

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INCREASING REGIONAL LOGISTICS LINKAGES TO PROMOTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST VIETNAM



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FOREWORD

Logistics play a vital role in enhancing competitiveness and promoting socio-economic development, especially in the Southeast region - the most dynamic economic region in the country. In order to research and propose solutions to increase the efficiency of logistics linkages, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Ho Chi Minh Regional Branch (VCCI-HCM), with funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through the Aus4Skills Program, has coordinated with experts to implement the Report “Increasing Regional Logistics Linkages to Promote Socio-economic Development in Southeast Vietnam”.

The report was carried out under the professional guidance of Professor Dr. Thai Van Vinh, Faculty of Logistics and Supply Chain Management, RMIT University, with the participation of the following members:

- Dr. Dau Anh Tuan – Vice Secretary General and Director of Legal Department, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Ms. Bui Thi Ninh, MA – Deputy General Director, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry- Ho Chi Minh City Regional Branch;
- Dr. Chu Thi Hue – Lecturer, Department of Logistics, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education;
- Dr. Dang Truong Khac Tam – Director of Training Management Department, Academy of Politics Region II;
- Mr. Mai Van Thanh, MA – Lecturer, Department of Logistics, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education;
- Ms. Vu Thi Binh Minh, MA – Country Director, Melbourne Polytechnic Vietnam.

The research process received valuable coordination, information, and experience sharing from:

- The Department of Industry and Trade; the Department of Transport; Customs Sub-Departments of provinces/cities: Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai, Tay Ninh, Binh Phuoc, Binh Duong, Ba Ria - Vung Tau (before the merger), now Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai, Tay Ninh
- The Vietnam Logistics Business Association (VLA), Binh Duong Logistics Association (BLA), Ho Chi Minh City Leather and Footwear Association, and the regional business community.

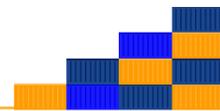
We sincerely acknowledge and appreciate the valuable feedback and contributions from the experts of the Australian Embassy in Vietnam and the Australian Consulate-General in Ho Chi Minh City to the report.

The support and collaboration of agencies, organizations and enterprises have not only contributed to ensuring the accuracy and objectivity of the analysis, but also provided a solid foundation for the recommendations in the report to be highly feasible and aligned with the characteristics and development needs of the Southeast region in the context of deep integration and rapid digital transformation.

The editorial team extends its sincere gratitude and hopes that this report will serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, managers, enterprises and training institutions; and contribute to promoting logistics linkages, strengthening inter-regional cooperation, and supporting the sustainable socio-economic development of the Southeast region.

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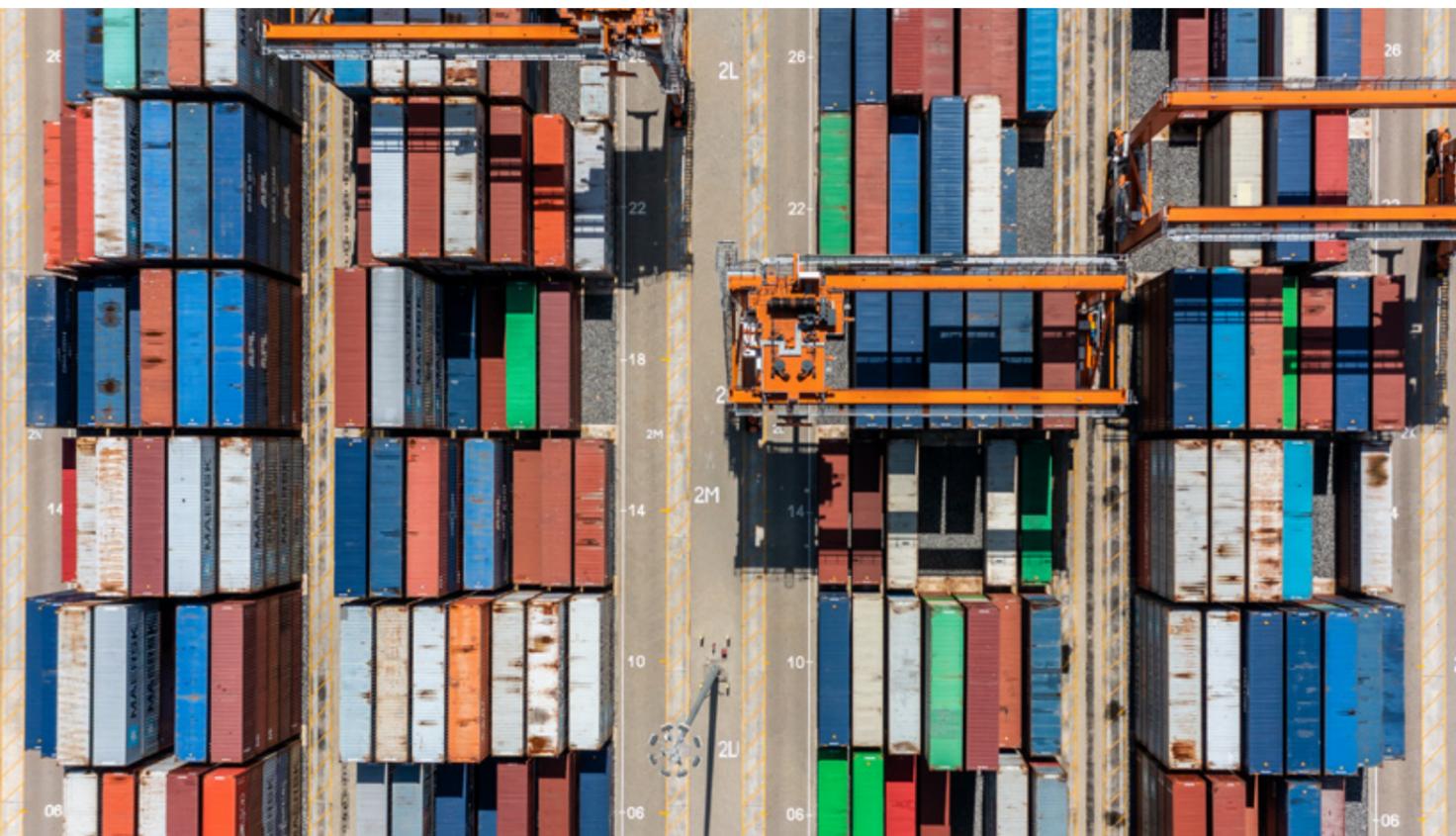


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1 INTRODUCTION

As Vietnam accelerates the implementation of strategic socio-economic development resolutions, the Southeast region remains firmly recognized as the nation's "growth engine," contributing a substantial share to GDP, exports, state budget revenues, and investment inflows. However, to sustain and enhance this role, the region must address critical "bottlenecks" in infrastructure, institutional frameworks, and, most notably, its capacity for both intra-regional and inter-regional logistics linkages. Resolution No. 24-NQ/TW of the Politburo (2022) underscores the importance of strengthening regional linkages, identifying logistics as the "backbone" underpinning all economic activities. Ineffective logistics linkages would undermine the entire regional economic linkage system, erode competitiveness, and constrain the spillover effects of development to the rest of the country.

In response to this pressing need, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Ho Chi Minh Regional Branch (VCCI-HCM) and Logistics Industry Reference Council (LIRC) with sponsorship and support from the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through the Aus4Skills Program, undertook the research "Increasing regional logistics linkages to promote socio-economic development in Southeast Vietnam". This research was carried out at a crucial turning point, as Vietnam undertakes provincial-level administrative restructuring (Decision No. 759/QĐ-TTg, April 14, 2025), leading to significant shifts in administrative boundaries, governance frameworks, and regional development planning. The updates and analyses presented in this report thoroughly capture the new context, ensuring relevance and strong practical applicability.

