



'Early Harvest' Implementation of the GMS Cross-Border Transport Facilitation Agreement

Mohammad Ehteshamul HOQUE

Trade Specialist

Regional Cooperation and Integration and Trade Division
Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department



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Background

- GMS CBTA - aims to create a common subregional cross-border transport system, making **faster, easier and cheaper movement of goods and people throughout the GMS** (based on reciprocity)
- Ratification – All 6 GMS countries ratified as Contracting Parties by 2015
- However, no real movement of vehicles made possible due to diverse set of challenges – except under a few **IICBTAs** (bilateral agreements on initial implementation of the CBTA)
- Ministers at a CBTA Joint Committee (JC) Retreat in 2016 (Bangkok) asked NTFC-SOM to draft an **'Early Harvest'** CBTA implementation package as an interim solution



Background

- ‘Early Harvest’ MOU, signed by the Ministers in 2017, was launched on 1 June 2018
- Permits issued, and operations began, but implementation stopped after the closure of borders (due to Covid-19) in 2020
- With trade returning to pre-pandemic levels by 2023, borders progressively re-opened - but CBTA Permits and the ‘Early Harvest’ MOU had expired
- **December 2023 – In JCM8, Ministers extended the ‘Early Harvest’ MOU to the end of 2026, and agreed to re-launch EH transport operations (following the issuance of Permits by relevant national authorities) from 1 April 2024**



GMS Vice-Ministers of Transport at the JCM8 and NTFC-SOM
Hainan, December 2023

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Scope of the 'Early Harvest'

'Early Harvest' focusses on the free movement of commercial goods and passenger vehicles. Conditions -

- Each country may issue up to 500 multiple journey GMS Road Transport Permits and Temporary Admission Documents (TADs) to goods and/or passenger transport operators (see next slide)
- TAD is like car pass or vehicle 'passport' and must be signed or stamped and dated at the border by the Host country Customs officials when entering and exiting that country
- No limit on the number of journeys to be undertaken; single stay in another Host country cannot exceed 30 days. Cabotage is not allowed



Scope of the 'Early Harvest'

- Vehicles may enter through one BCP and exit through another using only Protocol 1 Route Network
- For 2024 re-launch, Lao PDR will open NR3 and NR9 from Houayxay to Boten and Savannakhet to Dansavanh plus NR13 from Boten to Nong Nok Khiene
- Additional routes and border crossing were added under Protocol 1 Extension MOU entered into force after final signature at JCM8
- Transport Sub-Committee Meetings in March and September 2024: Further extensions were discussed
- New extended routes may be agreed and signed in the JCM9
- Myanmar will join by 2027 and conclude bilateral IICBTAs with neighboring PRC and Lao PDR (as they signed IICBTA with Thailand)

ສັນຍາວ່າດ້ວຍການອໍານວຍຄວາມສະດວກ
ໃນການຂົນສົ່ງຂ້າມແດນພາຍໃຕ້ຂອບອະນຸພາກພື້ນແມ່ນໍ້າຂອງ

Greater Mekong Subregion Cross-Border Transport Facilitation Agreement



ປຶ້ມອະນຸຍາດນໍາເຂົ້າພາຫະນະຊົ່ວຄາວ

Motor Vehicle Temporary Admission Document

This document is issued in accordance with Protocol 3 and Article 23 of the Agreement between and among the Governments of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for the Facilitation of Cross-Border Transport of Goods and People.

Permit No. _____

Country code	Permit Number	Serial

Type of Permit/Transport Operation: Scheduled passenger Non-scheduled passenger Cargo

1. Issuing Authority:

1.1 Name: _____
1.2 Address: _____
1.3 Contact Data: _____

2. Beneficiary of the Permit:

2.1 Name: _____
2.2 Address: _____
2.3 Contact Data: _____
2.4 Road Transport Operator's National License: _____

3. Particulars for Scheduled Passenger Transport Operations Only:

3.1 Itinerary: _____
3.2 Frequency of operations for the beneficiary: _____
3.3 Maximum Capacity (number of seats/benches): _____
3.4 Other Restrictions: _____

