

# The Influence of Stakeholders on Sustainable Import-Export Performance of Import-Export Firms in Bangkok and Vicinity

Nipawan Poojom<sup>1</sup> and Ratchaneewan Sujarit<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1-2</sup> College of Logistics and Supply Chain, SuanSunandha Rajabhat University

E-Mail: <sup>1</sup>\*Nipawan.po@ssru.ac.th, <sup>2</sup>ratchaneewan.su@ssru.ac.th

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

This study examines the influence of stakeholder pressure on sustainable import-export performance among import-export firms in Bangkok and its vicinity. The research objectives were threefold: (1) to assess the level of perceived stakeholder pressure, (2) to investigate the influence of stakeholder pressure on sustainable supply chain and logistics management practices, and (3) to examine the impact of such practices on sustainable import-export performance, including the mediating role of sustainable supply chain and logistics practices.

A quantitative research approach was employed, collecting data from 286 import-export firms and related professionals in Bangkok and surrounding metropolitan areas through structured questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale. Measurement reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.89. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression analysis.

Results indicated that overall stakeholder pressure was perceived at a relatively high level (Mean = 3.69), with pressure from customers and foreign partners rated highest (Mean = 3.92), followed by government agencies and regulations (Mean = 3.78). Sustainable supply chain and logistics management practices were implemented at a moderately high level (Mean = 3.55), while sustainable import-export performance was rated at a relatively high level (Mean = 3.66), with economic performance showing the highest mean score (Mean = 3.88).

Multiple regression analysis revealed that stakeholder pressure from all four groups had a significant positive influence on sustainable supply chain and logistics practices ( $R^2 = 0.41$ ). Furthermore, sustainable supply chain and logistics practices significantly and positively affected sustainable import-export performance ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The findings confirm that sustainable supply chain and logistics practices partially mediate the relationship between stakeholder pressure and sustainable import-export performance.

**Keywords:** Stakeholders, Sustainable Supply Chain and Logistics Management, Sustainable Import-Export Performance

## 1. Introduction

International trade and investment serve as crucial mechanisms driving Thailand's economy, particularly import-export businesses, which play a vital role in continuously enhancing the country's competitiveness in global markets (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2023). Under the framework of stakeholder theory, various stakeholder

groups—including customers and foreign partners, government agencies, logistics service providers, and society at large—influence strategic formulation and operational execution, as well as the capacity for sustainable business operations (Freeman, 1984; Freudenreich et al., 2020).

In the context of sustainable supply chains and logistics, including green logistics, Thailand has promoted green logistics concepts and sustainable supply chain management to enhance the competitiveness of its trade and logistics sectors. Bangkok and its metropolitan areas host numerous import-export operators, both large enterprises and small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), connected to logistics centers, ports, and the country's main transportation networks (Development of Thailand's Agricultural Logistics Systems, 2025).

Therefore, this study on "The Influence of Stakeholders on Sustainable Import-Export Performance of Import-Export Firms in Bangkok and Vicinity" holds significant importance. It provides insights into how operators perceive stakeholder pressure, translate these pressures into sustainable supply chain and logistics practices, and how such practices affect sustainable import-export performance across environmental, social, and economic dimensions. The study also examines the relationships among stakeholder pressure, sustainable supply chain and logistics practices, and sustainable import-export performance to generate empirical knowledge applicable for policy formulation, strategic planning, and long-term sustainable business development in Thailand's import-export sector (Wolf, 2014; Freudenreich et al., 2020).

### 1.1 Research Objective

1. To examine the level of stakeholder pressure perceived by import-export operators in Bangkok and vicinity regarding sustainable import-export operations
2. To investigate the influence of stakeholder pressure on sustainable supply chain and logistics practices among import-export operators in Bangkok and vicinity
3. To propose practical guidelines for import-export operators in Bangkok and vicinity to develop sustainable supply chain and logistics practices that enhance sustainable import-export performance

## 2. Expected Benefits

**2.1.1 Academic Benefits:** Generate empirical knowledge regarding stakeholder pressure levels and response patterns of import-export operators in Bangkok and vicinity toward sustainable import-export operations.

**2.1.2 Theoretical Development Benefits:** Gain deeper understanding of relationships among stakeholder pressure, sustainable supply chain and logistics practices, and sustainable import-export performance, which can serve as a foundation for organizational strategy formulation.