It offers a comprehensive overview of the current logistics linkages landscape in Southeast Vietnam, alongside detailed examinations of key bottlenecks in infrastructure, institutional and policy frameworks, operational processes, and human resource development. Through desktop research, in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders, and case studies, the research team identified critical challenges and developed concrete solutions and action plans spanning central, local, and inter-regional levels. Once implemented, these recommendations will help optimize supply chains, reduce logistics costs and transit times, boost business competitiveness, and drive broader economic spillover effects.

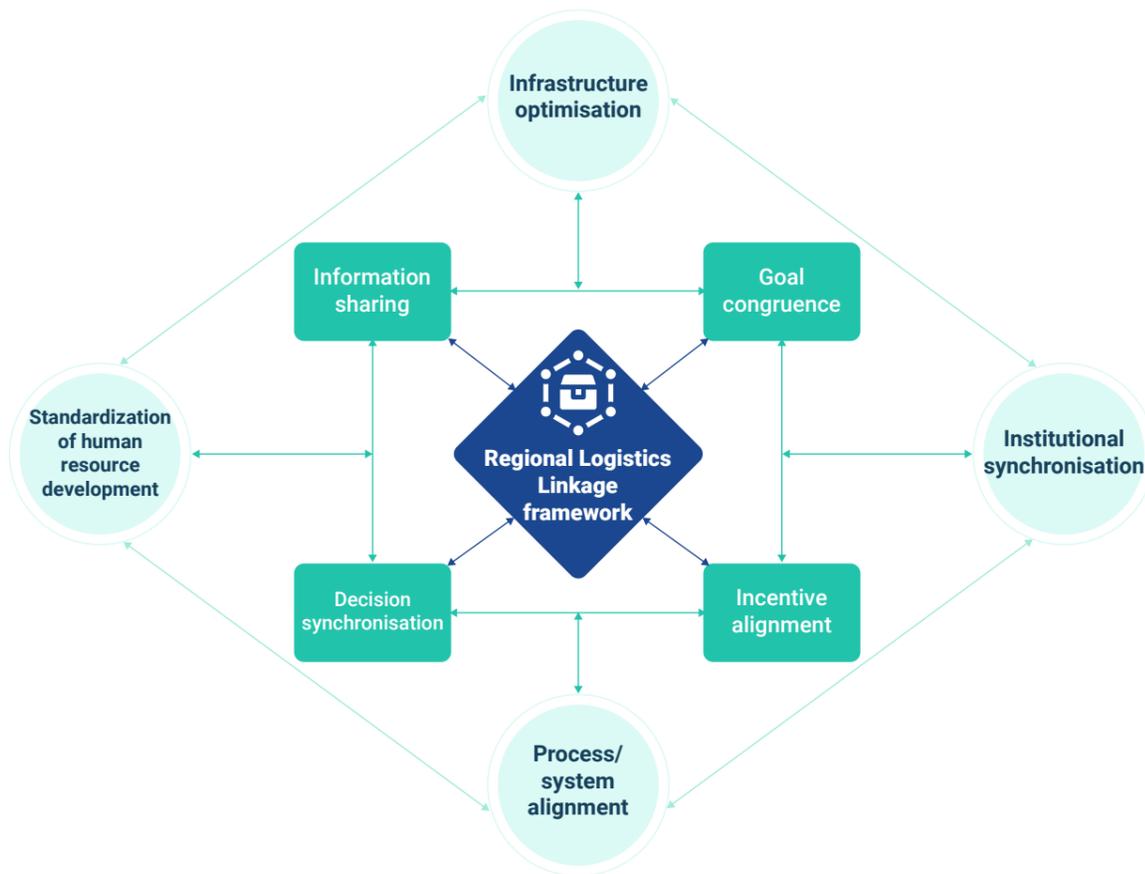
The report's value goes beyond its scientific and policy advisory contributions to Vietnam; it also holds significant diplomatic and development cooperation importance. It serves as concrete testament of the deep and comprehensive strategic partnership between Vietnam and Australia, particularly in infrastructure connectivity, trade, and human resource development (for example, providing technical and financial support for the development of occupational skills standards, short-term skills training courses for lecturers of vocational colleges and intermediate-level vocational institutions, as well as enterprise staff/employees, and skills forecast research projects in the logistics and port industries). Serving as a bridge between the research-training community, the business sector, and government authorities, the report offers a crucial knowledge base and policy recommendations for strategic planners, while also supporting investors, enterprises, and training institutions in formulating operational strategies in an era of integration and digital economic transformation.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The authors adopted the *Regional Logistics Linkage Analysis Framework* to conduct an in-depth analysis of all elements affecting regional logistics linkages at both macro and micro levels as follows.

