



Together toward the future,

# Mekong and Japan

## A New Partnership between Japan and the Mekong region

---Today and Tomorrow of the relations with  
Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet  
Nam

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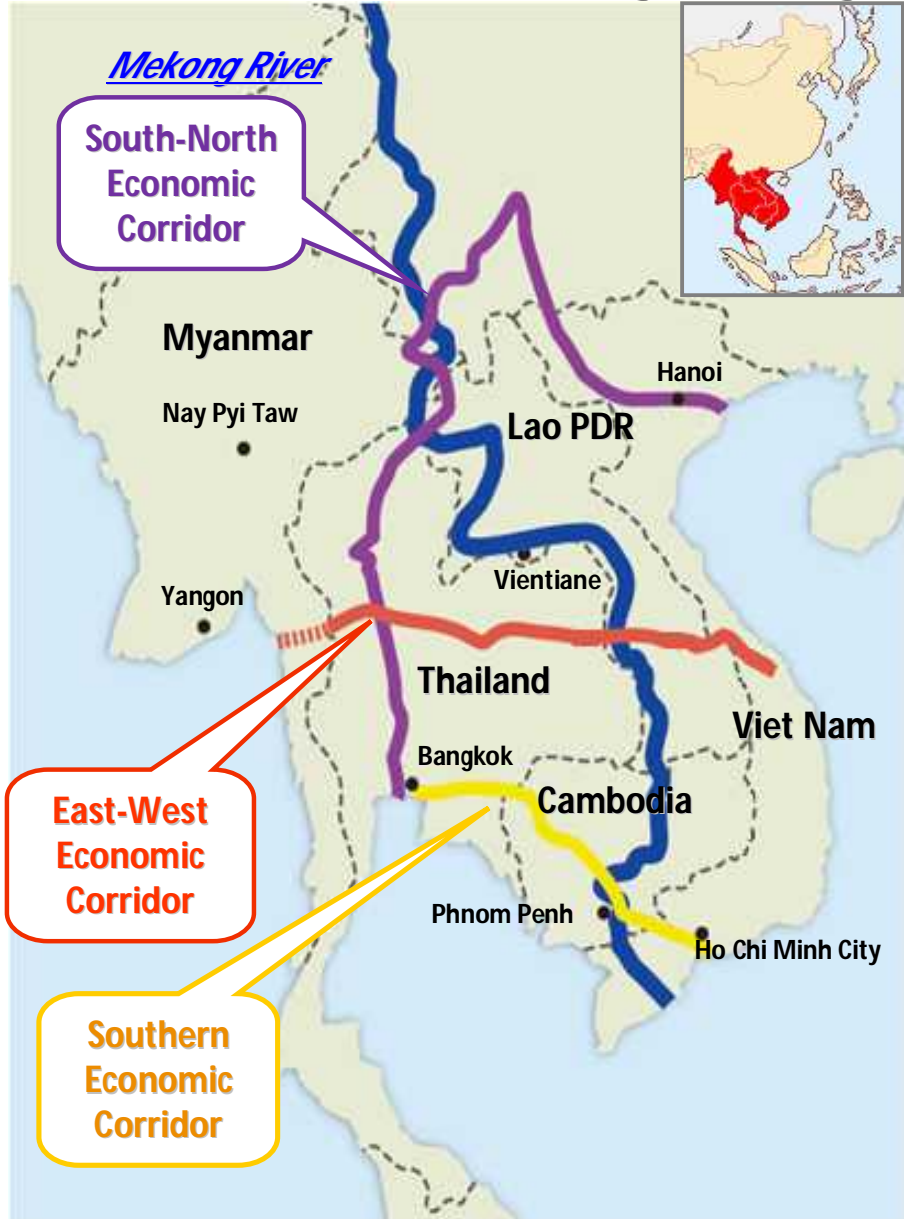


Together toward the future,

# Mekong and Japan

1. Japan-Mekong Exchange Year 2009
2. Long History between Japan and the Mekong region
3. What's today's Mekong?
4. The First Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting  
on November 6 and 7, 2009 in Tokyo
5. "A Decade toward the Green Mekong" initiative
6. Dialogue with China
7. Close policy coordination with the United States
8. Brief overlook of the relations with each country  
in the Mekong region

# Mekong Region Countries



Kingdom of Cambodia



Lao People's Democratic Republic



Union of Myanmar



Kingdom of Thailand



Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

# 1. Japan-Mekong Exchange Year 2009

- Agreed in the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Jan 2008  
(To promote exchanges between Japan and Mekong Region Countries)
- Exchange events in various fields (politics, economy, culture, youth exchange, tourism)
- Events held by the public and private sectors
- Designated events held in Japan and Mekong Region Countries



Opening Reception  
(Jan 20, Tokyo)

# High-level visits and meetings in 2009

(January)

- Foreign Minister Nakasone Visits Thailand, Lao PDR and Cambodia

*Pic.1*



(February)

- His Imperial Highness The Crown Prince Visits Viet Nam (pic.1)

(May)

- Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of Vietnam and Bouasone Bouphavanh, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR attend visited Tokyo.

