



Integrating Cooperation Between Thailand and Lao PDR In Organizing Tourism Activities on the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province and Sanakham City, Vientiane Province

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ABSTRACT: The research objective was to develop tourism activities along the Mekong River in Chiang Khan, Loei Province and Sanakham City, Vientiane Province. This qualitative research uses in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and brainstorming meetings. The target group is leaders and members of various communities in Chiang Khan District, tour operator representatives from local administrative organizations including the people of Sanakham City, and qualitative data analysis by content analysis. The research results found that the guidelines for integrating cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR as follows: should be carried out together, including organizing travel activities together, managing shared services creating public relations media together, and facilitating provided. A joint committee was established and Thai-Lao association was established. The results of the development of tourism activities on the Mekong River should be organized together as follows: organize activities on important Buddhist days together, organize traditional merit-making activities together, organize an exhibition of activities showing both sides of the Mekong River, car caravan activities travel the two countries of Thailand-Laos and ride a bicycle to reduce pollution, pay homage to 9 Buddha statues in two counties at Muang Chiang Khan and Sanakham, meditation and dhamma practice in temples in the two countries..

Keywords: tourism; Integration of cooperation; Mekong River travel activities

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1. Introduction

Muang Chiang Khan Loei Province is a secondary tourist destination according to the government's tourism promotion policy. This is a slow life type of tourism that proceeds slowly and simply, such as sitting and watching the local people's boats pass, wake up early and feel the refreshing mist, giving alms to monks with sticky rice according to culture. In the evening, stroll along Chiang Khan walking street, eat delicious food in a traditional way which is a very happy life. This city of Chiang Khan has quality tourism management so, receiving a world-class sustainable tourism award from World Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) namely “ the Green Destinations Silver Award 2024” and received a symbolic flag management compare to international standards. It is empirical evidence of success in driving development which is an international certification system. That certifies sustainable development to tourist attractions. It is the first in Thailand and in the Southeast Asian region. It is the fifth tourist destination in Asia (from 3 countries: Taiwan, Japan, and Thailand) that has joined the certification of tourist destination standards. From the World Sustainable Tourism Council with operations under responsibilities of The Special Area Office for Sustainable Tourism in Loei (Loei DASTA) has developed a prototype tourist attraction in Chiang Khan Subdistrict. According to the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC), since 2019 the past has driven the GSTC criteria together with relevant agencies and network partners by integrating sustainable tourism development: In 2020, Chiang Khan was ranked among the top 100 sustainable tourist destinations in the world [1].

In this city of Chiang Khan, the Mekong River flows through the border with the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). There are many activities taking place on this Mekong River, especially various types of tourism activities consisting of nature tourism, there are large rapids in the middle of the Mekong River called “ Kaeng Khut Khu ” or dubbed “ Heaven on the Earth. ” which can see the beauty of the Mekong River along with flocks of egrets flying back to their nests at sunset [2] In the morning, watch Phu Thok sea mist together with the cultural tourist attractions. There is an interesting tradition of giving alms to monks with sticky rice, worshipping the Big Buddha, Phukok Ngio, and worshipping the Lan Chang Buddha image. and travel accumulate merit by visiting temples, paying respects to the teachers who practice good conduct and act rightly, and ancient chedi and Buddha statues that people believe in [3]

As for the city of Sanakham. It is a city in Vientiane Province that borders Thailand at Chiang Khan District, Loei Province, with the Mekong River connecting the two countries and used as the main transportation route that is important in daily life. In addition, people from Sanakham also use this Mekong River to travel in Thailand, especially tourism in Chiang Khan. Because in Sanakham, there are no tourist activities organized. There are no natural tourist attractions, there are only 3 temples where Lao people go to practice their religion, namely Wat Si Phumavararam, Wat Saen, and Wat Yai Pha Hot. In addition, Sanakham City and Muang Chiang Khan have never organized joint activities that integrate cooperation from all sectors, including the government sector and private and public sectors. But the people of both countries want to have joint activities to create good relations between our brother and sister cities, as well as being an attraction for tourists to travel, which will create income for both countries. [4]