Figure 2.1. Regional logistics linkage analysis

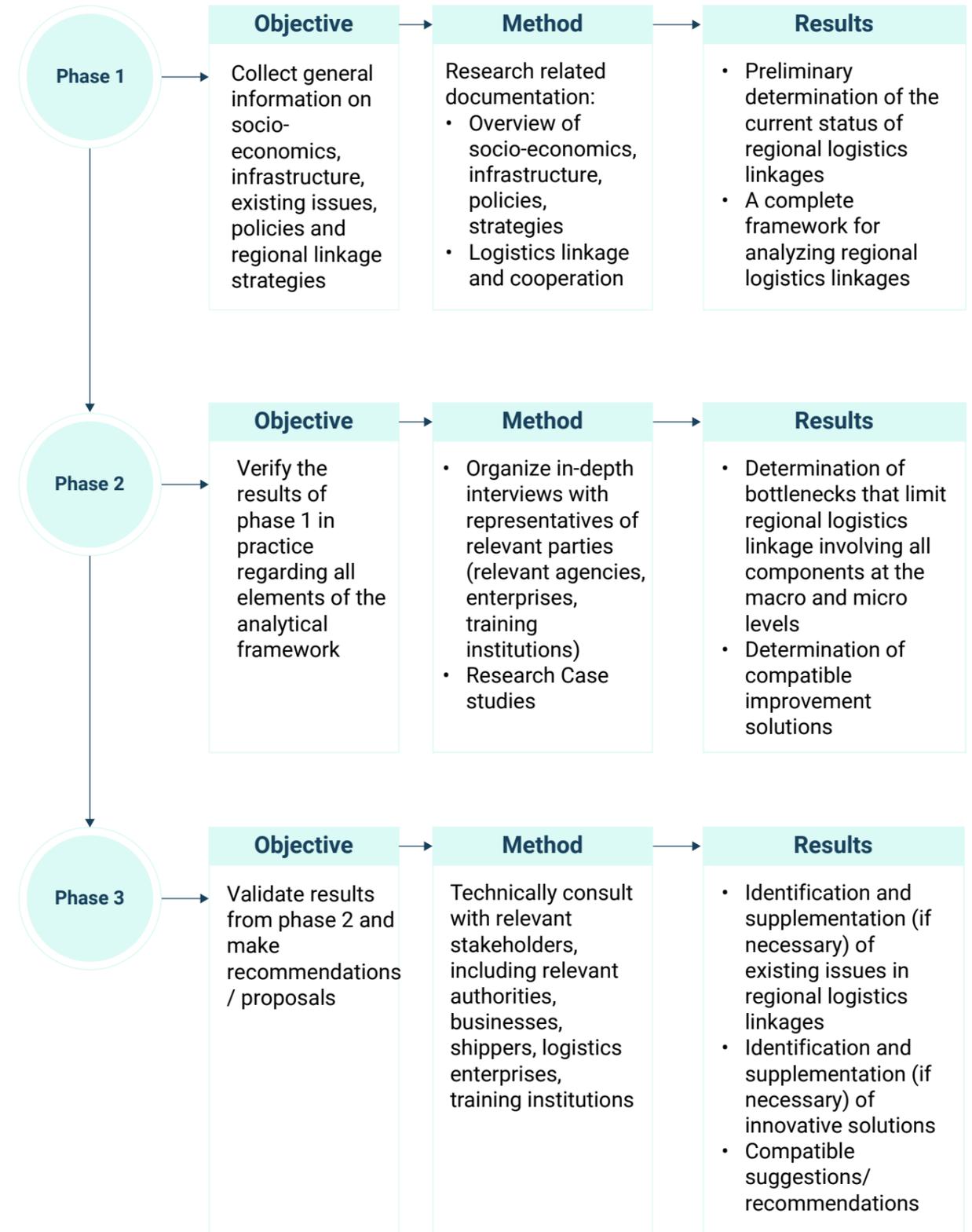


Source: <https://vcci-hcm.org.vn/khung-phan-tich-lien-ket-hop-tac-logistics-vung/>

The research process is conducted through the following sequential stages. In Phase 1, existing background information on the Southeast region was collected and analysed to provide a comprehensive picture and inform the basis for assessing contemporary problems related to logistics linkages in the region. In Phase 2, the current status of elements in the analysis framework in the Southeast region, at both the macro and micro levels, was identified, analysed,

and evaluated. Additionally, a number of solutions to improve the current situation were identified. These results in phase 2 were then validated in Phase 3, and corresponding conclusions and improvement policies and strategies were proposed accordingly.

Figure 2.2. Overview of research methods





3 CURRENT STATUS OF REGIONAL LOGISTICS LINKAGES

3.1. Infrastructure

Optimizing logistics infrastructure in the Southeast region is extremely important in promoting the enhancement of regional logistics linkages. According to the results of interviews with stakeholders including logistics enterprises, logistics service users, state management agencies, key infrastructure challenges in the Southeast region are summarized in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1. Current status of infrastructure in the Southeast region (pre-merger)

Infrastructure issues	Current Status
Logistics infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ho Chi Minh City: Focusing on seaports and airports, small warehouse network, industrial parks located close to residential areas, significant traffic congestion, and fragmented connections between industrial parks, warehouses, and ports. • Binh Duong: Good infrastructure, spacious roads, having its own service areas such as customs and warehousing. However, connectivity to key seaport hubs serving import and export activities remains limited. • Dong Nai: Infrastructure is concentrated in the center of the province and the area bordering Ba Ria-Vung Tau, the suburbs are still in their infancy. • Ba Ria-Vung Tau: The seaport is large but the linkage with other provinces is still limited, only National Highway 51 is the main connection. • Tay Ninh: Strong industrial development but almost no logistics infrastructure. This may improve after the merger with Long An province.
Road transport infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many roads are small and cannot be expanded. • Frequent traffic jams at major port clusters, major national highways, and highways. • Lack of expressways, ring roads 3 and 4 connecting with residential areas, leading to congestion between the production area and the consumption market
Inland waterway and rail transport infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited waterway and rail transport linkages. • Sóng Thần Station primarily serves cargo heading north, with limited connectivity from the north to the Cai Mep - Thi Vai Port cluster. • Waterway and railway freight rates are lower, but the volume of goods is not large enough; limited flow, such as from Ben Cat to Tay Ninh.
Soft infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customs software is not good, especially in bonded warehouses, information is not updated. • V5 customs declaration software is often overloaded. • Port, warehousing, and transportation management software is not consistent, leading to difficulties in collecting and sharing data.

Infrastructure issues	Current Status
Planning and investment in logistics infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning is still fragmented, all localities want to build ports/ICDs/ depots to increase revenue. • Planning many seaports but lacking connection with other logistics infrastructures. • The number of warehouses, ICDs, and logistics centers has not been invested much. • Planning is different in localities, lacking a common orientation and coordination agency.

Sources: Findings from in-depth interviews with state management agencies and enterprises

3.2. Institutions and policies related to the increase of logistics linkages in the Southeast region

Synchronizing institutions operating in the field of logistics in Southeastern provinces is highly important, since they will serve to promote the strong development of regional logistics, and subsequently the strong economic development of the region. Through in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders, there is currently no synchronization of institutions and policies in the Southeast region in logistics activities. At present, efforts are confined to workshops, with no single agency overseeing the planning and execution of logistics activities for the entire region.

The fact that institutions and policies related to logistics activities in general and efforts to increase regional logistics linkages in particular have not been synchronized and unified is due to a number of inadequacies such as:

Firstly, while national regulations provide general guidance¹ for logistics activities nationwide, the distinct natural, economic, and social conditions of each region and province result in differing interpretations and implementations, causing inconsistencies among localities within the region.

Secondly, administrative procedures issued by regulatory bodies of various ministries and agencies - such as the Ministry of Industry and Trade; Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (formerly Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development); Ministry of Health; and Ministry of Construction (formerly Ministry of Transport) - are inconsistently applied at the local level. This lack of coordination leads to overlaps that hinder overall economic development and specifically impede efforts to strengthen regional logistics linkages in the Southeast region.

¹ A number of legal documents such as: Commercial Law 2005; Decision 200/2017/QĐ-TTg dated 14/2/2017 approving the Action Plan to improve the competitiveness and development of Vietnam's logistics services to 2025; Decision 221/2021/QĐ-TTg dated 22/2/2021 on amending and supplementing Decision No. 200/QĐ-TTg dated 14/02/2017 on approving the Action Plan to improve competitiveness and develop logistics services in Vietnam to 2025; Decision 396/2023/QĐ-TTg dated April 17, 2023 on Approving plans, policies, solutions, and resources for the implementation of the Railway Network Master Plan for the 2021 - 2030 period, with a vision to 2050; Decision 979/2023/QĐ-TTg dated August 22, 2023 on approving the master plan for the development of the inland clearance depot system for the 2021 - 2030 period, with a vision to 2050; Decree No. 69/2018/ND-CP dated 15/5/2018 detailing a number of articles of the Law on Foreign Trade Management

Table 3.2. Summary of survey results and assessment of the institutional and policy synchronization related to enhancing regional logistics linkages in the provinces of Southeast (conducted pre-merger)

Province/City	General observations on institutional synchronization
Ho Chi Minh City	Clear institutions and procedures, synchronous enforcement
Binh Duong	Some regulations are not yet uniform
Dong Nai	There are differences in the application of regulations
Ba Ria - Vung Tau	Synchronous and effective application
Tay Ninh	Lack of synchronization in regulations and procedures
Binh Phuoc	Synchronization is not high

Sources: Findings from in-depth interviews with state managing agencies and enterprises

Thirdly, each province and locality in the Southeast region has different regulations on logistics activities, namely: Ho Chi Minh City collects fees for seaport infrastructure, but businesses seek “detours” to avoid these costs. Additionally, the collection of seaport infrastructure fees in Ho Chi Minh City is inconsistent and lacks coordination among the city’s various customs sub-departments. Since a number of localities do not yet collect this fee, a sense of discrimination arises among enterprises across the region, with even the benefits being unevenly allocated between different localities.

Fourthly, the understanding, awareness, and qualifications of officials in different localities are very different, leading to differences in solutions to the same problem between different localities.