**2.1.3 Practical Benefits:** Provide practical guidelines for import-export operators to develop sustainability measures in supply chains and logistics aligned with stakeholder expectations, enhancing competitiveness in international markets.

**2.1.4 Policy Benefits:** Enable government agencies and related organizations to utilize research findings as supporting information for policy formulation or measures supporting operators in driving sustainable trade.

### 3 Research Scope

#### Content Scope:

- Examination of pressure from four main stakeholder groups: (1) customers and foreign partners, (2) government agencies/regulations, (3) logistics service providers and suppliers, (4) society and communities
- Study of sustainable supply chain and logistics practices
- Assessment of sustainable import-export performance across environmental, social, and economic dimensions

**Geographic Scope:** Limited to import-export operators in Bangkok and metropolitan areas

**Time Scope:** Data collection period from February to November 2025

#### Methodological Scope:

- Quantitative research approach
- Data analysis using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and multiple regression analysis to test relationships among variables according to the research framework

### 4 Operational Definitions

**Stakeholders:** Groups or individuals who can affect or are affected by organizational activities and decisions

**Stakeholder Pressure:** Demands, expectations, rules, regulations, or conditions that stakeholders use to push organizations to adjust operations according to acceptable standards in environmental, social, and governance aspects (Wolf, 2014)

**Sustainable Supply Chain and Logistics Management Practices:** Systematic integration of environmental, social, and economic dimensions into supply chain management processes, from raw material sourcing through production, transportation, distribution, to end-of-life product management (Srivastava, 2007)

**Sustainable Import-Export Performance:** Operational outcomes linking international trade operations with three sustainability dimensions—economic, social, and environmental—consistent with the Triple Bottom Line concept proposed by Elkington (1997)

### 5. Literature Review

#### 5.1 Stakeholder Theory

Freeman (1984) challenged the traditional view that organizations are solely responsible for maximizing shareholder returns. This theory proposes that organizations must consider the impacts and expectations of all stakeholder groups involved in organizational operations, including customers, partners, suppliers, employees, local communities, and government agencies.

## 5.2 Stakeholder Pressure Concept

Stakeholder pressure refers to demands, expectations, rules, regulations, or conditions that stakeholders use to drive organizations to modify operations according to acceptable standards in environmental, social, and governance aspects (Wolf, 2014).

## 5.3 Sustainable Supply Chain and Logistics Management

Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) involves the systematic integration of environmental, social, and economic dimensions into supply chain management processes, from raw material sourcing through production, transportation, distribution, to end-of-life product management (Srivastava, 2007).

## 5.4 Sustainable Import-Export Performance

Sustainable import-export performance links international trade operations with three sustainability dimensions: economic, social, and environmental, consistent with the Triple Bottom Line concept (Elkington, 1997). In the import-export context, sustainability can be measured across multiple dimensions:

**1. Environmental Dimension:** Reduction of carbon emissions, use of eco-friendly packaging, waste management

**2. Social Dimension:** Labor standards, human rights protection, community engagement

**3. Economic Dimension:** Profitability, market access, operational efficiency, competitiveness

## 5.5 Related Research

**Wolf (2014)** studied relationships among sustainable supply chain management, stakeholder pressure, and corporate sustainability performance using data from manufacturing companies across multiple countries. Findings indicated that stakeholder pressure significantly and positively influenced SSCM adoption, particularly pressure from customers and regulatory agencies. Research also found that SSCM positively correlated with sustainability performance in both environmental and economic dimensions, with SSCM functioning as a mediator between stakeholder pressure and performance.

**Martínez-Conesa, Soto-Acosta, and Palacios-Manzano (2017)** examined relationships among Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), innovation, and SME performance in the export sector using data from Spanish exporting SMEs. Results showed that companies with serious CSR implementation tended to have higher performance and competitiveness, especially in international markets with high sustainability awareness and requirements.

**Supatchari Supriyakul and Than Chaithon (2024)** studied green logistics management effects on operational efficiency among road freight transport operators in Nakhon Pathom province. Findings indicated that businesses emphasizing green logistics—such as energy-efficient vehicle maintenance, eco-friendly packaging, and efficient route planning—demonstrated better performance than those not focusing on environmental aspects.

**Aunyawong et al. (2020)** found that supply chain business intelligence (SCBI) has a significant positive impact on supply chain performance among Indonesian firms, with supply chain agility and supply chain capability acting as key mediating variables. Using PLS-SEM

on survey data from 325 firms, the study demonstrates that technical, cultural, and managerial competencies—especially knowledge- and information-related capabilities—are essential for effective business intelligence and enhanced supply chain agility and competitiveness.