*Pic.2*



(October)

- The 2th Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia (pic.2)

*Pic.3*



(November)

- The First Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting in Tokyo (pic.3)



*(Photographs courtesy  
by Cabinet Public Relations Office)*



# Cultural and Youth Exchange

- JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths)
  - ~ 1086 youth visitors from the Mekong region (Jan.-Nov. in 2009)
    - Young Amateur Traditional Arts Performers
    - Young Parliamentarians and Political Leaders
    - Youth Soccer Players
    - Young Journalist etc.
- Endorsed Events : 362 (as of November 24)
  - ✓ Events Calendar URL
    - <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/mekong/event.html>



Panel Discussion on Mekong-Japan Political Exchange (May 11)



Myanmar youth team vs. Japan U-17 team (June 5)

## 2. Long History between Japan and the Mekong region

- 15C: Trade between Ryukyu (Okinawa) and the countries of Southeast Asia
- 17C : Lively Trade by Edo (Tokyo) shogunate government

Japanese quarter were created in Ayutthaya, Hoi An...

*(Photographs courtesy  
By Asean-Japan Centre)*



## 2. Long History between Japan and the Mekong region

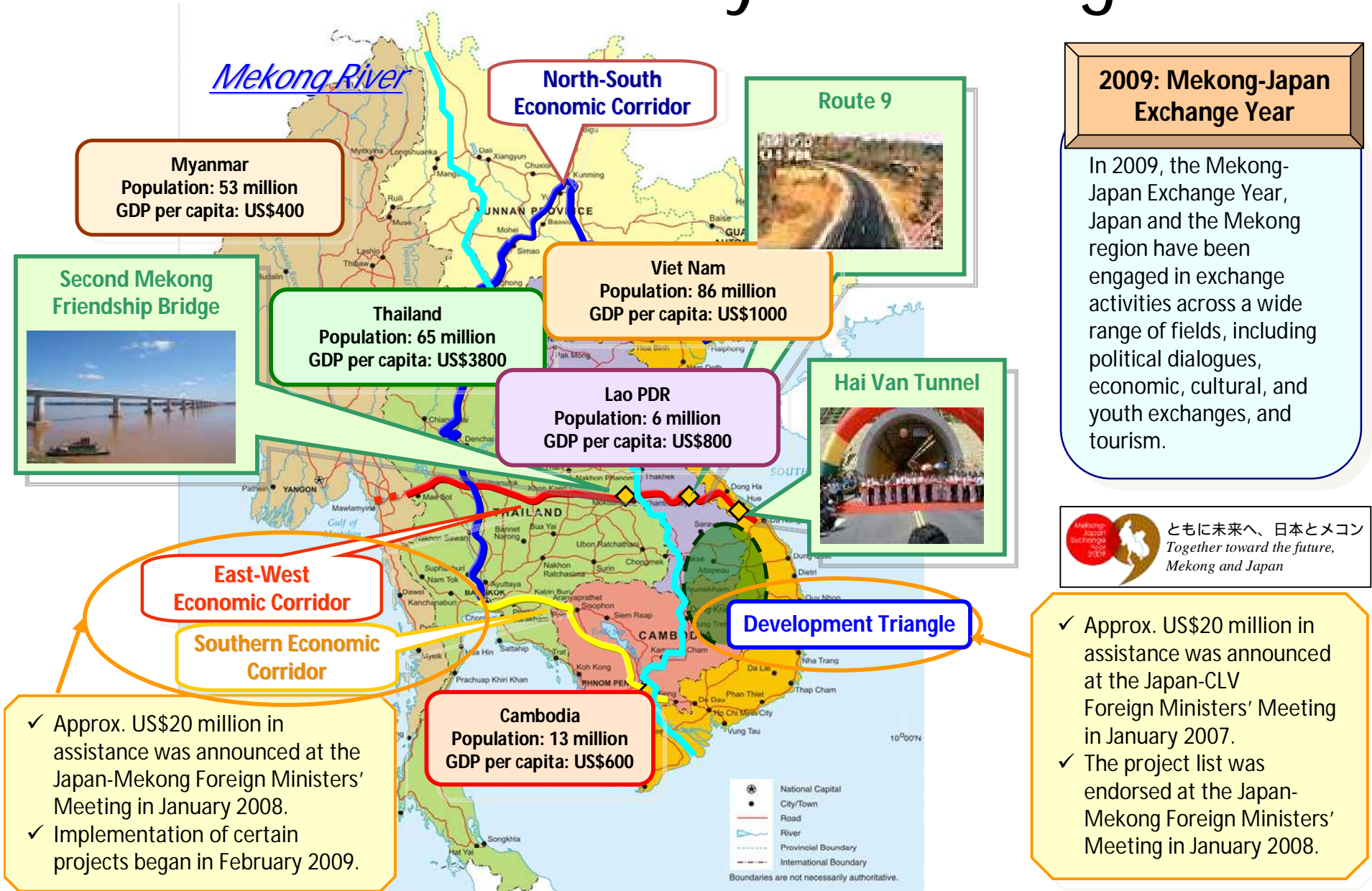
Today:

- Japanese Government furnished ODA
- Japanese companies' investment increased
- Japan's deep involvement in the peace process of Cambodia in 1980's-1990's
- A lot of visits of the people

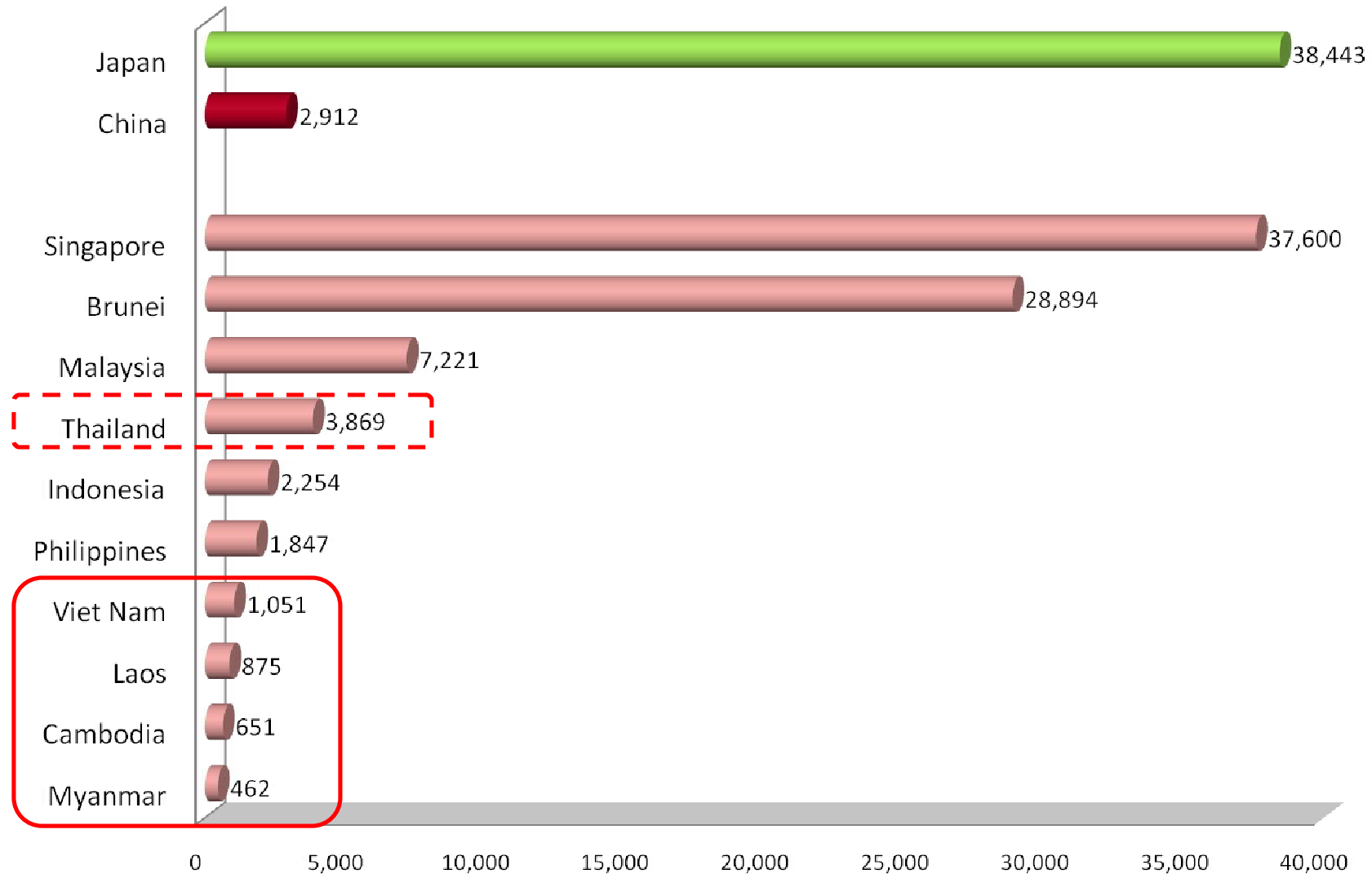