And with Circulars, Decrees, and policies constantly changing, the parties involved in logistics activities are, in many cases, not able to update in time, leading to errors in implementation.

The report also conducts case studies on a number of cases, such as a shipper in Ca Mau specializing in frozen and processed shrimp production, export, and domestic distribution. The study points out the inadequacies and limitations in the suboptimal institutional and policy synchronization in the Southeast region, leading to enterprises having to bear unnecessary logistics costs and spending a lot of time during the transportation of goods.

Table 3.3. Summary of assessments of inadequacies in the legal system, institutional planning, and policies related to increasing regional logistics linkages

Inadequacies	Description
Unclear and inconsistent regulations	Lack of proper delineation of responsibilities
Customs processes becoming more manual	The customs process still has to be done manually, causing delays
Differences in the application of regulations	Localities (pre-merger) apply different regulations, causing difficulties for enterprises

Source: Findings from in-depth interviews with state management agencies and enterprises

Table 3.4. Case study of Shipper 4 (research conducted pre-merger, June 2024)



Flow diagram of CHUHANG4 (the value of the company's export shipment is about VND 5,600,000,000 VND/container)

Enterprise: CHUHANG4

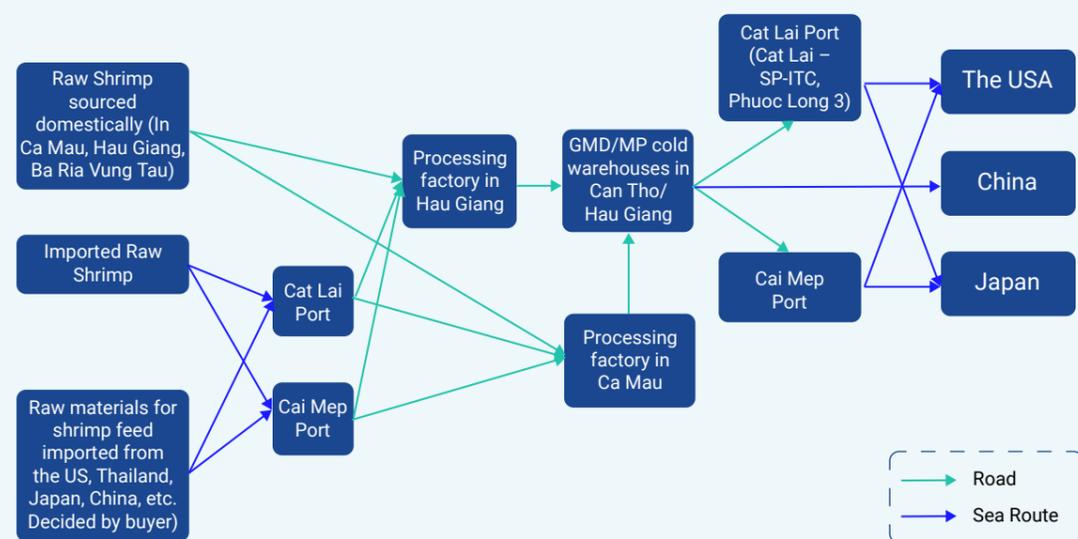
Year of establishment: 1992

Business line: Manufacturing and trading of frozen shrimp and finished shrimp products (ready-to-use)

Number of employees: > 7000 people

The supply chain of the enterprise is shown in **Figure 3.1**

Figure 3.1. CHUHANG4 Flow Chart



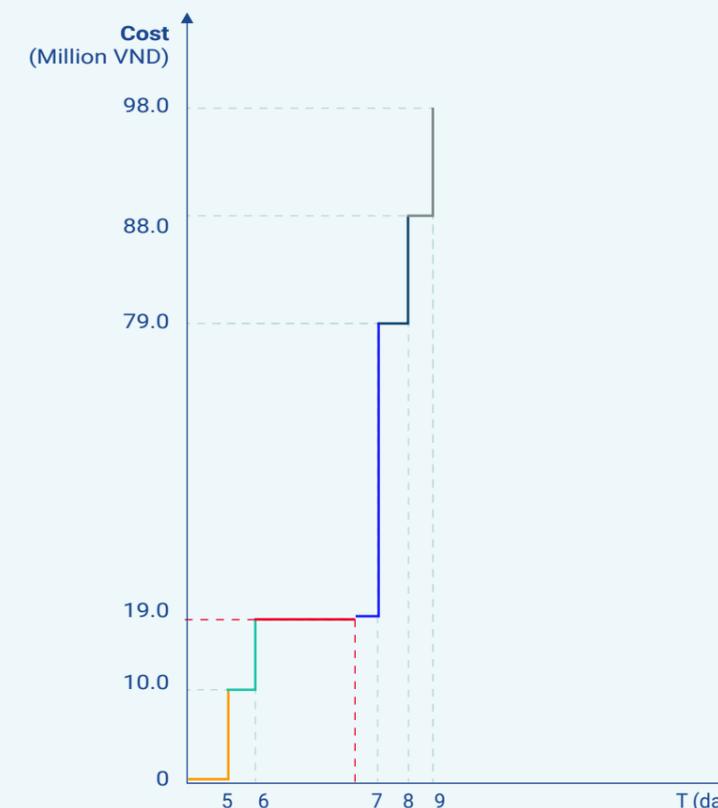
Notes:

- Raw materials, chemicals and additives to produce shrimp feed are often imported for processing.
- Exported products must be inspected for food safety and must be accompanied by relevant certificates: cost VND 5,000,000 - 10,000,000/shipment; irradiation cost VND 3,500/kg (average irradiation cost is nearly VND 60,000,000/container) - irradiation rate is about 30-40% (depending on market requirements)
- Export goods unloaded at Cat Lai account for 70%; the cost of pulling containers from Ca Mau to Can Tho/Hau Giang is VND 7,000,000 - 8,000,000/container (including pulling empty containers), and from Can Tho/Hau Giang to Cat Lai is VND 9,000,000 - 10,000,000/container (including pulling empty containers).
- Transport from port to warehouse/factory are usually within the day (provided procedures are completed);
- Export goods are mainly FOB

a/ Raw materials are imported via Cat Lai Port, undergo import procedures, and are transported to processing factories in Hau Giang Province, where they are processed into finished products. These products are then exported from Hau Giang, where the shipper operates a cold warehouse that consolidates goods from factories in the western region for export through Cat Lai Port.

According to the flow chart in **figure 3.2**, raw materials imported through Cat Lai Port will clear customs procedures and be received at the port after about 5 days (customs procedures, quarantine, safety certification, port delivery procedures, etc.) at the cost of VND 10,000,000/ container, and then transported to the factory in Hau Giang province to be processed into finished products (by semi-truck or barge, often the company opts to take the traffic road, which takes about 1 day, so that the goods arrive within the day (transportation time varies with traffic density en route) at the transportation cost VND of 9,000,000/container.