## 6. Conceptual Framework

Based on literature review and related research, the conceptual framework was synthesized as follows

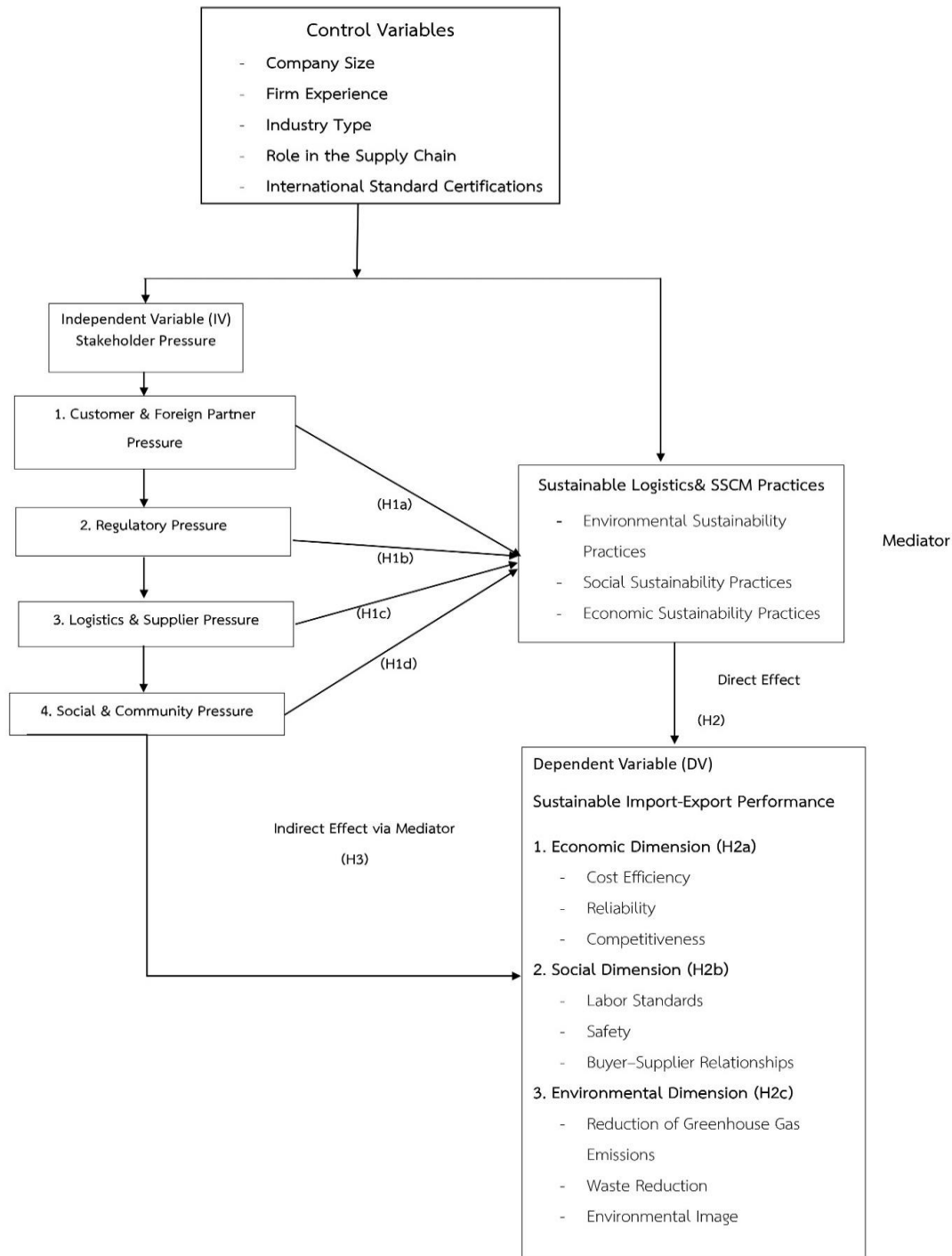


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

**Independent Variables (Stakeholder Pressure)**

- Pressure from customers and foreign partners (SP\_CUST)
- Pressure from government agencies and regulations (SP\_REG)
- Pressure from logistics service providers and suppliers (SP\_LOG)
- Pressure from society and communities (SP\_SOC)

**Mediating Variable:**

- Sustainable Supply Chain and Logistics Management Practices (SSCM)

**Dependent Variable:**

- Sustainable Import-Export Performance (SIEP)
  - Economic dimension
  - Social dimension
  - Environmental dimension

**Control Variables:**

- Organization size (SIZE)
- Business age (AGE)

**Research Hypotheses:**

H1a-H1d: All types of stakeholder pressure positively influence SSCM practices, with customer and government agency pressure expected to have the strongest influence.

