

Consultation Meeting Twinning Partnership on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Between Lao PDR and Japan

9 January 2014, Mercure Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Organized by DESIA, MoNRE, Lao PDR and AECEN Secretariat with support from ADB

Background

Minimizing adverse environmental impacts of economic development accompanied by rapid urbanization and industrial growth as well as conserving natural environment remain significant challenges for Asia. While many governments have developed legal and institutional frameworks for environmental safeguards, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws and regulations remains weak due in large part to technical, financial, and human capacity limitations.

In the region, application of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements has been consistently identified as a priority concern of environmental compliance and enforcement. Yet, effective implementation of the EIA laws in Asia remains patchy, especially in relation to compliance and enforcement of environmental management and monitoring plans (EMMPs) which identify measures to be taken in order to reduce adverse environmental and social impacts to acceptable levels or offset them in appropriate manners. Therefore, EIA implementation needs to be enhanced through further capacity strengthening.

Under Technical Assistance (TA) 7566-REG on environmental safeguard of Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Environmental Compliance and Network (AECEN) aims to increase capacity for EIA implementation through its subproject - "Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Clearinghouse and Capacity Strengthening through Twinning." The subproject strives to achieve its aims by facilitating knowledge capture and dissemination of information on international best practices in EIA implementation through exchange of knowledge and know-hows as well as mutual learning.

For twinning partnerships, Lao PDR and Sri Lanka were selected, and Japan will act as mentor country to both countries. Useful perspective, experience and strategies are expected to be shared to advance implementation of EIA laws and regulations in Lao PDR and Sri Lanka through hands-on activities under this project.

Objectives and expected outputs of the Consultation Meeting

The Department of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (DESIA), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental (MoNRE), Lao PDR will organize a Consultation Meeting on Twinning Partnership on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Between Lao PDR and Japan, in collaboration with the AECEN Secretariat and with support from ADB. The Consultation meeting aims to bring together partners from both mentor and mentee countries to identify and prioritize assistance needs, discuss and agree on objectives and design of the partnership, and secure commitments from leadership of both countries for its implementation. Extended consultation between leading organizations of the project will follow after this Meeting to develop detailed work plan.

Expected outputs: critical parts of joint work plan and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that guide the successful implementation of the twinning partnership.