

Creation of Greater Mekong Subregion Regional Competitiveness through Cluster Mapping

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Abstract : This research investigates cluster development in the area called the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), which consists of Thailand, the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Myanmar, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Cambodia, and Vietnam. The study utilized Porter's competitiveness theory and the cluster mapping approach to analyze the competitiveness of the region. The data collection consists of interviews, focus groups, and the analysis of secondary data. The findings identify some evidence of cluster development in the GMS; however, there is no clear indication of collaboration among the components in the clusters. GMS clusters tend to be stand-alone. The clusters in Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia tend to be labor intensive, whereas the clusters in Thailand and the PRC (Yunnan) have the potential to successfully develop into innovative clusters. The collaboration and integration among the clusters in the GMS area are promising, though it could take a long time. The most likely relationship between the GMS countries could be, for example, suppliers of the low-end, labor-intensive products will be located in the low income countries such as Myanmar, Lao PDR, and Cambodia, and these countries will be providing input materials for innovative clusters in the middle income countries such as Thailand and the PRC.

Keywords : cluster, GMS, competitiveness, development

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