Greater Mekong Subregion Climate Change And Environmental Sustainability Program

Fostering inclusive cooperation among GMS countries to enhance climate resilience & sustainability

Over a couple of decades, the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) has experienced significant economic growth and poverty alleviation. Yet, this growth has been supported by an unsustainable use of natural resources, causing significant depletion on ecosystems. The GMS countries have acknowledged the need for subregional collaboration and have set a common vision to foster economic development while ensuring sound environmental management and practices.

In 2018, the environment ministers of the GMS countries endorsed the Greater Mekong Subregion Core Environment Program Strategic Framework and Action Plan. Building on the successes of the Core Environment Program Phase 1 (2006-2011) and Phase II (2012-2018), the Asian Development Bank approved TA-9915 – GMS Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Program to support the implementation of the action plan.

Through the key areas of support outlined below, the TA will help develop climate-friendly projects in the GMS regional investment framework and help the GMS realize its overarching vision of an integrated, prosperous, and equitable subregion.

EXECUTING AGENCY	Asian Development Bank
CONSULTANT	Ramboll Danmark A/S
DURATION	2020-2025

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Working Group on Environment (WGE) of Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam

KEY AREAS OF SUPPORT

- Enabling policies and regulations
- Strengthening capacities
- Demonstrating innovative technologies and practices

PROJECT TITLE

TA-9915-REG Greater Mekong Subregion Climate Change And Environmental Sustainability Program (TA9915-CCESP)

From lessons learned towards an inclusive & resilient GMS

The GMS countries have proven considerable engagement and mobilization to improve environmental governance and management. However, there is still a long way to go: the subregion still faces numerous challenges including increasing climate change vulnerability and greenhouse gas emissions, degradation of natural landscapes, growing pollution, low adoption of innovative technologies and financing deficits.

The GMS WGE prioritized six thematic areas to tackle these issues during the GMS Working Group on Environment 24th Annual Meeting in Kunming, People's Republic of China.

The GMS CCESP will address these six themes to support policy and capacity building in the subregion and to demonstrate innovative measures focusing on a strong regional integration and a high scaling-up potential.

Key program components

Assessments and studies under each theme

- Demonstrations to test new initiatives

- Development of new knowledge products

- Capacity building of stakeholders

Thematic areas

Theme 1
Climate and disaster resilience

Theme 2
Low-carbon transitions

Theme 3
Transboundary climate-smart landscapes

Theme 4
Environmental quality through pollution control and sustainable waste management

Theme 5
Digital technologies for climate actions and environmental sustainability