The researcher is aware of the distinctiveness of culture and the similar good way of life of Thailand and Lao PDR. Around the world, they accept and like their own way of life. In addition, the two countries have also created a framework for cooperation in tourism together. Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and Lao National Tourism Organization They made an agreement on cooperation in tourism on February 19, 1992 and recorded the meeting on cooperation in tourism, including TAT and the Lao National Tourism Organization. However the two countries have not yet truly integrated the connection in organizing concrete tourism activities from the participatory process of the communities and relevant partners.

From all of the above, it is very necessary that there should be organized tourism activities along the Mekong River. In terms of integrating cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR, there must be activities that do not destroy the environment and the traditional way of life of the local people but aim to preserve and disseminate the good culture of the people in the community for the world to know. The results of the research allow the community to organize appropriate tourism activities to be used as a guideline for promoting tourism and also creating good cooperation between them as well as creating income for the people in the local community, both make a community with economic strength is the foundation for a more stable and sustainable economy.

Research objectives

1. To study the guidelines for integrating cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River in Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province, and Sanakham City, Vientiane Province
2. To develop tourism activities on the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan , Loei province, and Sanakham City, Vientiane province
3. To implement tourism activities on the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan , Loei province, and Sanakham City, Vientiane province.

2. Theoretical Overview of the Main Concepts

General information about the Mekong River

The Mekong River originates from the melting ice and snow on the Tibetan Plateau in northern Tibet and Qinghai Province of China, which is the source of two other important rivers: the Yangtze River and the Salween River. The Mekong River that flows through China is called the “Lancang Jiang River” by the Chinese. It flows through the mountains and plateaus in China, through Yunnan Province into the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and Thailand. In the “Golden Triangle” area in Chiang Saen District, Chiang Rai Province, it flows as the border between Thailand and the Lao PDR, through Chiang Rai, Loei, Nong Khai, Bueng Kan, Nakhon Phanom, Mukdahan, Amnat Charoen, and Ubon Ratchathani Provinces, a distance of 1,520 kilometers, before flowing into the Lao PDR and Cambodia before flowing into the South China Sea in Vietnam. The total length is 4,880 kilometers, covering a water catchment area in the basin of 795,000 square kilometers or 496.875 million rai. [5]

The Mekong River Basin can be divided into two parts: the Upper Mekong Basin and the Lower Mekong Basin. The Upper Mekong Basin begins at the source of the Mekong River in Tibet and China. The Lower Mekong Basin begins in Yunnan Province in China and flows through Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam before flowing into the South China Sea. The Greater Mekong Basin, comprising Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand, is a region of great biodiversity. With at least 1,100 species of fish, the basin is home to a vast freshwater fishery, with more than 2.6 million tonnes caught annually, accounting for 25 percent of the world's freshwater fish catch. The basin is also home to more than 430 species of mammals, more than 800 species of reptiles and amphibians, 1,200 species of birds and more than 20,000 species of plants. Every year, scientists identify new species and identify the remaining 2,216 species that have yet to be discovered. Between 1997 and 2014, the Mekong River's biodiversity helps to replenish farmland with mineral-rich sediments. Its forests and wetlands provide key raw materials for industry, filter water and purify the air, and protect cities from natural disasters such as floods and storms. Approximately 80 percent of the region's 300 million people directly depend on these natural systems for their food security, livelihoods and cultural traditions. [5]

In addition, the Lower Mekong Basin, which covers areas in four countries: Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, is a source of water, protein, fish species, plant species and a variety of aquatic animals, which feed more than 60 million people. It is a source of protein for people in the Mekong Basin region, up to 47-80 percent, with an annual fisheries value of 127,000-231,000 million baht.

The importance of the Mekong River as an international river flowing through 6 countries that influence the lives of the people of the 6 countries mentioned above, it is the starting point that the researcher is interested in developing tourism activities along the Mekong River along the border of Thailand and Laos.

