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Title	Asian Development Bank's development paradigm and its role in the Bank's energy policy in the Lower Mekong region.		
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Abstract

In this thesis I have studied how the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) energy policy reflects the Bank's paradigm on development. As an example region I have studied the Lower Mekong region, namely Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. In my research I try to find answers to the following five questions. First, how can development be understood through different theories? Second, what kind of development paradigm does ADB have? Third, what is the energy policy of ADB? Fourth, what are the conditions and needs of energy sectors in the four Lower Mekong area's countries? And last, what kind of projects ADB has financed in the Lower Mekong region.

In my thesis I have used qualitative text analysis to study the energy policy publications made by ADB. I have analyzed three official documents published by ADB on its energy policy by supplementing these with other publications dealing with ADB's energy-related policies. After that I have compared the official statements with three projects that ADB has implemented in the Mekong region in order to find out whether these two are in line with each other or do they contradict in some way. My study also included elaboration of the ADB's development paradigm which I compared with the findings of the Bank's energy policy in order to see how the energy policy reflects these ideas. I also interviewed an alternate executive director of ADB to compare with the findings from the literature.

I was able to identify four priorities of ADB's energy policy, namely poverty reduction, environment protection, regional cooperation and enhancing private sector participation. Of these four priorities, the last two seem to be the core priorities of the energy projects that the Bank has funded in the Lower Mekong region. Regional cooperation and private sector participation are very much in line with the ideas of neo-liberalism. Because neo-liberalist values are relatively close to the Bank's development philosophy, it might be one of the reasons why the Bank values them so highly. These two priorities are also quite concrete, whereas poverty reduction is not something that can be proved easily in concrete way and therefore it is difficult to know whether or not it has actually been an objective in the projects that the Bank has funded in the Lower Mekong. In recent years the Bank has also started addressing more environmental impacts. However, this does not mean that the projects could not cause any harm to the environment, but it rather means that the Bank wants to minimize adverse environmental impacts on each of its project.

Key words	Asian Development Bank, development, energy, Lower Mekong region
Further information	