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News Releases



Lao PDR Deputy Minister of Finance Thipphakone Chanthavongsa (seated, right) and ADB Country Director for the Lao PDR (seated, left) Yasushi Negishi signed the additional grant agreement in Vientiane. Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Phouangparisak Pravongviengkham (standing, second from right) also attended the signing ceremony.

VIENTIANE, LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (20 November 2017) —The [Asian Development Bank \(ADB\)](#) [3] and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) signed an agreement on 13 November for a \$10 million grant as [additional financing for a project that will enhance Lao PDR's sanitary and phytosanitary \(SPS\) capacity](#) [4], and improve food safety as well as plant and animal safety in the country.

The agreement was signed by ADB Country Director to the Lao PDR Yasushi Negishi and Deputy Minister of Finance Thipphakone Chanthavongsa. Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham and other

senior officials from line ministries witnessed the signing ceremony.

The additional assistance follows a \$14 million loan and grant approved by ADB in 2012 for the Improved Sanitary and Phytosanitary Handling in Greater Mekong Subregion Trade Project to improve capacity for SPS management systems in the Lao PDR through enhancing surveillance and monitoring of plant health, animal health, and food safety.

“Effective SPS management systems are crucial for facilitation of trade in agriculture, food and forestry (AFF) products, and increasing the benefits of the country’s participation in regional and global trade,” said Mr. Negishi. “The national trade data shows clear benefits such as the increase of export volume of AFF products resulting from improved SPS management systems. For instance, rice exports from the Lao PDR to the People’s Republic of China, Thailand, and Viet Nam had increased from \$12.3 million in 2013 to more than \$33.6 million in 2016. This project will help the Lao PDR to further expand its agriculture exports.”

The additional grant will support the Government of the Lao PDR in scaling up existing SPS enhancement initiatives, including strengthening surveillance and inspection programs for plant, animal health, and food safety; improving regional cooperation and harmonization on SPS issues; and enhancing education levels for national SPS specialists. The project activities will be expanded to five more priority provinces, namely Bolikhamxay, Khammouan, Oudomxay, Savannakhet, and Vientiane.

The additional financing project will be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Health, Agriculture Faculty at the National University of Laos, and the Ministry of Education and Sports. It will run for three years, with an expected completion date of June 2021.

ADB, based in Manila, is dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration. Established in 1966, ADB is celebrating 50 years of development partnership in the region. It is owned by 67 members—48 from the region. In 2016, ADB assistance totaled \$31.7 billion, including \$14 billion in cofinancing.

[Lao translation](#) [5]

Source: [ADB.org](#) [6]

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