Strategies for the development of sustainable creative tourism for tourism along the economic routes in the Upper Mekong Subregion

From the research results of Yaem et al. [6] who researched on the strategy for developing sustainable creative tourism for tourism along the economic routes in the upper Mekong subregion, it was found that the strategy for developing sustainable creative tourism for tourism along the economic routes in the upper Mekong subregion has a total of 4 strategies. The implementation guidelines are as follows: To lead to the allocation and development of resources on the infrastructure to restore and connect the competitive potential of creative and sustainable tourism along the economic routes in the upper Mekong subregion, consisting of:

Strategy 1 Creating sustainable participation

Strategy 2 Stimulating sustainable tourism marketing

Strategy 3 Restoring and creating added value for sustainability

Strategy 4 Creating sustainability in identity, culture, and the environment

From the research results, the components that will lead to the development of creative tourism include the roles of the government sector, the private sector, and those involved in the creation of creative tourism in the upper Mekong sub-region, which must be collaborated to create creative tourism as follows:

1. Thailand (Chiang Rai/Chiang Saen) should promote the creation of awareness of environmental/natural creativity, authenticity, and originality.
2. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar (King Tung) should promote the creation of awareness of ecotourism.
3. The People's Republic of China (Chiang Rung) should promote the creation of awareness of the economy, environmental/natural creativity, ecotourism, cultural conservation creativity, authenticity and originality, tourism culture, interpersonal interaction, travel and cultural tourism, creative tourism landscape, and creative tourism borders and areas.

From the above-mentioned of Strategies for the development of sustainable creative tourism for tourism along the economic routes in the Upper Mekong Subregion, the researcher used them as a guideline for cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province and Sanakham City, Vientiane Province.

The potential of tourism in border towns to connect tourism in the Greater Mekong Subregion: Mukdahan-Savannakhet-Kwangtri

Border tourism or border tourism cities have the following meanings [7]

1. Interaction between areas: Interaction with neighboring countries according to the characteristics of the landscape and adjacent territories, which may be connected by land or water, resulting in benefits of border trade exchange and tourism in terms of tourist attractions that have similar characteristics of both countries, such as cultural tourism, local traditions, studying the characteristics of community lifestyles and tourism according to natural geographical conditions, such as rivers, mountains, buildings and visiting architecture, valuable antiques that were once in the same kingdom, etc.
2. Having tourism activities in the area, it can be seen that border tourism cities will have tourists traveling to interesting places (Travel Destination) to join the activities.
3. Development of international transportation systems: creating all types of transportation facilities to respond to the convenience of the transportation system of travelers and to facilitate the entire logistics system, such as road construction to facilitate access to tourist attractions, building bridges connecting the two countries to facilitate convenient transportation, reduce travel time, and be faster and safer, and also being cooperation in opening international transportation services. (International Transportation) in the form of international passenger trains (International Train) or road transportation using international buses (International Bus), etc.

4. There is a goal to develop the economic system at the provincial and regional levels because border tourist cities have tourism potential and can also generate a huge income from the tourism industry in the country. As can be seen from the fact that the whole world is accelerating the development of the tourism industry to help bring benefits to the country and Thailand is the same, which has been in line with many civilized countries. Government agencies or administrators of the country will give importance to setting goals for developing the country's economy to be distributed to the regions more, especially cities or areas with the potential to generate income to the country.

From the characteristics mentioned above in all 4 aspects, if border cities can create tourism activities and become popular in the connecting areas of the three countries, such a process can help generate income into the city and have a significant impact on the economy of the region and the country because the government policies of all three countries promote border tourism to be well-known and have the potential to accommodate tourists very well.