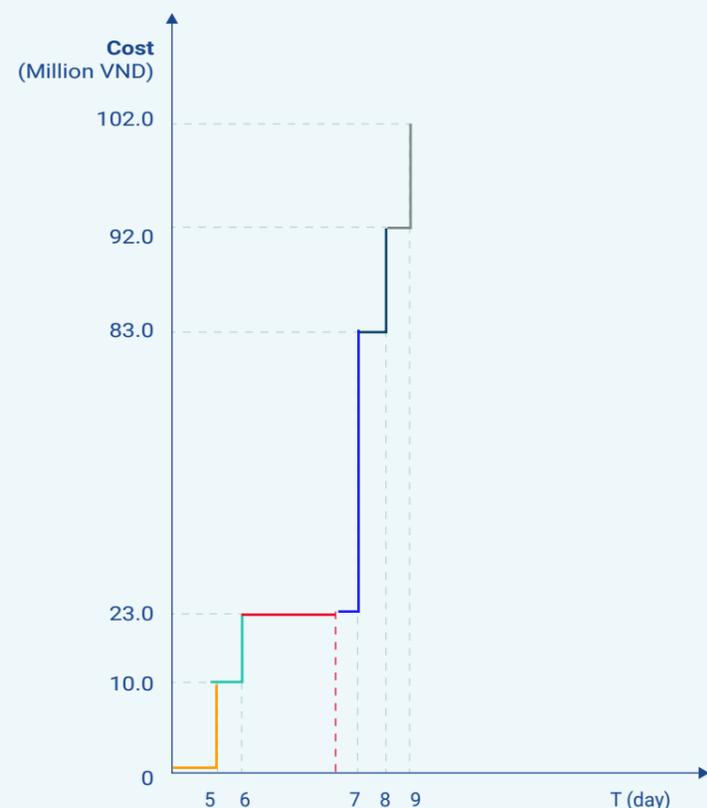
Figure 3.2. Logistics costs and transit time for shipping frozen shrimp, with raw materials imported via Cat Lai Port, processed at a factory in Hau Giang, and exported through Cat Lai Port



When the raw shrimp and additives have been imported to the factory, the Shipper 4 will proceed with production according to orders. Processed goods will be transferred to cold storage to be gathered together with shipments from the processing factory in Ca Mau province and undergo irradiation at the request of the importers overseas; the irradiation time is usually 1 day, at the cost of VND 60,000,000/container. The shipment will then be transported to Cat Lai Port for overseas exports with a transportation time of 1 day and cost of VND 9,000,000/container. Upon arrival at Cat Lai port, Shipper 4 will complete relevant procedures (customs procedures, port procedures for delivery and receipt of goods, and payment of other fees at the port, etc.) which is usually completed within the day, at a cost of about VND 10,000,000/container.

b/ Raw materials are imported through Cat Lai Port, are to carry out import procedures and be brought to the processing factory in Hau Giang province to be processed into finished products and exported from the factory in Hau Giang province through Cat Lai Port.

Figure 3.3. Logistics costs and transit time for shipping frozen shrimp, with raw materials imported via Cai Mep Port, processed at a factory in Hau Giang, and exported through Cat Lai Port

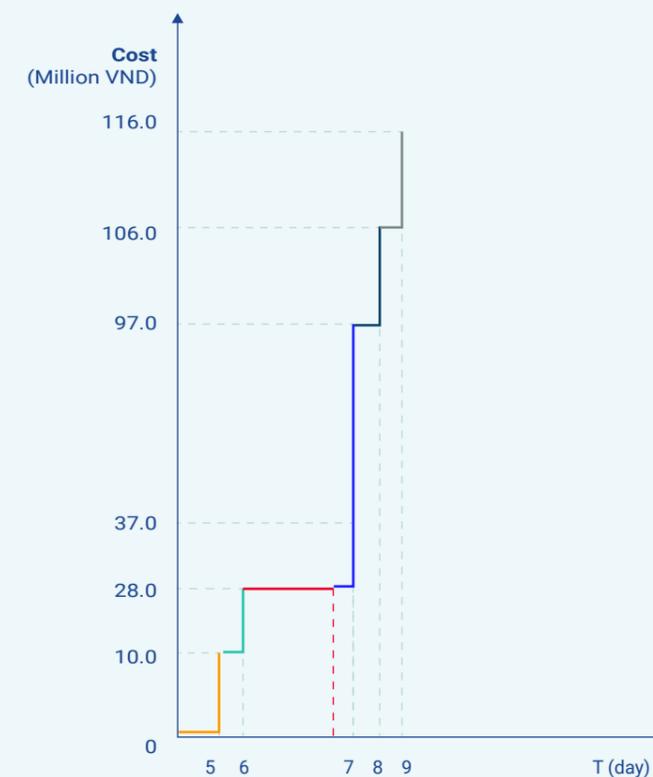


According to the flow chart in **figure 3.3**, raw materials imported through Cai Mep Port will clear customs procedures and be received at the port after about 5 days (customs procedures, quarantine, safety certification, port delivery procedures, etc.) at the cost of VND 10,000,000/container, and then transported to the factory in Hau Giang province to be processed into finished products (by semi-truck or barge, often the company opts to take the traffic road, which takes about 1 day, so that the goods arrive within the day (transportation time varies with traffic density en route) at the transportation cost VND of 23,000,000/container.

When the raw shrimp and additives have been imported to the factory, the Shipper 4 will proceed with production according to orders. Processed goods will be transferred to cold storage to be gathered together with shipments from the processing factory in Ca Mau province and undergo irradiation at the request of the importers overseas; the irradiation time is usually 1 day, at the cost of VND 60,000,000/container. The shipment will then be transported to Cat Lai Port for overseas exports with a transportation time of 1 day and cost of VND 9,000,000/container. Upon arrival at Cat Lai Port, Shipper 4 will complete relevant procedures (customs procedures, port procedures for delivery and receipt of goods, and payment of other fees at the port, etc.) which is usually completed within the day, at a cost of about VND 10,000,000/container.

c/ Raw materials are imported through Cat Lai Port, are to carry out import procedures and be brought to the processing factory in Ca Mau province to be processed into finished products, transported to a gathering hub in Hau Giang province and exported through Cat Lai Port

Figure 3.4. Logistics costs and transit time for shipping frozen shrimp, with raw materials imported via Cat Lai Port, processed at a factory in Ca Mau, and exported through Cat Lai Port



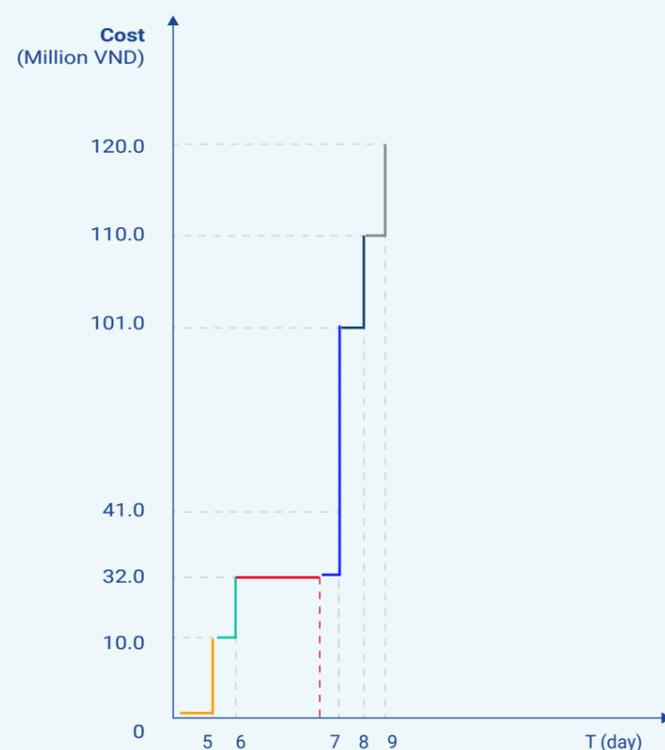
According to the flowchart in **figure 3.4**, raw materials imported through Cat Lai Port undergo customs clearance and are received at the port after approximately 5 days (including customs procedures, quarantine, safety certification, and port delivery), incurring a cost of VND 10,000,000 per container. They are then transported to a factory in Ca Mau province for processing into finished products, typically by semi-truck or barge. Companies often choose road transport, which takes about one day—depending on traffic conditions—to ensure same-day delivery, with transportation costs of around VND 18,000,000 per container.