# 3. What's today's Mekong?

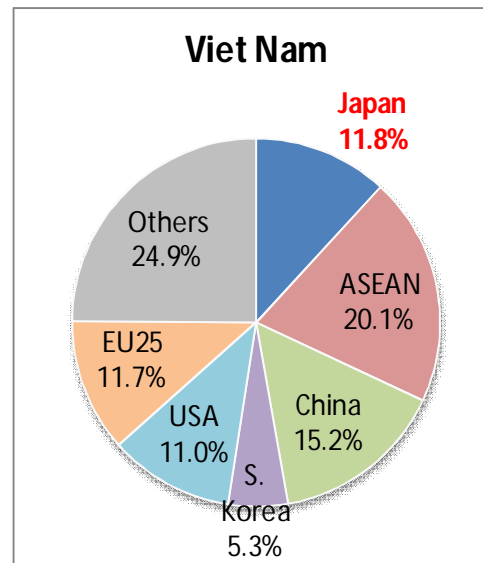
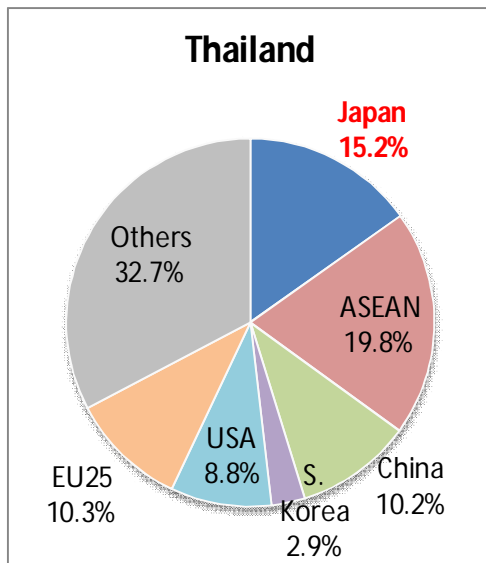
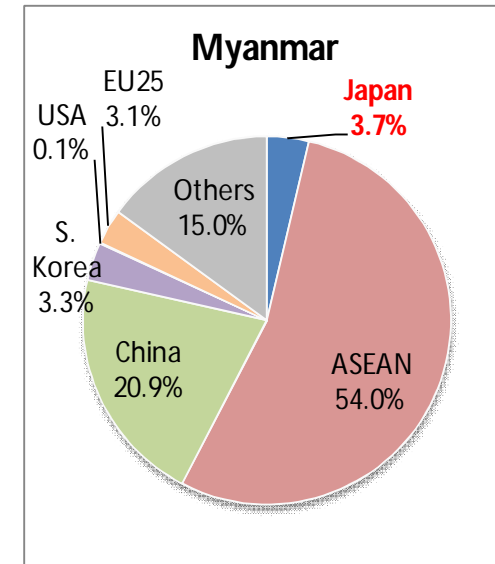
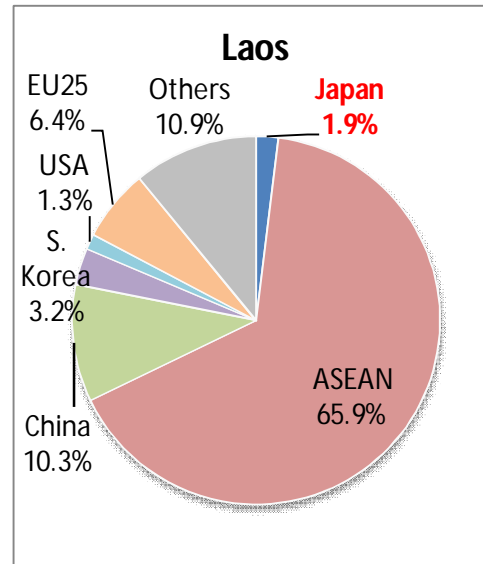
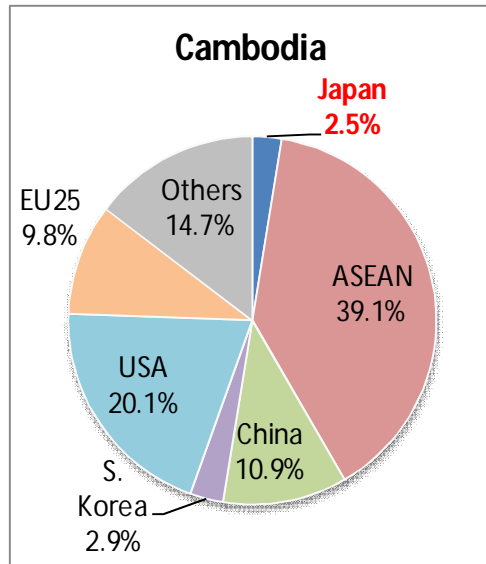