Thailand and Lao PDR move to advance their bilateral cooperation in all dimensions

Thailand and the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) have reaffirmed their commitment to working closely to advance their bilateral cooperation in all dimensions, especially in security, economic, development, and people aspects. According to a report from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand and Lao PDR will strive to achieve the bilateral trade target of 11 billion US dollars by 2025 through various measures, such as better trade facilitation, expansion of cross-border networks of SMEs, and promotion of economic activities between border provinces of both countries. Both sides agreed to expedite the process to start the construction of a new railway bridge over the Mekong River at Nong Khai – Vientiane border crossing as early as possible by 2026 to support the cross-border rail freight growth and tourism between Thailand – Laos – China. Thailand and Lao PDR were pleased with the progress of the construction of the fifth Thai–Lao Friendship Bridge (Bueng Kan – Bolikhamxai), which is now almost 90 percent completed. The construction is expected to be completed and the bridge will be opened in the near future. Both sides looked forward to more projects in the pipeline to enhance better connectivity between the two countries and the region, including the construction of the sixth Thai–Lao Friendship Bridge (Ubon Ratchathani - Salavan) and the improvement of the National Road No. 12 (R12) from Thai – Lao border at Nakhon Phanom – Thakek to Lao – Viet Nam border at Na Phao – Cha Lo. On transportation and logistics, both sides will work together to increase the efficiency of road and rail transshipment to boost bilateral and regional trade. They will also expedite the establishment of Common Control Areas (CCA) to reduce customs procedures for cross-border transportation at the second Thai – Lao Friendship Bridge (Mukdahan – Savannakhet), which is a major transport route between Thailand – Laos – Viet Nam. Regarding tourism, both sides will conclude a Joint Plan of Action to promote cross-border tourism and make joint activities to attract tourists, in conjunction with the 2024 Visit Laos Year. Security agencies of the two countries will cooperate closely to maintain peace and stability along the border, and effectively tackle transnational crimes, especially drug trafficking and online scams. The updated Agreement on Cooperation in Border Security between Thailand and the Lao PDR is scheduled to be signed by the end of this year. Both leaders agreed to work even more closely on the issue of transboundary haze and tasked

their relevant agencies to conclude the trilateral Joint Plan of Action - CLEAR Sky Strategy between Thailand, Lao PDR, and Myanmar by the end of this year. Thailand will support the development of Lao PDR's fire risk map and capacity building programs on the control of forest fires and crop burning. The Lao side expressed appreciation for Thailand's continued development cooperation in a wide range of areas, which have contributed to the uplifting of people's livelihoods as well as the bond of friendship between the peoples of the two countries. Both sides took the opportunity to exchange views on international and regional issues of mutual interest and concern. In 2024, Thailand and Lao PDR will cooperate closely to strengthen ASEAN unity and cohesiveness and maintain ASEAN's central role in maintaining regional peace, stability, and development amidst international uncertainties. [8]

Bilateral discussions There are important points as follows. [8]

1. Handover of the Learning Centre for the Development of Sustainable Agriculture based on the Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy at the Attapeu Integrated Vocational Education and Technical School;
2. Handover of the Friendship Arboretum in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Thai-Lao Diplomatic Relations;
3. Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Exchange between the Ministry of Culture of Thailand and the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism of the Lao PDR.
4. Signing of the Record of Discussion between NEDA and the Lao National Railway for Technical Assistance for Capacity Building for Locomotive Driving and Ticketing System and Development of a Business Model for the Lao National Railway.

3. Methodology

The research format is qualitative research using in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and brainstorming. The Target group consisting of tour operators community members, community leaders representatives of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization and Chiang Khan Municipality and related parties including representatives from the Loei Special Area Office for Sustainable Tourism (Loei DASTA) and TAT, Loei Province, the Association of Tourist Entrepreneurs in Thailand and Lao PDR. hotel operators and tour companies representatives of local government agencies in both Thailand and Lao PDR for in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and participatory brainstorming. All involved parties, a total of 55 people

Data collection

Data collection carried out 4 The steps are as follows:

Step 1 Study guidelines for integrating cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River in Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province, and Sanakham City, Vientiane Province In this step, in-depth interviews were used. The information obtained from this step will be used as a guideline for creating tourism activities in the next step. In this step there are various activities as follows:

1. Study of documents related to the strategy for building cooperation in tourism between Thailand and Lao PDR.
2. Interview the opinions of a group of entrepreneurs in tourist destinations, community members include the

village headman and citizens, including relevant officials at all levels, including the Permanent Secretary of the Chiang Khan Subdistrict Administrative Organization, representatives from the Chiang Khan Municipality, local government agencies, representatives from the Loei Special Area Office for Sustainable Tourism (Loei DASTA) and TAT, Loei Province, regarding the guidelines for integrating cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province, and Sanakham city , Vientiane Province.

Step 2 Study the needs for organizing tourism activities.

In this step, it is a study of the needs for organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River. In this step there are various activities as follows:

1. In-depth interview, senior executives in Loei Province Relevant agencies include the Governor of Loei Province, Chiang Khan District Chief and Deputy District Chief Permanent Secretary of Chiang Khan Subdistrict Administrative, organization and concerning the need for organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River in Thailand and Lao PDR that are appropriate for the two countries
2. Focus Group Discussion ,the participants are tourism operators in Thailand and Lao PDR. Regarding the need for organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River
3. In-depth interviews with tourists traveling to Chiang Khan about their needs in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River.

Synthesize information on needs for organizing all tourism activities obtained from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to bring to the brainstorming stage in step 3.

Step 3 Develop tourism activities on the Mekong River.

At this stage there are various activities as follows:

1. Use participatory brainstorming methods participants in the brainstorming session include: tour operator community members, community leaders representatives of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization and Chiang Khan Municipality and related parties include representatives from the Loei Special Area Office for Sustainable Tourism (Loei DASTA) and TAT, Loei Province, the association of Tourist Entrepreneurs in Thailand and Lao PDR. hotel operators and tour companies representatives of local government agencies in both Thailand and Lao PDR
2. Criticize the form of tourism activities on the Mekong River obtained from the meeting by meeting the business team representatives of government agencies and administrators to consider the suitability of tourism activities on the Mekong River.

Step 4 Implementing tourism activities on the Mekong River

By implementing tourism activities for 1 quarter, in this step, the process is as follows.

1. Set up a working group or responsible person to carry out the pilot project by considering selecting activities that should be carried out first.
2. Meet to assign work and select activities as appropriate. In order of first-last
3. Prepare a plan of action for tourism activities.
4. Conducting trials of tourism activities on the Mekong River for 1 quarter

Qualitative data review and analysis

Methods for examining qualitative data. The data was examined using the triangulation technique. Qualitative data analysis using content analysis.

4. Discussion

Results of the study of guidelines for integrating tourism activities on the Mekong River

It was found that various activities should be carried out together, including organizing travel activities together, manage shared services create public relations media together. There is facilitation in the matter of documents passing through the Thai-Lao border. A joint committee was established and the Thai-Lao association was established. This is because both Thailand and Lao PDR are neighboring countries and share borders with each other. They travel to see each other regularly. Therefore, the implementation of activities requires cooperation in order to be successful, in line with the strategic plan of the Special Area Development Administration for Sustainable Tourism [9], which summarizes the strategic points of the 3 regions, manage, coordinate and promote participation of all parties in tourism management and in accordance with Phetsamone [10] was found that guidelines for developing cooperation include (1) guidelines for cooperation in evaluating tourism results (2) guidelines for cooperation in making tourism plans (3) guidelines for cooperation in exchange tourism information and (4) guidelines for cooperation in tourism operations. As for Patthira's research, it was found that