When the raw shrimp and additives have been imported to the factory, the Shipper 4 will carry out production according to the orders. The finished goods will be transferred from the factory in Ca Mau province to the cold storage in Hau Giang province (there is a cold storage of the company here so it will be more convenient) to proceed with irradiation according to the requirements of foreign importers. The irradiation time is usually within 1 day. The transportation cost from the factory in Ca Mau to the cold storage in Hau Giang is 9,000,000 VND/container and the irradiation cost is about 60,000,000 VND/container; then the goods will be transported to Cat Lai Port for export abroad with a transportation time of 1 day and a transportation cost of 9,000,000 VND/container. Upon arrival at Cat Lai Port, Shipper 4 will complete relevant procedures (customs procedures, port procedures for delivery and receipt of goods, and payment of other fees at the port, etc.) which is usually completed within the day, at a cost of about VND 10,000,000/container.

d/ Raw materials imported to Cai Mep Port go through import procedures and are brought to the processing factory in Ca Mau province to produce finished products. Goods for export from the factory in Ca Mau province are brought and put together at the warehouse in Hau Giang and exported through Cat Lai Port

According to the flowchart in **figure 3.5**, raw materials imported through Cai Mep Port undergo customs clearance and are received at the port after approximately 5 days (including customs procedures, quarantine, safety certification, and port delivery), incurring a cost of VND 10,000,000 per container. They are then transported to a factory in Ca Mau province for processing into finished products, typically by semi-truck or barge. Companies often choose road transport, which takes about one day—depending on traffic conditions—to ensure same-day delivery, with transportation costs of around VND 18,000,000 per container.

Figure 3.5. Logistics costs and transit time for shipping frozen shrimp, with raw materials imported via Cai Mep Port, processed at a factory in Ca Mau, and exported through Cat Lai Port



When the raw shrimp and additives have been imported to the factory, the Shipper 4 will carry out production according to the orders. The finished goods will be transferred from the factory in Ca Mau province to the cold storage in Hau Giang province (there is a cold storage of the company here so it will be more convenient) to proceed with irradiation according to the requirements of foreign importers. The irradiation time is usually within 1 day. The transportation cost from the factory in Ca Mau to the cold storage in Hau Giang is 9,000,000 VND/container and the irradiation cost is about 60,000,000 VND/container; then the goods will be transported to Cat Lai Port for export abroad with a transportation time of 1 day and a transportation cost of 9,000,000 VND/container. Upon arrival at Cat Lai Port, Shipper 4 will complete relevant procedures (customs procedures, port procedures for delivery and receipt of goods, and payment of other fees at the port, etc.) which is usually completed within the day, at a cost of about VND 10,000,000/container.

CHUHANG4 has the following comments on the operating institutions:

- The time to complete procedures related to phytosanitary and veterinary activities is not consistent among enterprises. For ordinary enterprises, it takes 5-7 days, while for priority enterprises, 1-2 days to get results. But depending on the import market of CHUHANG4's products and each set of documents, it will take about 3-5 days or a whole week to complete the application for quarantine certificate as well as veterinary certification.
- For example, in the Middle East market, when exporting goods here, it takes a whole week to have all the documents for the shipment (because all documents must be transferred to Hanoi for confirmation before being transferred back to Ho Chi Minh City as the embassies of the countries are usually located outside of Hanoi to confirm and approve of the shipment before the goods can be allowed to enter this market).
- In terms of imported raw shrimp, veterinary quarantine is required, but now the load is reduced because the goods are produced for export, so it is not necessary. Thus, the time is reduced to 5-7 days, which means the procedure time is shortened to further support enterprises.
- Import-export shippers continuously import and export goods and the monthly import and export volume is up to thousands of containers (peak is up to 5000 tons/month, equivalent to about 300 40ft containers of import and export goods), therefore, it is necessary for state agencies such as Customs, Quarantine, ... to have staff on duty 24/7 to ensure the continuous circulation of goods of enterprises to avoid incurring port costs, as well as waiting for confirmation of documents for goods.



3.3. Processes, procedures and systems related to increasing logistics linkages in the Southeast region

Unified logistics-related operational processes between units in localities in the region will promote the increase of regional logistics linkages and play a very important role in the economic development of the region.

The effectiveness of process unification

- Minimize costs and delivery times
- Improve coordination and linkage
- Strengthen competitiveness

Current status of procedures in localities in the Southeast region

Table 3.5. Status of logistics process unification in the provinces of the Southeast region (pre-merger)

Province/City	Process consistency	Notes
Ho Chi Minh City	Improved but not completely	There are differences in the implementation of procedures and requirements
Binh Duong	Partially improved	The inspection and customs clearance process is still slow
Dong Nai	There has been an improvement	Inconsistent processes between agencies
Ba Ria - Vung Tau	Improved but differences remain	The application process is not completely synchronized.
Tay Ninh	Not unified yet	Processes and regulations are still different
Binh Phuoc	Unclear unification	The process and regulations are still different due to different understanding problems

Source: Findings from in-depth interviews with state management agencies and enterprises

Table 3.6. Summary of major shortcomings related to unifying operating procedures

Inadequacies	Describe the shortcomings
Bottlenecks related to policies and specialized inspections	Inspection regulations are not synchronized, causing difficulties for enterprises
Shortcomings related to VAT and on-the-spot import and export	Unrefunded VAT affects FDI enterprises
Lack of transparency in the process	Enterprises must mobilize on their own and find individual solutions

Source: Findings from in-depth interviews with state management agencies and enterprises