# (1) GDP per capita (2008)



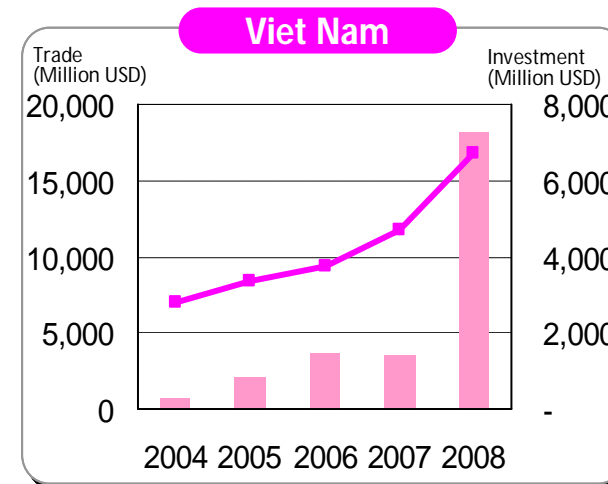
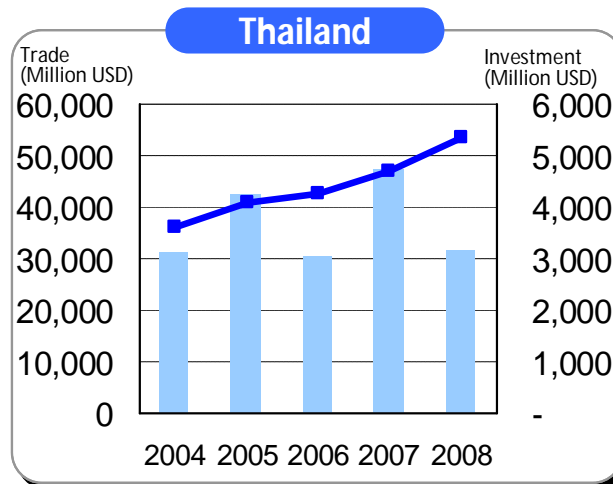
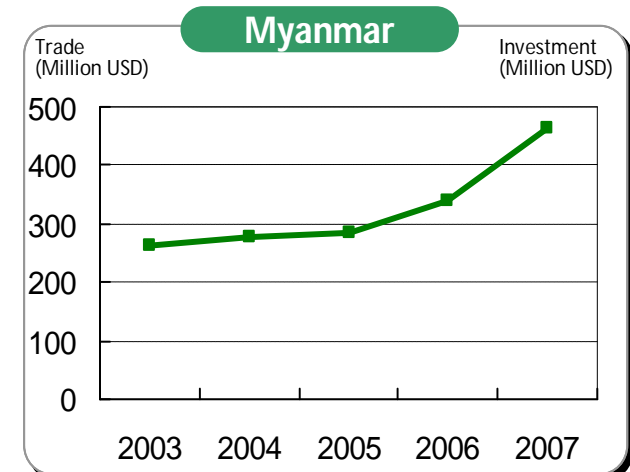
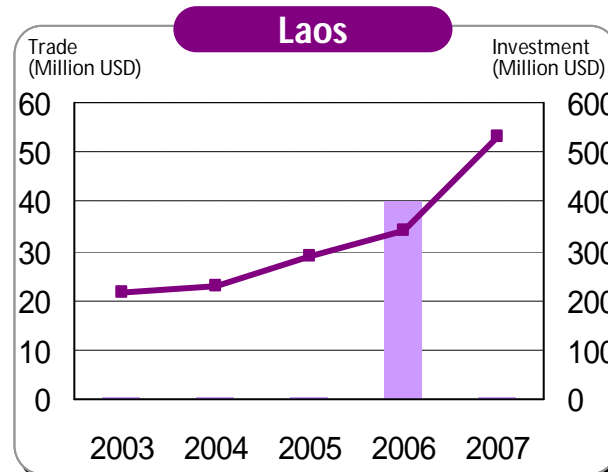
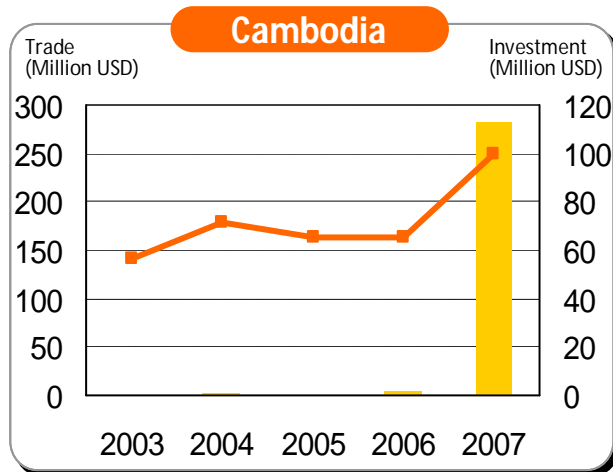
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators database; IMF, World Economic Outlook