Results of the development of tourism activities on the Mekong River

Results of the development of tourism activities on the Mekong River. It was found that there was activity which should be arranged together as follows: organize activities on important Buddhist days together, organize traditional merit-making activities together, organize an exhibition of activities showing both sides of the Mekong River, car caravan activities travel the two countries of Thailand-Laos and ride a bicycle to reduce pollution. Pay homage to 9 Buddha images in two countries at Muang Chiang Khan and Sanakham, meditation and dhamma practice in temples in the two countries of Thailand and Laos. All of these activities are forms of cultural tourism activities that emphasize peace, tranquility, and peace of mind and get to experience the reality of the community's way of life and learn valuable local traditions. The same is research of Thanaphan and et al. [11] had studied guidelines for developing areas along the Mekong River to promote tourism found that both of them attach importance to the development of tourism together, especially the concept of developing connected tourism of the two countries, that is, at the meeting of the association of entrepreneurs tourism of Ubon Ratchathani Province and the Entrepreneur Council of Chapassak Province. There were discussions and exchanges on the development of new tourist routes, preparing for the development of tourist attractions linking Laos-Thailand to sell to the new tourist market group who pay more attention to Indochina regional tourism than coming. The same is research of Patthira [12] also suggested that in developing Mekong River tourism activities, the basic infrastructure/services should be improved. There should be signs to tourist attractions and roads, clean and sufficient public toilets, and the riverside scenery should be clean, beautiful, and have fresh flowers. was recommended that needs to improve the infrastructure / basic service. There should be signs to tourist sites and roads and public toilets, clean and adequate. Landscapes along the river should be clean and

beautiful, with fresh flowers.

Results of implementing tourism activities on the Mekong River

The activities were trialled according to the needs of the community and tourists moreover, consideration is given to readiness and suitability for trial use by carrying out a total of 6 activities together with the Lao PDR, including cycling to reduce pollution at Muang Chiang Khan and Sanakham city, The Red Cross festival was called “Dog Phy Ban to preserve Thai -Laos culture at Loei Province. Thai-Lao Songkran Festival and Merit-making ceremony of the merit-making tradition of Bun Phawet at Loei Province, Ghost Festival in two countries, Thailand-Laos at Vientiane and Pha Sad Loi Kroh activities on the banks of the Mekong River Muang Chiang Khan. Because all of these activities are activities that have received the attention of tourists, it makes entrepreneurs and communities want to organize them, which results in many tourists coming to visit. The community earns income from organizing activities. This is different from the research of Ban Pak Ing Tai Women's Group [13], which researched the traditions of tourism on the Mekong River. Organized activities Greetings Raising a party raising ghosts Lai Ruea Fai Land and Lai Ruea Fai Water and Loi Thanaphan, and others [14] designed tourism along the Mekong River to connect community areas with cultural tourist attractions and all 6 activities areas which includes Mekong River Basin lifestyle and Culture Learning Center Group of residential buildings, homestays, and roadside shops Ban Ta Mui Agricultural Learning Center Hat Sai Kaew Viewpoint and Kao Phan Bok Viewpoint. It has been developed into a tourist route along the Mekong River, with pedestrian and bicycle paths

5. Synopsis of the Main Research Outcomes

Results of the study of approaches to integrating cooperation between Thailand and Lao PDR in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province, and Sanakham City. Vientiane Province.

This section uses in-depth interviews. Gain information about the tourism potential of Muang Chiang Khan and Sanakham city, which leads to success in integrating tourism. In conclusion, Muang Chiang Khan is well-equipped to organize activities because it has a beautiful tourism atmosphere along the Mekong River that can organize a variety of activities. As shown in figure 1

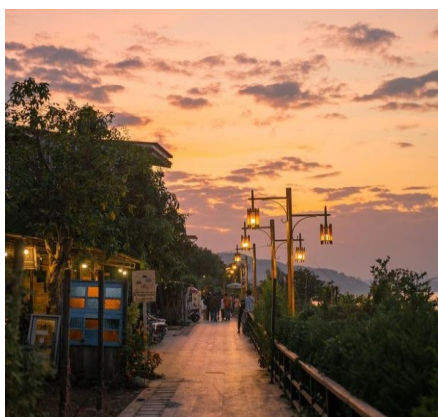


Fig 1: Muang Chiang Khan in the evening.