Theme 6
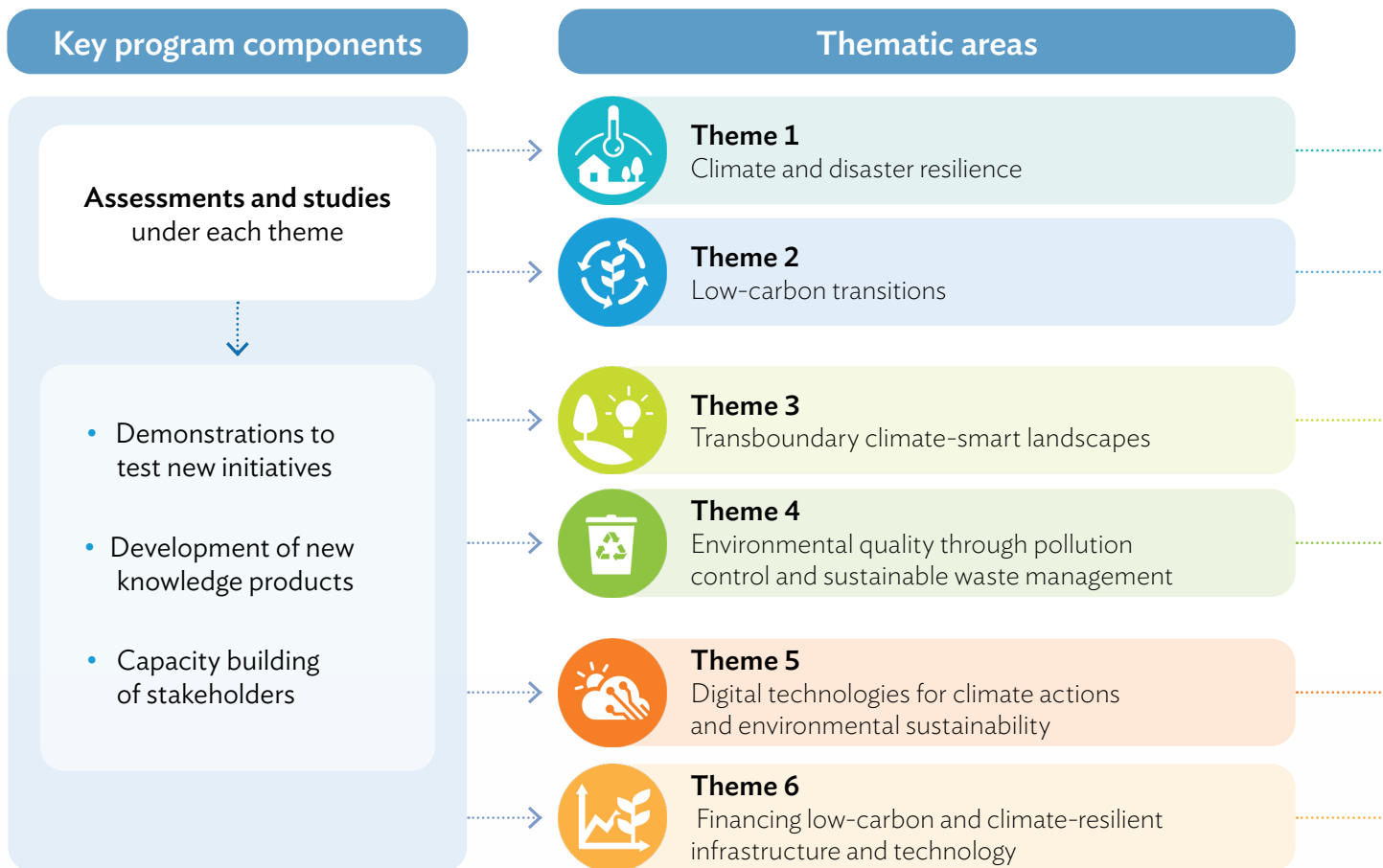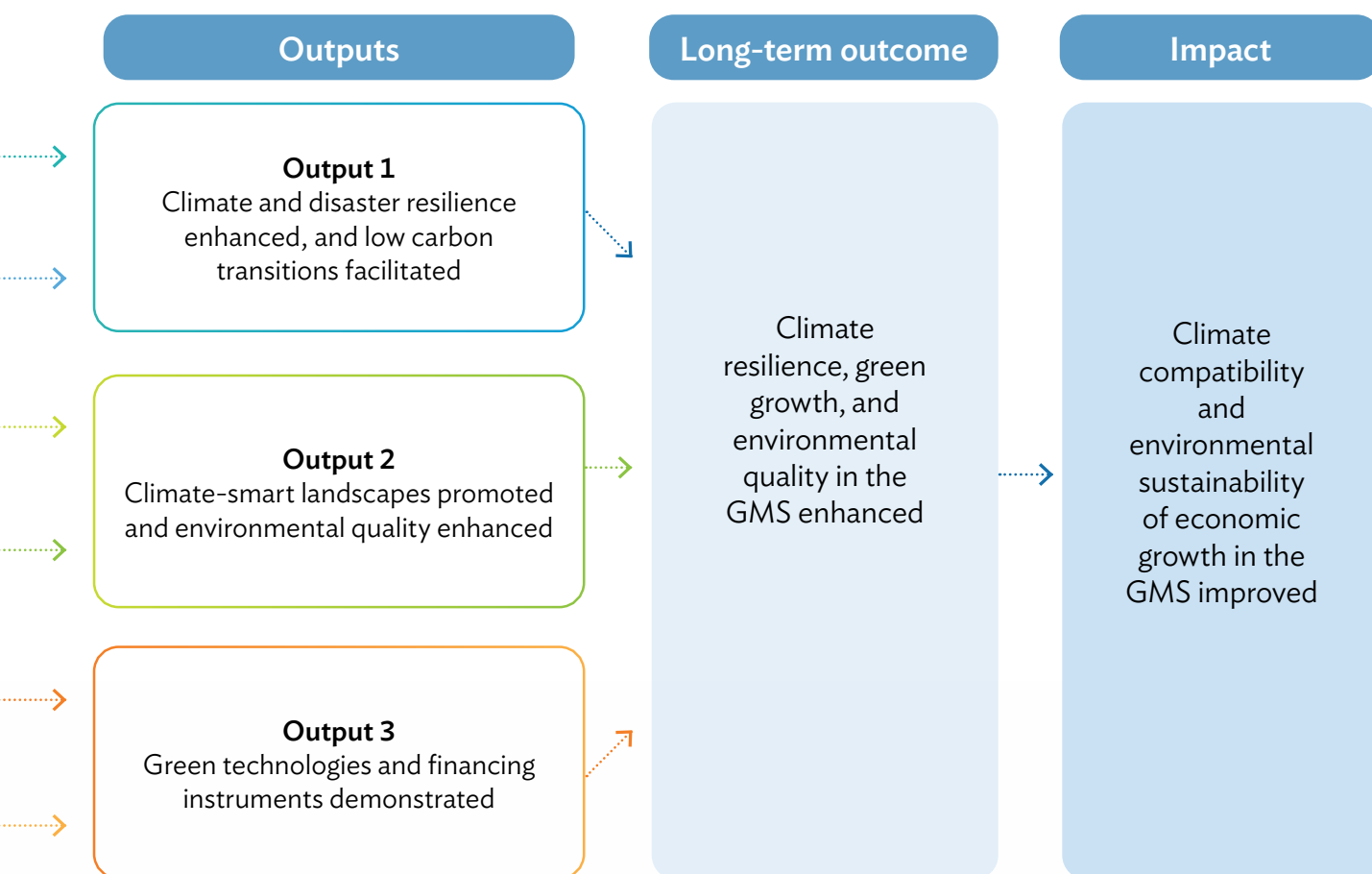Financing low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure and technology