H2: SSCM practices positively influence sustainable import-export performance.

H2a-H2c: SSCM practices positively influence performance across all three dimensions (economic, social, environmental).

H3: SSCM practices serve as a partial mediator between stakeholder pressure and sustainable import-export performance.

**7. Research Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative research approach using survey research through structured questionnaires and multiple regression analysis as the primary testing technique.

**7.1 Population and Sample**

The research population consisted of import-export business operators in Bangkok and metropolitan areas (Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon) with continuous import-export activities during the specified period. Using Yamane's (1967) formula, the sample size was determined to be 286 respondents.

**7.2 Research Instrument**

The questionnaire was divided into four main sections:

1. General organizational and respondent information
2. Stakeholder pressure from four groups using a 5-point Likert scale

3. Organizational sustainable supply chain and logistics practices
4. Sustainable import-export performance across environmental, social, and economic dimensions

The questionnaire underwent content validity verification by experts and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha in the pilot phase.

### 7.3 Data Analysis

- **Descriptive Analysis:** Descriptive statistics to summarize sample characteristics and variable levels
- **Reliability Testing:** Calculation of Cronbach's alpha for each scale
- **Preliminary Relationship Analysis:** Pearson's correlation to examine direction and strength of relationships among main variables
- **Multiple Regression Analysis:** Testing of each model with verification of regression assumptions including linearity, absence of multicollinearity, normal distribution of residuals, and homoscedasticity

## 8. Research Findings

Data were collected from 286 import-export operators and related professionals in Bangkok and metropolitan areas.

### 8.1 Sample Characteristics

**Table 1: Business Type Distribution**

Business Type	Number	Percentage
Primarily importers	90	31.50%
Primarily exporters	104	36.40%
Both import and export	92	32.20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Organization Size and Business Age:

- Size < 200 employees: 76.3%
- Business age > 10 years: 60.1%

The majority were SMEs with considerable import-export business experience, suitable for assessing stakeholder pressure and sustainable operations.

### 8.2 Stakeholder Pressure Levels

**Table 2: Mean Stakeholder Pressure Levels**

Pressure Dimension	Mean	SD	Level
Customers and foreign partners (SP_CUST)	3.92	0.62	High

Pressure Dimension	Mean	SD	Level
Government agencies and regulations (SP_REG)	3.78	0.67	High
Logistics providers and suppliers (SP_LOG)	3.65	0.64	Moderately high
Society and communities (SP_SOC)	3.41	0.71	Moderate to moderately high
<b>Overall pressure average</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>Moderately high</b>

Results indicate that pressure from customers/foreign partners and government agencies were highest, consistent with research reporting external stakeholders as primary SSCM drivers.

### 8.3 Sustainable Supply Chain and Logistics Practices Level

**Table 3: Mean SSCM/Sustainable Logistics Practices**

Practice Item	Mean	SD
Route planning to reduce distance and energy use	3.84	0.68
Selection of environmentally friendly logistics providers	3.76	0.7
Use of recyclable/eco-friendly packaging	3.52	0.73
Supplier evaluation on environmental and social aspects	3.47	0.75
Technology use to reduce waste/increase efficiency	3.69	0.71
Written SSCM/sustainable logistics policy	3.38	0.79
Employee training on sustainable logistics	3.32	0.82
Sustainability communication with supply chain partners	3.45	0.77
<b>Overall SSCM Practices average</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>0.59</b>

Sample firms implemented SSCM and sustainable logistics practices at a moderately high level, consistent with international SSCM research trends.

### 8.4 Sustainable Import-Export Performance Level

**Table 4: Mean Sustainable Import-Export Performance**

Performance Dimension	Mean	SD	Level
Economic dimension	3.88	0.6	High
Social dimension	3.62	0.63	Moderately high
Environmental dimension	3.48	0.66	Moderate to moderately high
<b>Overall sustainable performance</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>Moderately high</b>

Economic dimension showed the highest mean, consistent with CSR-export performance research indicating sustainability enhances export performance and competitiveness.

### 8.5 Instrument Reliability

**Table 5: Cronbach's Alpha Values**

Variable Set	$\alpha$
Pressure from customers and foreign partners (SP_CUST)	0.86
Pressure from government agencies and regulations (SP_REG)	0.84
Pressure from logistics providers and suppliers (SP_LOG)	0.83
Pressure from society and communities (SP_SOC)	0.81
SSCM/sustainable logistics practices	0.89
Sustainable import-export performance	0.88

All values exceeded 0.80, reflecting good measurement reliability according to quantitative research and SSCM research standards.

### 8.6 Variable Relationships

#### Pearson's Correlation Coefficients:

- SP\_CUST ↔ SSCM:  $r = 0.46, p < 0.001$
- SP\_REG ↔ SSCM:  $r = 0.39, p < 0.001$
- SP\_LOG ↔ SSCM:  $r = 0.35, p < 0.001$
- SP\_SOC ↔ SSCM:  $r = 0.30, p < 0.001$
- SSCM ↔ SIEP (overall):  $r = 0.52, p < 0.001$
- SP\_CUST ↔ SIEP (overall):  $r = 0.41, p < 0.001$

Relationships were at moderate levels, with no values between independent variables exceeding 0.80, indicating no severe multicollinearity issues before regression analysis.

### 8.7 Regression Analysis Results

#### Model 1: Testing H1a-H1d (Stakeholder Pressure → SSCM Practices)

**Table 6: Regression Results - Model 1**

Variable	B	$\beta$	t	p
SP_CUST	0.28	0.33	5.6	< 0.001
SP_REG	0.17	0.21	3.4	0.001
SP_LOG	0.14	0.16	2.8	0.005
SP_SOC	0.09	0.11	2.1	0.036
SIZE	0.06	0.09	1.98	0.049
AGE	0.04	0.06	1.45	0.148

$R^2 = 0.41, \text{ Adjusted } R^2 = 0.39$

Results indicate that stakeholder pressure from all four dimensions positively influenced SSCM/sustainable logistics practices, with customer and foreign partner pressure showing the highest standardized coefficient, consistent with H1a-H1d and international SSCM research trends.

**Model 2: Testing H2 and H2a-H2c (SSCM Practices → Sustainable Performance)**

**Table 7: Regression Results - Model 2**

Variable	B	$\beta$	t	p
SSCM	0.35	0.42	5.83	< 0.001
SP CUST	0.12	0.14	2.4	0.017
SP REG	0.07	0.08	1.36	0.175
SP LOG	0.05	0.06	1.15	0.251
SP SOC	0.04	0.05	1.02	0.308
SIZE	0.08	0.11	2.4	0.017
AGE	0.05	0.07	1.68	0.094

$R^2 = 0.48$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.46$

SSCM/sustainable logistics practices significantly and positively influenced sustainable import-export performance ( $\beta = 0.42$ ), supporting H2. When examined by dimension, positive trends were found across all three dimensions (economic, social, environmental), supporting H2a-H2c.

Customer and foreign partner pressure maintained a direct effect on performance ( $\beta \approx 0.14$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), while pressure from other dimensions became non-significant when SSCM was included in the model, consistent with the framework viewing SSCM as a key channel through which organizations respond to stakeholder pressure.

**Testing H3: Mediating Role of SSCM Practices**

According to H3 framework, SSCM/sustainable logistics practices function as a mediating variable between stakeholder pressure and sustainable import-export performance. Testing revealed:

- Without SSCM in the model, customer and foreign partner pressure showed higher influence ( $\beta \approx 0.26$ ,  $p < 0.001$ )
- When SSCM was added, this value decreased to  $\beta \approx 0.14$ , demonstrating indirect effects through SSCM, interpreted as partial mediation

Pressure from government agencies and logistics providers appeared to affect performance primarily through SSCM, consistent with H3 that organizations respond to pressure by adjusting supply chain and sustainable logistics practices before reflecting in sustainable import-export performance.

**9. Discussion**

Findings that customer and foreign partner pressure most strongly influenced SSCM/sustainable logistics practices align with stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), which states that organizations respond to stakeholders with high bargaining power. In the import-export context, customers and foreign partners often set environmental and social standards as trade conditions.