The result of integration guidelines

It is a study of guidelines. /Methods for jointly organizing activities are as follows:

1. Organize joint tourism activities in both countries
2. Manage shared services Including water transportation Shared comfortable boat crossing the Mekong River providing shuttle service between each other.
3. Prepare public relations media together. The two countries must share tourism information in the online media system. There must also be a variety of tourist information media in the form of documents such as maps, brochures, and travel books. etc. in order to promote tourism together thoroughly and continuously.
4. Development of local tour guides at tourist attractions shared by both countries. There must be a call center information center opened to provide services to tourists together.
5. Traveling across borders in the two countries requires facilitation in terms of passing documents Thailand-Laos border for tourists that is not hassle-free, not complicated, and must be fast.
6. A joint committee has been established. The two countries must hold a meeting of the provincial governors and provincial governors of the Thai-Lao border. The other two countries must have a joint Thai-Lao committee to take care of the operation's various activities on the Mekong River, and two countries must have a committee to cooperate to maintain peace and order on the provincial-district level border. There is a joint commission on Thai-Lao cooperation at the local level. There is a mediation committee to resolve business disputes trade and investment and other fields. There is a joint Thai-Lao Boundary Commission.
7. Establish the Thai-Lao Association for good friendship between Thailand and the Lao PDR. relations between two countries must be promoted smoothly as brother country - sister city.

Results of the development of tourism activities on the Mekong River.

Activity development begins with studying the need for organizing activities as a basis for activity development. Results of the study of activity needs from the target group of Thai tourists and Laos PDR revealed that they wanted to organize cultural and traditional activities together with Thailand, such as Songkran, the end of the Buddhist Lent festival, and agricultural tourism because both Thailand and Laos PDR have agricultural careers. Therefore, it is a good idea to organize a tour to see various agricultural plants, for example, to see how vegetables are grown without toxic chemicals and display various aspects of life such as weaving, including weaving and

dyeing, basketry, etc. There are products on display in the walking street, products from two countries of the Mekong River, both Thai and Laos PDR. There should be educational and sports tourism, such as field trips to various academic sites, camps, and joint sports competitions, such as golf or water sports and boat racing, etc. There should also be activities to organize a market for local Thai-Lao products and cultural exchanges for Thai-Lao tourism. Synthesize information from interviews and focus groups to bring to the next meeting.

Results of the development of tourism promotion activities on the Mekong River

This section uses participatory brainstorming methods. From Thai and Lao people, consisting of executives from Chiang Khan Municipality, academics, community representatives, and tourism operators, etc.

A summary of the results of developing tourism activities is as follows:

1. Organize activities on important Buddhist days together, such as activities for the beginning of Buddhist Lent and the end of Buddhist Lent and offerings to monks in two countries.
2. Organize traditional merit-making activities together, including the traditional merit-making ceremony of Bun Phawet on both sides of the Mekong River and the Songkran traditional merit-making event on both sides of the Mekong River, including the annual cultural exhibition on both sides of the Mekong River.
3. Organize an exhibition of activities on both sides of the Mekong River. This includes organizing sports competitions on both sides of the Mekong River, showcasing music, songs, dancing, dancing on both sides of the Mekong, and food display good things on both sides of the Mekong River, organize an exhibition of products, business, agriculture and handicrafts on both sides of the Mekong River.
4. Car caravan activity travel the two countries of Thailand-Laos and ride a bicycle to reduce pollution.
5. Pay homage to 9 Buddha images in the two countries at Muang Chiang Khan and Sanakham.
6. Meditation and Dhamma practice in temples in the two countries of Thailand and Laos PDR.

Results of implementing tourism activities on the Mekong River

In this part, the activities were trialled according to the needs of the community and tourists moreover, consideration is given to readiness and suitability for trial use by carrying out a total of 6 activities together with the Lao PDR, the committee has considered and selected activities that are appropriate for the time to carry out as follows.