Fig. 1 - Program overview

The six themes fall under under three key output areas that contribute to the long-term outcome and impact of the program (Fig . 1).

The TA outcome includes development of a pipeline of climate-resilient and green investment projects for ADB and the private sector of at least USD $500 million; and supporting at least five new gender-responsive and socially inclusive climate change and environmental policies and strategies.

By thoroughly assessing how each GMS country is responding to various challenges, the TA will deliver three outputs, drawing upon lessons and good practices from similar efforts in other countries. To deliver the three key outputs, the four components iin Fig. 1 will be realized.

Outputs	Long-term outcome	Impact
Output 1 Climate and disaster resilience enhanced, and low carbon transitions facilitated	Climate resilience, green growth, and environmental quality in the GMS enhanced	Climate compatibility and environmental sustainability of economic growth in the GMS improved
Output 2 Climate-smart landscapes promoted and environmental quality enhanced		
Output 3 Green technologies and financing instruments demonstrated		

Output 1
Climate and disaster resilience enhanced, and low carbon transitions facilitated

Sub-output 1.1 Climate and disaster resilience enhanced will help countries accelerate adaptation and disaster risk reduction efforts through:

- Creating a gender-responsive policy platform on climate and disaster resilience to support the implementation of national adaptation plans and national disaster risk reduction plans