Government agency and regulatory pressure positively influencing SSCM aligns with institutional pressure concepts (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Zhu & Sarkis, 2007), indicating

that laws and government policies are crucial factors driving organizational adoption of sustainability practices.

The positive effect of SSCM/sustainable logistics practices on sustainable import-export performance across all dimensions aligns with research by Seuring and Müller (2008) and Wolf (2014), indicating that SSCM practices enhance economic efficiency, social acceptance, and environmental outcomes. The highest economic dimension level reflects resource constraints faced by SME operators (Walker et al., 2008).

## **10. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **10.1 Conclusions**

This study on "The Influence of Stakeholders on Sustainable Import-Export Performance of Import-Export Firms in Bangkok and Vicinity" aimed to examine stakeholder pressure levels, pressure influence on SSCM/sustainable logistics practices, and practice effects on sustainable import-export performance, including the mediating role of SSCM practices.

Results showed that operators perceived stakeholder pressure at a moderately high level, with customer/foreign partner pressure and government agency/regulatory pressure most strongly influencing SSCM/sustainable logistics practices. Such practices were implemented at a moderately high level, and sustainable import-export performance was rated moderately high, with economic dimension showing the highest level.

Statistical analysis confirmed that stakeholder pressure positively influenced SSCM/sustainable logistics practices, and such practices positively affected sustainable import-export performance across all dimensions. Additionally, SSCM/sustainable logistics practices served as a partial mediating variable in these relationships.

### **10.2 Practical Recommendations**

Operators should establish clearer SSCM/sustainable logistics policies and practices alongside investments in logistics technology and information systems to enhance efficiency, reduce waste, and support ESG data compilation according to customer and government requirements.

### **10.3 Policy Recommendations**

Government should provide supportive measures such as tax incentives, low-interest loans, and development of SSCM/sustainable logistics standards or guidelines, along with training and consultation for operators, particularly SME groups.

### **10.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should expand study areas, employ qualitative or mixed-methods approaches, and consider additional variables such as digital innovation or dynamic capabilities to more comprehensively explain sustainable performance outcomes.

## References

- Aunyawong, W., *et al.* (2024). The effect of green supply chain management practices on performances of herb manufacturers in Thailand . *Uncertain Supply Chain Management* 12 (2024) 417–424
- Department of Business Development. (2024). *Report on the status of SME entrepreneurs in Thailand's trade and service sectors* [Online report]. Department of Business Development, Ministry of Commerce.
- Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning. (2021). *Thailand's logistics development strategy 2022-2027*. Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning.
- Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council. (2023). *National economic and social report 2023*. Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council.
- Thailand Development Research Institute. (2011). *Study on approaches to sustainable supply chain and logistics management in Thailand* [Research report]. Thailand Development Research Institute.
- Supatchari Supriyakul & Than Chaithon. (2024). Green logistics management affecting operational efficiency of road freight transport operators in Nakhon Pathom province. *Journal of Mass Communication Innovation*.
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 147-160.
- Elkington, J. (1997). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st century business*. Capstone Publishing.
- Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Pitman Publishing.
- Freudenreich, B., Lüdeke-Freund, F., & Schaltegger, S. (2020). A stakeholder theory perspective on business models: Value creation for sustainability. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 166(1), 3-18.
- Maas, S., Schuster, T., & Hartmann, E. (2018). Stakeholder pressure and corporate environmental strategies: A meta-analysis. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 27(8), 1236-1255.
- Martínez-Conesa, I., Soto-Acosta, P., & Palacios-Manzano, M. (2017). Corporate social responsibility and its effect on innovation and firm performance: An empirical research in SMEs. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 142, 2374-2383.
- Seuring, S., & Müller, M. (2008). From a literature review to a conceptual framework for sustainable supply chain management. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 16(15), 1699-1710.
- Srivastava, S. K. (2007). Green supply-chain management: A state-of-the-art literature review. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 9(1), 53-80.
- Walker, H., Di Sisto, L., & McBain, D. (2008). Drivers and barriers to environmental supply chain management practices: Lessons from the public and private sectors. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, 14(1), 69-85.
- Wolf, J. (2014). The relationship between sustainable supply chain management, stakeholder pressure and corporate sustainability performance. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 119(3), 317-328.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.
- Zhu, Q., & Sarkis, J. (2007). The moderating effects of institutional pressures on emergent green supply chain practices and performance. *International Journal of Production Research*, 45(18-19), 4333-4355.