoods have dramatically changed prior to promoting land transport over IWT. Based on statistical data and interview, both internal and regional transport demands between Nongkhai and Vientiane are greatly increased by ongoing improvement of road network. Increasing demand of heavy construction materials poses major problems for road maintenances. Still, the water transport in Mekong plays a vital role for local livelihood by providing cross-border accessibility between both sides, allowing local people to commute and access to their demands.</p>	