## (2) Major Trading Partners of Mekong Region Countries (2008)




*Source: ASEAN-JAPAN Center Homepage*

# (3) Economic Relations with Japan



 Polygonal line graph indicates Japan's Trade Value

 Bar graph indicates Japan's FDI

(Source: ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE, NESDB (Thailand), General Statistics Office of Viet Nam)



# (4) Perspective of the Japan-Mekong Relation

## Strategic Importance of Mekong Countries for Japan

Assist development of the CLMV  
→ Fill the gap among ASEAN countries  
→ Promote **ASEAN integration**  
→ Achieve prosperity and stability in East Asia

**Traditionally close and friendly to Japan**  
→ Important asset for Japanese diplomacy

Attract the Japanese business community  
– by the progress of the projects to **improve efficiency of logistics and distribution** (e.g. The East-West Economic Corridor)  
– by the **Potentials** in the region such as natural resources & labor

Rich tourist resources (13 world heritage sites in Mekong countries) attract Japanese tourists  
→ Promotion of grass-roots exchange  
→ the basis of Japan-Mekong friendship relations

## Actions

Make Mekong region a priority target for Japan's economic assistance  
→ **Continue the policy to expand ODA to the Mekong region from 2010 to 2012**

– **Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting**  
– **Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting**

– EPA (Thailand, Viet Nam)  
– Investment agreement (Cambodia, Lao PDR)  
– Public-private joint dialogue to improve environment for trade and investment (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, Myanmar)

– Temporary visa waiver for Japanese tourists (Lao PDR, Viet Nam Thailand)  
– Direct charter flight to Siem Reap  
– Japan and Thailand liberalize bilateral commercial aviation access

## (5) Economic Agreements with Japan

- Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (November 2007)
- Japan-Cambodia Investment Agreement (July 2008)
- Japan-Lao PDR Investment Agreement (August 2008)
- Japan-Viet Nam Economic Partnership Agreement (October 2009)
- ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

(entered into force between Japan, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, and Myanmar in December 2008 / Thailand in June 2009)

## (6) Economic Assistance

Amount of DAC Countries' ODA Disbursements ( 2 0 0 6 )

(Unit: Million USD)

Rank	1 <sup>st</sup>		2 <sup>nd</sup>		3 <sup>rd</sup>		4 <sup>th</sup>		5th		Total
Cambodia	Japan	106.25	U.S.	57.87	Australia	33.10	France	29.77	Germany	27.64	347.51
Lao PDR	Japan	64.05	Sweden	23.73	France	22.91	Germany	18.34	Australia	12.77	187.61
Myanmar	Japan	30.84	U.K.	13.47	U.S.	10.94	Norway	8.05	Australia	6.47	91.98
Viet Nam	Japan	562.73	France	159.38	Germany	86.75	U.K.	82.15	Denmark	71.03	1,306.32

Japan commits more than 500 bn JPY  
in the next 3 years (2010-12) for the Mekong region.  
(Tokyo Declaration, November 2009)

