

KAS-BOTT-GIZ-Conference on Social and Ecological Market Economy

CONCEPT NOTE & AGENDA

Synopsis

Title of Conference: **Relevance of a Social and Ecological Market Economy for a Sustainable Development in Thailand**

Date and Duration: 9th of February 2012, 1 day

Background:

Recent shocks in economic and financial markets have revealed weaknesses in policies throughout the world and have shown that policy responses were often improvised. It was usually the working poor and the middle class who were affected most, either directly in the labor market or indirectly e.g. in social services. As a consequence, even in large industrialized liberal economies questions have been raised on how to adopt policies of social protection. At the same time climate change and depletion of natural resources have put the issue of green growth on the international agenda again. International organizations and governments alike have understood that sustainability is an important criterion for assessing the quality of a country's economic growth. So what is the quality of *Thailand's* growth then?

In the past the rather liberal approach has provided a strong head start for the Thai economy and the overall success of Thai growth is reflected in a comparatively high per capita income with USD 4210 in 2010. However, competition in the region has increased. Also in view of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) as of 2015 Thailand will have to redefine its economic position within the region. Does the competition allow for a responsible market economy which takes into consideration ecological aspects, social balance and sharing? Which role will the government have to play, which the private sector and the civil society?

The Board of Trade of Thailand together with the German International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) invite to a one-day-conference which will examine these questions and discuss examples of how to approach a more responsible market economy in Thailand. GIZ and KAS have been working in Thailand for many years on this topic, mostly on behalf of and financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). GIZ has interesting lessons learnt over seven years of the bilaterally financed program on strengthening the competitiveness and eco-efficiency of SME; plus, it has recently started implementing a new EU-financed project on sustainable production and consumption in Thailand. KAS conducted a conference and other events on social market economy in Thailand in 2010. Based on these previous discussions, the upcoming conference on 9th of February 2012 will focus exclusively on Thailand and its outlook for the future. Moreover, the aim of the conference is to form a core working group of stakeholders interested in the topic of a social and ecological market economy.

Participants are representatives from Thai Ministries and other government authorities such as the National Economic and Social Development Board or the National Research Council of Thailand, as well as stakeholders of the private sector. Also Thai business associations, think tanks, universities, and representatives of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the German International Cooperation (GIZ) will participate.

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Objective of the Conference:

The main objective of the event is to define and assess the needs and potential for an organized exchange of information and experiences on the topic of a social and ecological market economy for Thailand. Based on this, the expected result of the conference would be the formation of a core working group which will continue working on the topic together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) and the GIZ.

Purpose of the Conference:

1. Participants learn about criteria and advantages of a socially and ecologically responsible market economy.
2. Participants share their views on the topic. They discuss and assess a potential interest in establishing a network on social and ecological market economy, which might provide a platform for further exchange of experiences and for advocacy.
3. The roles and experiences of KAS and GIZ as service providers for supporting a sustainable economic development are presented.

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Tentative Agenda

9th of February 2012

09.00-09.30

Registration and Welcome Coffee

09.30-10.00

Welcome and Opening of the Conference
(German Embassy, BOT, KAS, GIZ)

10.00-10.30

Key Note 1: Features of a Responsible Market Economy and the 11th
NESDP (Mr. Thanin Pa-em, Deputy Secretary General of NESDB)

10.30-11.00

Key Note 2: Costs and Benefits of Social and Ecological Standards –
the Example of Siam Cement Group (Mr. Cholatorn Dumrongsak,
Director Corporate Total Quality Promotion of Siam Cement Group)

11.00-11.15

Short Coffee Break

11.15-12.00

Panel Discussion: How to Enhance Thailand's Position in the Regional
Market for 2015 Sustainably?
(Facilitator; Key Note Speakers; Dr. Pasu Lohalchun, Director General
of Department of Industrial Promotion; Dr. Jingjai Hanchanlash,
Board of Trade Thailand; Dr. Udomsak Soponkij, Senior Researcher &
Advisor to the Economic, Commerce & Industry Committee, Senate,
Parliament of Thailand)

12.00-12.30

Q & A in the Plenary

12.30-13.45

Lunch Break

13.45-14.15

Inspirations
(Dr. Thitinan Pongsudhisak, Director of the Institute of Security and
International Studies – ISIS Thailand)

14.15-16.00

„The Soc-Eco World Cafe“ ***(coffee included)***:
Chances and Challenges of a Socially and Ecologically Sound Market
Economy
Inter-active discussion among all participants based on guiding
questions

16.00-16.30

Summary of the Discussion in the Plenary
Final Statement and Forming of a Core Working Group (KAS, GIZ)

16.30-17.30

Reception