4. Period of Validity: from _____ until _____

5. Allocated Vehicle Registration Number:

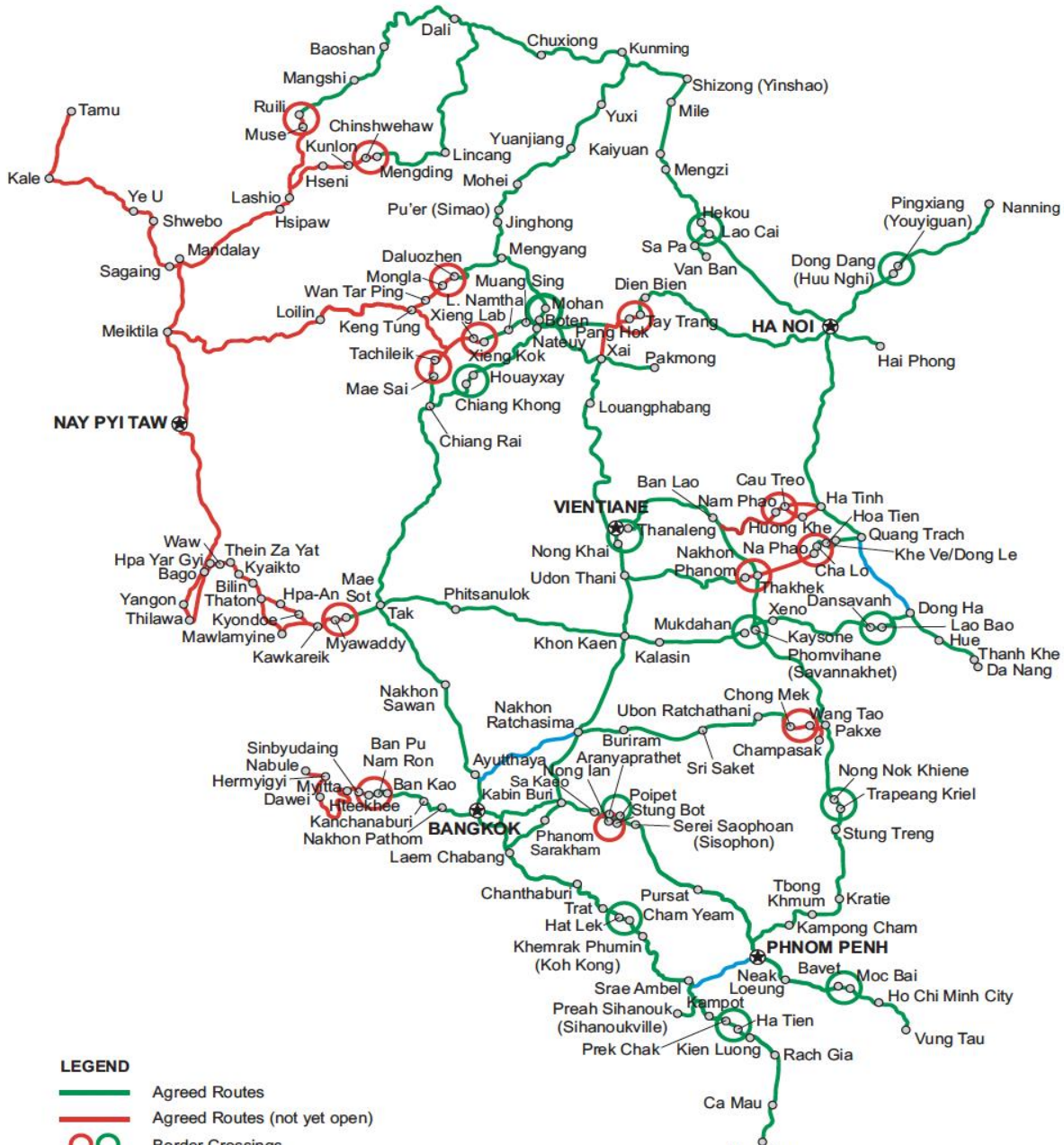
From motor/Truck/Bus	Serial number	From motor/Truck/Bus	Serial number
1		5	
2		6	
3		7	
4		8	

Place and date of issuance: _____ Authentication (Stamp/Stamp, Signature): _____

- Warning: Crossing/entry is a mutual affair. This permit authorizes holder to perform cross-border road transport operations in the GMS region, subject to compliance with national law of the Host Country, and the other conditions of the Agreement. The transport operator shall keep the original of the permit at least the vehicle at all times during cross-border transport operations for inspection and control purposes by authorities. This permit shall be valid only for the vehicle of which the registration number is entered on the permit form. Except for scheduled passenger transport operations, the itineraries are restricted to the itinerary point, route, and location defined in Protocol 1 to the Agreement.
- Please tick the type of transport operation.
- Contact Data may include telephone number, fax number, email address, etc.
- This permit is non-transferable and non-negotiable and non-transferable.
- The validity of this permit shall be subject to the validity of the holder's transport operator license.
- Other restrictions on the type of transport operations, flowing from the arrangements on terms and conditions by the Country whose territory is covered as per Article 1(3) of Protocol 2 to the Agreement.
- Provided the permit was used before the expiry of its validity date by entering the territory of another GMS country than that of its holder transport operator, it shall remain valid until the completion of the transport operation by the return of the vehicle to its Home Country. A cross-border transport operation shall be completed by the exit of the vehicle from the Host Country territory within a period of 30 days from the date of entry in the Host Country territory. If the transport operator is unable to comply leave the Host Country territory, he/she shall inform the Host Country Competent Authority.

GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION CBTA EARLY HARVEST ROUTE DIAGRAM

(15 March Draft | Not For Circulation)



CBTA Protocol 1 route network and border crossings

Green routes and border crossings are included from the 1 April 2024 re-launch

Red routes should be added later (subject to road and border facilities upgrading)



Scope of the 'Early Harvest'

- Goods transported will continue to observe current domestic Customs procedures (i.e. the CBTA Annex 6 – Transit and Inland Customs Clearance – formalities and documentation and other provisions for a subregional transit and inland transport will NOT apply to EH)
- No financial guarantees (or Customs bonds) are required for EH movements of vehicles and containers in the spirit of CBTA Article 18 (temporary importation without guarantee)
- Each country will maintain (and share) a list or National Register of GMS Road Transport Permits and TADs issued



- Transport Sub-Committee Meetings in March and September 2024 discussed further extensions of CBTA Protocol 1 routes
- Customs Sub-Committee Meetings in May and September 2024 focused on subregional solutions for Customs Transit and sharing of Transport and Trade Facilitation (TTF) data (format, data fields, etc)
- ADB updated GMS website's EH related information and added training materials
- Outreach and training event for government officials and transport operators held in Vientiane, Lao PDR in March 2024 (to be held in PRC, Cambodia, Vietnam and Lao PDR)
- **Trial Run of the Early Harvest MOU, GMS CBTA: 22 – 28 June 2028 along PRC-Lao PDR-Thailand-Cambodia – from Kunming to Phnom Penh** to identify challenges and bottlenecks before commencement of movement of vehicles under EH

Recent Developments



Recent Developments

Why Trial Run?

To ensure smooth operation of EH MOU

- Understand border crossing procedures (customs, immigration and quarantine procedures) with a variety of cargo (two refrigerated semi-trailer trucks carrying vegetables, and 3 others carrying office supplies, furniture, and other goods)
- Confirm operational capacity and equipment
- Identify challenges and bottlenecks

To promote cross-border transportation

- Check and confirm transport infrastructure
- Learn transport regulations and practices





Trial Run - Programme

Saturday, 22 June 2024	
Kunming, PRC - Mojiang, PRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- CBTA 'Early Harvest' Launch Workshop- CBTA 'Early Harvest' Trial Run Launch Ceremony- Launch of Trial Run - Fleet leaves Kunming for Mojiang
Sunday, 23 June 2024	
Mojiang, PRC - Mohan, PRC - Boten, Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Travel to PRC – Lao PDR border in Mohan- Border crossing into Lao PDR and photo ceremony in Boten
Monday, 24 June 2024	
Boten, Lao PDR - Houayxay, Lao PDR - Chiang Khong, Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Travel to Lao PDR – Thailand border in Houayxay- Border crossing into Thailand and photo ceremony in Chiang Khong
Tuesday, 25 June 2024	
Chiang Khong, Thailand - Tak, Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Travel to Tak
Wednesday, 26 June 2024	
Tak, Thailand - Aranyaprathet, Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Travel to Thailand – Cambodia border in Aranyaprathet
Thursday, 27 June 2024	
Aranyaprathet, Thailand - Poipet, Cambodia - Phnom Penh, Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Border crossing into Cambodia and photo ceremony in Poipet- Travel to Phnom Penh- Arrival Ceremony
Friday, 28 June 2024	
Phnom Penh, Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Debriefing Workshop



Trial Run (Photo Gallery)



with a



Lessons learnt/Challenges identified from the Trial Run

- Regulatory systems, procedures and practices differ
- Infrastructure – generally good with some need for upgrading (eg corridor segment Boten-Nateuy)
- Lack of training of the transport operators (documentation incomplete)
- Need upgradation of some BCPs (including Boten)
- Red tape in a few BCPs
- Need to align transport regulations – especially vehicle lengths
- Mutual recognition of driving licenses worked well
- More training, capacity support and knowledge sharing needed
- Corridor handbook needs further development (tolls, border clearance processing flow, requirement of registration etc to be added)
- More trial runs to be undertaken



Next Steps

In the Joint Transport and Customs SubCommittee Meeting in Vientiane, Lao PDR in September 2024, the following next steps were agreed by the Member Countries

- Issuance of Permits and National Registers
- EH Monitoring
- IICBTAs
- EH Helpdesk
- CBTA 2.0
- Consultation and training
- Further Surveys and Trial Runs



Next Steps

- Vehicle weights and dimensions
- Third-party liability (TPL) insurance
- Corridor handbooks
- Mutual Recognition of Domestic Driving Licenses and official translation
- Customs Transit Regime
- Road User Maintenance Charge (RUMC), Customs Seals for Containers
- Use of local agents (brokers or transit operators)
- Exchange of transport and trade facilitation (TTF) data



Next Steps

9th Joint Committee Meeting
will be held in Lao PDR
in December 2024

Preparations started!



Thank you

For further information, please contact
mehoque@adb.org