- Strengthening government staff capacity to mainstream climate and disaster resilience in planning and to climate-proof infrastructure investments in priority vulnerable sectors such as agriculture, water resources, and transport

- Supporting gender-responsive and socially inclusive studies on community- and ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk management initiatives, including early warning systems, to scale up in larger investments

Sub-output 1.2 Low carbon transitions facilitated will be realized through the following actions:

- Identifying policies and measures to effectively implement climate investment plans for agriculture, energy, and transport, which are aligned with nationally determined contributions

- Strengthening capacities for monitoring, reporting, and verifying climate actions; and

- Conducting demonstrations on low carbon agriculture and green freight, while exploring transactions in greening the tourism sector, reporting, and verifying climate actions

The TA will assess the role of indigenous adaptation practices and opportunities in enhancing community and ecosystem resilience and blending them with modern technologies. The TA will also:

- Document lessons learned from activities implemented in GMS countries

- Study global and regional good practices

- Demonstrate new or modified approaches and document lessons learned

Output 2
Climate-smart landscapes promoted and environmental quality enhanced

Sub-output 2.1 Climate-smart landscapes promoted will deploy nature-based solutions to manage at least three transboundary landscapes through:

- Improving land use management systems

- Designing innovative compensation mechanisms for ecosystem services and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation

- Enhancing the capacity of institutions and communities, including women and other vulnerable groups, in integrated landscape management through targeted training workshops on landscape conservation, forest fire management, and natural regeneration of forests assisted by communities

Sub-output 2.2. Environmental quality through pollution control and waste management enhanced will be realized through:

- Building institutional capacities for strategic environmental planning, environmental quality data management, and guidelines on air, water, and soil pollution control and remediation

- Providing policy support for implementing a circular economy and sustainable waste management

- Conducting detailed studies and preparing concept papers for investments to address air and water pollution, including plastics

Aligned with the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Landscape Restoration 2021–2030 and the ADB Oceans Financing Initiative, this output will strengthen regulations and build capacities to adopt landscape approaches in managing natural resources, enhancing ecosystem services, and improving environmental quality.

Output 3
Green technologies and financing instruments demonstrated

Sub-output 3.1 Digital technologies for climate action and environmental sustainability deployed will identify good practices for strengthening technology policies and demonstrate the application of high-level digital technologies such as the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, robotics, and drones for:

- Monitoring climate actions

- Monitoring and managing pollution

- Managing forests sustainably

- Implementing early warning systems to facilitate adaptation

It will enhance capacities of communities, public institutions, and the private sector to use digital technologies.

Sub-output 3.2 Innovative climate and disaster risk financing instruments demonstrated will be realized through:

- Assessing the enabling conditions to deploy innovative financing instruments, and access environmental finance through national entities, in partnership with international organizations and the private sector

- Demonstrating climate and disaster risk financing instruments (e.g., blended finance, community resilience credit lines, and insurance)

- Strengthening the capacity of financial institutions to support green technologies and infrastructure

CCESP by the numbers

6 countries

>30% of women among total meeting attendees

5 gender-responsive and socially inclusive climate change and environmental policies supported

3 key activities
- demonstrations
- policy support
- capacity building

10 subregional policy dialogues and assessments

10 knowledge products

15 training workshops and meetings

> $500 million pipeline of climate-resilient and green investment projects

27 pilot demonstration projects:

12 Gender-responsive community resilience projects

3 Green freight and low carbon agriculture

3 Climate-smart transboundary landscape management

3 Circular economy, pollution control, and waste management

1 Blockchain enabled climate action monitoring

1 Artificial Intelligence enabled pollution monitoring

1 Drone enabled sustainable forest management

1 Mobile phone based early warning system

1 Climate financing instrument

1 Disaster risk financing instrument

GMS CCESP

GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION
CLIMATE CHANGE
AND ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

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