# 4. The First Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting

- Dates: November 6th-7th (Friday-Saturday)
- Venue: Tokyo



*(Photographs courtesy by Cabinet Public Relations Office)*

J



**Japan**

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama

C



**Cambodia**

Prime Minister Hun Sen

L



**Lao PDR**

Prime Minister Bouasone Bouphavanh

M



**Myanmar**

Prime Minister General Thein Sein

T



**Thailand**

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva

V



**Viet Nam**

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung



# (1) Summit Meeting on November 6-7



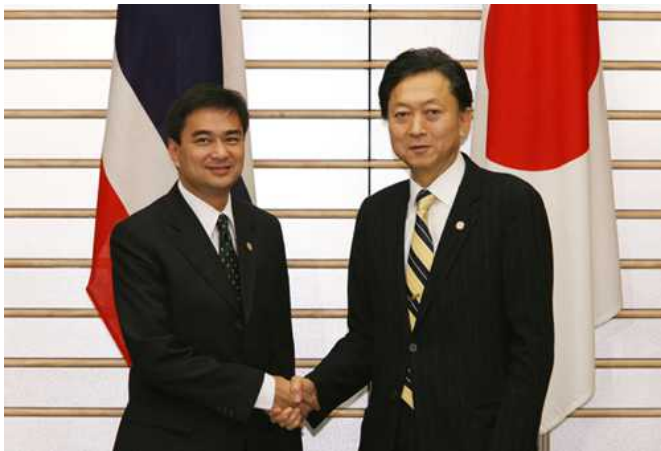
Session



Tokyo Declaration

*(Photographs courtesy  
by Cabinet Public Relations Office)*

## (2) Bilateral Meetings on November 7



*(Photographs courtesy  
by Cabinet Public Relations Office)*

### (3) Japan's Policies towards the Mekong Region (Developments Thus Far)

*Tokyo, December 2003*

**The ASEAN-Japan  
Commemorative Summit Meeting**



*Kuala Lumpur, December 2005*

**The Second Japan-CLV  
Summit Meeting**



*Cebu, January 2007*

**The Third Japan-CLV  
Foreign Ministers' Meeting**



*Tokyo, January 2008*

**The First Japan-Mekong  
Foreign Ministers' Meeting**



⇒ Announced "A New concept of Mekong Region Development"  
Emphasized the necessity of addressing Mekong regional development comprehensively as part of the three visions of strengthening regional cohesion, realizing sustained economic growth, and fostering harmony with the environment. In partnership with international institutions and Asian regional frameworks, ASEAN and Japan will expand and enhance their cooperation by integrating economic cooperation with the promotion of trade and investment.

⇒ Announced a new Japanese initiative for assistance to the CLV countries, which included (a) efforts to mitigate poverty, including through assistance to the "Development Triangle"; (b) countermeasures against infectious diseases; and (c) assistance to promote private-sector investment and trade. Lists total 15 ODA projects based on the Initiative for Mekong Region Development that were implemented in the five Mekong countries in 2005.

⇒ Announced the "Japan-Mekong Region Partnership Program," which included three new efforts: (a) the expansion and enhancement of Japan's ODA to the Mekong area for the three years from 2007 to 2009; (b) the formal launch of negotiations on investment agreements between Japan and Cambodia and between Japan and Laos; and (c) the holding of a Japan-Mekong ministerial meeting.

⇒ Agreed to make year 2009 the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year; reaffirmed Japan's commitment to the Mekong region by announcing that 10,000 youths would be invited to Japan over the span of five years and that assistance would be provided to improve the efficiency of logistics and distribution of the East-West and Southern Economic Corridors.

#### 2009: The Mekong-Japan Exchange Year

*Siem Reap, October 2009*

**The Second Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting**



*Tokyo, November 2009*

**The Mekong-Japan Summit**

## (4) Achievements

The first-ever Summit Meeting between Japan and the Mekong region countries: The leaders adopted “Tokyo Declaration” and “Mekong-Japan Action Plan 63”.

Japan and the Mekong region countries were determined to give priority to the following areas; (1) Comprehensive Development in the Mekong Region, (2) Environment and Climate Change (the launch of “A Decade toward the Green Mekong” Initiative), Overcoming Vulnerability and (3) Expanding Cooperation and Exchanges, and to establish “A New Partnership for the Common Flourishing future” between Japan and the Mekong region countries.

Regarding the Mekong region as a prioritized area, Prime Minister Hatoyama committed that Japan will continue the policy to expand its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam (CLV) respectively, as well as to the Mekong region as a whole, and committed more than 500 billion JPY of ODA in the next 3 years for the Mekong region.

Japan and the Mekong region countries determined to regularize Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting. It will be held in Japan every three years and on the occasion of multilateral meetings in other years. Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and Economic Ministers’ Meeting will also be held regularly.

Prime Minister Hatoyama emphasized that the Mekong region is a key area for the concept of the open and transparent East Asian Community, with regard to narrowing the existing development gaps.

Prime Minister Hatoyama also had Bilateral Meetings with each country.



# (5) Action Plan of 3 prioritized areas among the Mekong region countries and Japan

## 1 . Comprehensive Development in the Mekong Region

### Further Development of Infrastructure

~ To create further business opportunities through development of networks which connect production sites and industrial areas which dispersed across the Mekong region. At the same time, to reaffirm the importance of development of basic infrastructure in least developed areas.

### Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation

~ To boost economic development in the Mekong region through promoting more effective development assistance by All-Japan efforts including public-private cooperation.

### Development of Cross-regional Economic Rules and Systems

~ To develop harmonized economic rules and systems in each country of the Mekong region thereby improving region-wide economic activities particularly, logistics, raising the entire regional economy and strengthening the integrity of the region.

## 2 . Environment, Climate Change / Overcoming Vulnerability

### Environment and Climate Change: “A Decade toward the Green Mekong” Initiative

~ “Hatoyama Initiative” To support the Mekong region’s efforts on issues of environment and climate change, particularly in reduction of green house gas emission and adoption of negative influences by climate change, by expanding financial and technical assistance, as well as by closely watching the progress of international negotiations.

### Overcoming Vulnerability

~ To ensure social stability and self-sustaining growth in the Mekong region and to facilitate further development, through providing assistance to overcome vulnerability for the cross-border issues such as infectious disease, and negative impacts of economic growth, such as expansion of economic disparity.

## 3 . Expansion of Cooperation and Exchanges

### Enhancing Human Exchanges

### Active exchanges on parliamentarians and political parties

### Promotion of Tourism by the joint efforts of Private and Public organizations

### Protection of Cultural Heritages

## 5. “A Decade toward the Green Mekong” initiative

### “Hatoyama Initiative”

To support the Mekong region’s efforts on issues of environment and climate change, particularly in reduction of green house gas emission and adoption of negative influences by climate change, by expanding financial and technical assistance, as well as by closely watching the progress of international negotiations.

# Today's issues along the Mekong River

Construction of Dams  
on the upper course



Climate Change

Water shortage and  
water pollution

- Increasing the use of water for agriculture and living
- Cooperative management of water resources

Mekong Dolphin  
in danger of extinction

- drowning in gillnets
- inbreeding
- pollutants

Saltwater intrusion

- shortage of water, especially during the dry season

“A Decade toward the Green Mekong” initiative will cope with those issues.

Its main items may include:

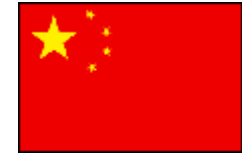
1. Support in Promoting sustainable forest management and related human resource development
2. Projects that Contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
3. Cooperation to Promote the Mekong water resource management
4. Cooperation related to energy-saving and clean energy technology and human resource development
5. Support to city planning resistant to flood



6. Support for the building of a society resistant to natural disasters
7. Projects for enhancing policy making capabilities in the field of environment and climate change
8. Cooperation to ensure that an ambitious and a fair and effective international framework are agreed
9. Efforts in the following fields
  - sustainable forest management
  - conservation
  - sustainable use of biodiversity
  - management of water resources

Announced in "Mekong-Japan Action Plan 63"  
(adopted pursuant to the Tokyo Declaration )

## 6. Japan-China Policy Dialogue on the Mekong Region



- First Dialogue: April 25, 2008 in Beijing
- Second Dialogue: June 11, 2009 in Tokyo
- Exchange views on current situation of the Mekong region Share information on respective policies toward the Mekong region  
Further strengthen dialogues between Japan and China to build reciprocal relations among Japan, China and the Mekong Region
- Next Meeting will be held in China next year

## 7. Close policy coordination with the United States



- U.S. administration has recently enhanced its involvement in the Mekong region and Southeast Asia.
  - The U.S.-Lower Mekong Ministerial Meeting was convened for the first time (July)
  - U.S. signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) (July)
  - Review of U.S. policy toward Myanmar (September 28)
  - Foreign Ministers' Meeting Between Japan and U.S. (November, APEC in Singapore)
  - U.S. ASEAN Summit (November )

# 8. Brief overlook of the relations with each country in the Mekong region

## 【Lao PDR】

- Japan is Top Donor of ODA
- 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations
- President Choummaly will visit Japan in 2010

## 【Myanmar】

- General Election in 2010
- Hoping that democratization will be promoted with participation of all the parties

## 【Thailand】

- Update on JTEPA (Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement)
- Bilateral cooperative relations in the international arena

## 【Viet Nam】

- Lively Visits of VIPs
- Strategic Partnership for peace and prosperity in Asia since April 2008
- Projects: North-South Expressway, North-South High-Speed Railway, Hoa Lac High Tech Park ,etc.
- ASEAN Chair in 2010

## 【Cambodia】

- Diplomatic efforts for KR (Khmer Rouge) Trials
- Voluntary contribution of US\$21.6 mn
- International Judge (Mr. Noguchi)
- 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations