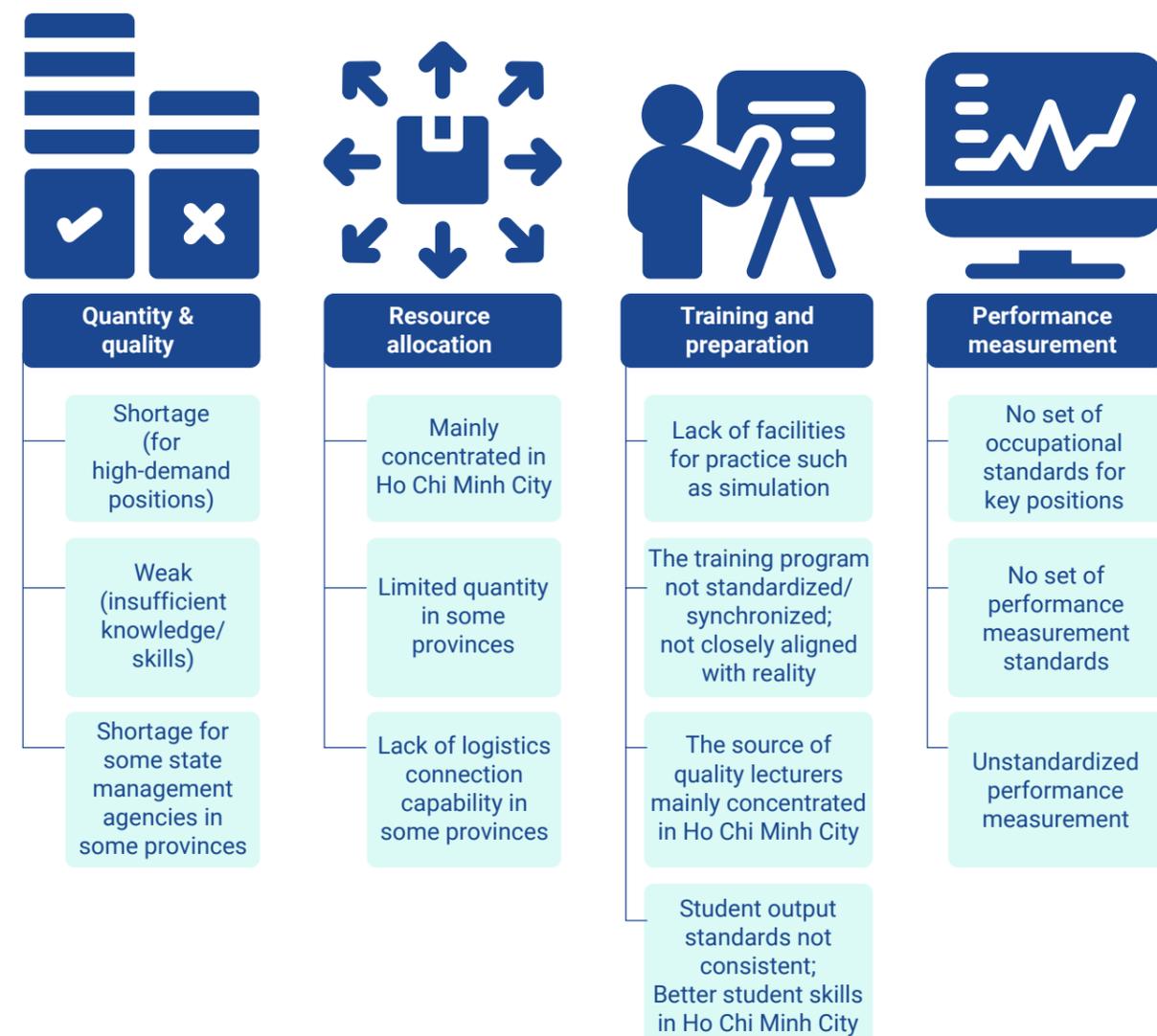
3.4. Human resource development

Human resource development is a very important component at the macro level in the regional logistics linkage analysis framework, which is closely related to other elements at both the macro and micro levels in the analysis framework. Human factors play a central and pivotal role in relation to other macro-level elements such as processes/systems, institutions, and infrastructure, as well as micro-level components like information sharing, goal alignment, risk/benefit sharing, and decision synchronization. In these relationships, the human factor plays a decisive role, directing the way in which other elements are formed and operated. Its importance remains unchanged after the merger of provinces.

The standardization of logistics human resource development between localities in the same economic region, thus, plays an essential role in creating consistency and alignment between localities in the operation of other elements in the analytical framework, and thereby contributing to promoting and increasing logistics linkages of the whole region. This important role of standardization and development of logistics human resources is widely acknowledged through in-depth interviews with experts who are knowledgeable about logistics linkages in the Southeast region at logistics service providers, relevant agencies (such as Customs, Department of Industry and Trade) and schools with logistics training programs in provinces and cities in the region (pre-merger).

While the standardization of logistics human resources is acknowledged as vital for enhancing regional logistics connectivity, experts interviewed observed that the current level of standardization across localities within the region remains inadequate. The standardization of logistics human resources among localities in the Southeast region (pre-merger) faces numerous challenges, as summarized in the following figure:

Figure 3.6. Some existing issues in the standardization of logistics human resources in the Southeast region



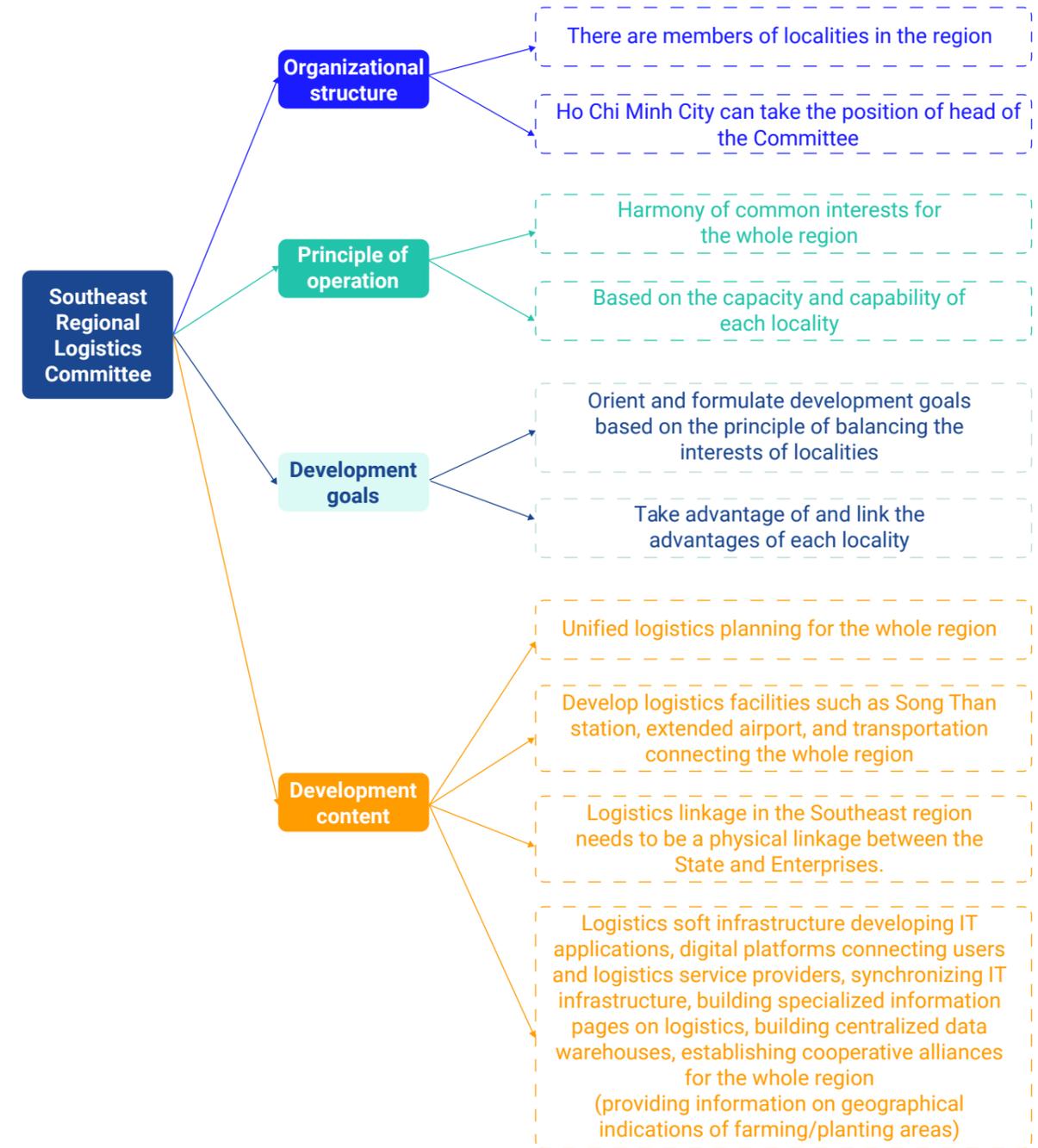
4 POLICIES AND STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE REGIONAL LOGISTICS LINKAGES



4.1. Infrastructure optimization

Through in-depth interviews with stakeholders, the respondents said that there is no common ground between provinces/cities in the Southeast region (pre-merger) in planning, building, exploiting and managing the logistics infrastructure system in the region. Interviewees believed that establishing a Southeast Region Logistics Committee is essential to strengthen regional logistics linkages.

Figure 4.1. Southeast Regional Logistics Committee



Source: Synthesized from the results of the authors' interviews with stakeholders

4.2. Developing a general management and coordination mechanism

- Establish a Southeast Region Logistics Coordination Agency
- Create regular dialogue forums

Harmonize regulations and procedures: develop a standardized set of rules and procedures; implement a unified electronic customs clearance system

Improve policies and processes: reform specialized inspection processes; ensure fair taxation and fee policies

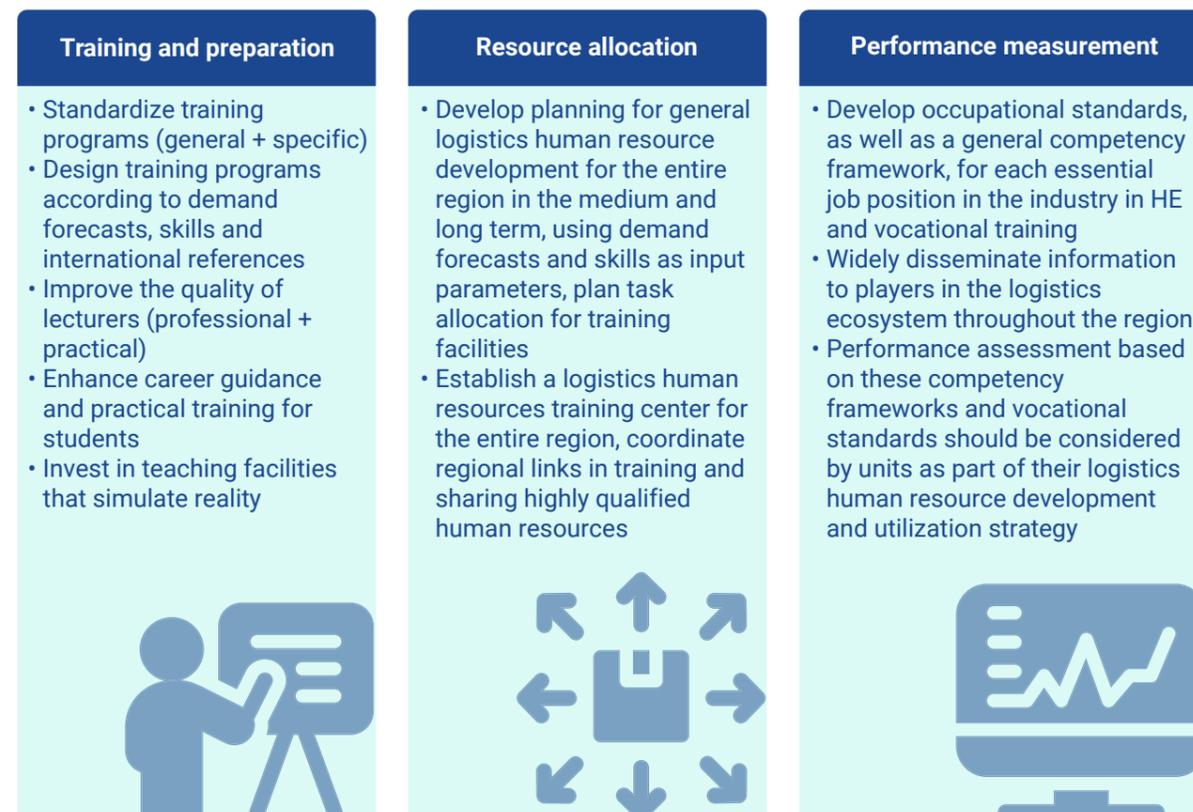
Enhance transparency and information disclosure: publicize regulations and procedures; build feedback and monitoring mechanism

Encourage innovation and technology adoption: promote the application of new technologies; foster innovation in logistics

4.3. Standardizing the development of human resources

To address the existing challenges in standardizing logistics human resources in the Southeast region and to help promote regional logistics linkages, a series of policies and strategies need to be planned, developed, implemented, and managed in alignment with each specific group of issues, as summarized in the following figure:

Figure 4.2. Some policies and strategies necessary for the standardization of logistics human resources of the Southeast region



5 PROPOSED ACTION PLAN



5.1. Infrastructure

At central level: Develop a strategy for inland waterway infrastructure development

At local level

- Improve road infrastructure in each locality
- Develop inland waterway infrastructure in localities with comparative advantages

Inter-regional level

- Strengthen road infrastructure connectivity
- Enhance inland waterway infrastructure connectivity, especially between gateway seaports and inland water transport
- Promote connectivity between maritime infrastructure and hinterland regions
- Accelerate the construction of aviation infrastructure at Long Thanh International Airport

5.2. Institutions and policies

At central level

- Implement policies to attract strong developers for developing seaport infrastructure.
- Resolutely implement macro-management on regional connectivity issues in seaport development, prioritizing national interests and harmonizing the interests of localities in the region.
- Improve management mechanisms for the development of associations related to seaports in general including those in the Southeast region, and enhance the role of port business associations.
- Issue policies that further facilitate transit and cross-border transport; meanwhile, localities within the region should proactively develop their own policies to attract transport and logistics activities to gain competitive advantages.
- Enhance coordination among central ministries and agencies such as the Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Finance, and specialized ministries during the formulation and adjustment of policies related to logistics development.

At local level

- Localities need to improve policies to enhance connectivity with surrounding areas and adopt streamlined, reformed administrative procedures to create a favorable business environment for logistics enterprises to thrive.
- Public-private linkages (between government agencies and private businesses) should be strengthened through increased policy dialogue between local authorities, associations, and enterprises.
- Ho Chi Minh City (post merger) proactively adopt incentive policies to attract investments that address existing gaps within the logistics ecosystem. Encourage and actively support the establishment of industry associations and business linkages among enterprises within the same and related sectors.

Inter-regional level

- State management policies of localities within the region need to be harmonized to serve the common interests and overall development of the entire region, including adjusting regulations to facilitate the free flow of goods for the region's shared benefit.
- Localities in the region should adopt common policies that incentivize the development of goods sources by leveraging local shared infrastructure.

5.3. Process and system

At central level

- Promote investment in and the coordinated development of national and international logistics systems linked to key transport hubs such as seaports, airports, international border gates, and major economic corridors.
- Encourage the development of multimodal transport businesses.
- Coordinate and support relevant localities in investing in the construction of an air logistics center connected to Long Thanh International Airport, as well as the development of port logistics systems at Cai Mep – Thi Vai Port cluster and along the Saigon River Port cluster.
- Expedite the planning of the Cai Mep – Thi Vai logistics ecosystem.

At local level

- Implement synchronized measures to ensure traffic safety.
- Establish specific policies to encourage multimodal transport businesses and enhance the role and effectiveness of specialized industry associations.
- Strengthen and modernize cargo handling technologies at seaports by adopting advanced technologies and developing integrated support services for transport and multimodal logistics, improving the quality of logistics services.
- Promote the application of information technology in managing and operating transport activities, with a focus on IT and emerging technology trends in transportation and logistics.



5.4. Human resource development

Key proposals for developing human resources to strengthen regional logistics linkages at both central and local levels are summarized in the following figure:

At central level

Figure 5.1. Some proposed central-level action plans for standardizing logistics human resources in the Southeast region



At local level

Figure 5.2. Some proposed local-level action plans for standardizing logistics human resources in the Southeast region



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