1. Riding a bicycle to reduce pollution by riding a bicycle along the Mekong River in Chiang Khan and Sanakham Vientiane Province

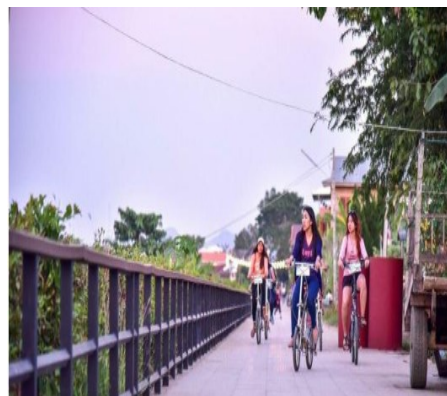


Fig 2: Cycling along the Mekong River at Chiang Khan City



Fig 3: Cycling along the Mekong River bank at the city of Sanakham

2. The Red Cross festival was called “Dog Phy Ban to preserve Thai -Laos culture at Loei Province. At the event, there were various activities that showed the way of life and culture of the two countries.



Fig 4 : Opening ceremony by the Governor.



Fig 5 : Activities at the Red Cross festival

3. The Thai-Lao Songkran Festival will be held from 9-10 April 2024 in Loei Province.



Fig 6: Thai-Lao Songkran Festival

4. Traditional Merit-making Ceremony of Bun Phawet in two countries. It is an event of the Isaan people and is considered an important merit-making event. The villagers will organize a large ceremony. Merit-making event for 2-3 days consecutively



Fig 7: Bun Phawet Ceremony

5. Ghost Festival of the two countries, Thailand-Laos. It is an activity organized for fun. According to the ghost beliefs of the Isan people



Fig 8 : Atmosphere of a Thai ghost show.



Fig 9: Atmosphere of a Lao ghost show.

6. The Pha Sad Loi Kroh activity is an ancient tradition and belief of the Mekong Basin community. It was held on the banks of the Mekong River at Muang Chiang Khan. It's about throwing away bad things. It will make your life better and bring only good things into your life.



Fig 10: Opening Ceremony of Pha Sad



Fig 11: Pha Sad At the banks of the Mekong River ,

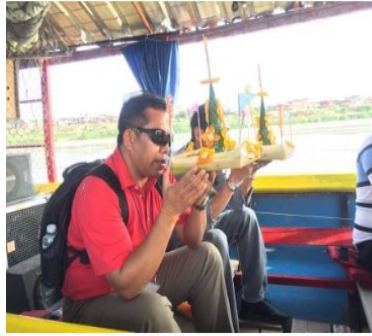


Fig 12. Tourists board a floating boat at Pha Sad.

7. Conclusions

Results of the study integration guidelines. It was found that various activities should be carried out together, including organizing travel activities together, managing shared services to create public relations media together, and facilitation is provided. In the matter of Thai-Lao border crossing documents. A joint committee was established, and the Thai-Lao association was established, and the results of the development of tourism activities on the Mekong River. Some activities should be organized together as follows: organize activities on important Buddhist days together, organize traditional merit-making activities together, organize an exhibition of activities showing both sides of the Mekong River, car caravan activities travel the two countries of Thailand-Laos and ride a bicycle to reduce pollution, pay homage to 9 Buddha statues in two counties at Muang Chiang Khan and Sanakham, meditation and dhamma practice in temples in the two countries

8. Limitations, Implications, and Further Directions of Research

The results of the study were known community needs and tourist in organizing tourism activities on the Mekong River in Muang Chiang Khan, Loei Province and Sanakham city Vientiane Province. The research results are used to organize activities to meet the needs of tourists.

Results from the study can be used as plans and strategies of local agencies, organizations or areas to support joint tourism on both sides of the Mekong River between Thailand and Laos PDR. in other areas further.

- 1) There should be studies to create tourism promotion innovations suitable for all target groups.
- 2) There should be further studies on tourism patterns in the Mekong Basin to cover all countries in the Mekong Basin.

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